

HEADSETS

WRITTEN FOR COACHES & COACHES

VOLUME 4: ISSUE 6

offensive & defensive

TIP OFFS

**TIPS FOR
TRANSITIONING FROM A
H.S. TO COLLEGE COACH**

**PULLING
GUARDS**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TIPS FOR TRANSITIONING FROM A HIGH SCHOOL COACH TO A COLLEGE COACH

2

UNLOCKING EXCELLENCE: A DEEP DIVE INTO YEAR-ROUND ATHLETIC DEVELOPMENT FOR FOOTBALL PROGRAMS

4

OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSIVE TIP OFFS

10

PULLING GUARDS

12

BEING AN ADAPTABLE COACH

14

LEADERSHIP SERIES: DO

16

CARD DRAWS

19



Kenny Simpson
Author/Coaching Consultant
HC - Southside, AR
[@fbcoachsimpson](https://www.facebook.com/fbcoachsimpson)
FBCoachSimpson.com

We are so glad to run Headsets season three! It has been unbelievable to have so many coaches willing to contribute their time and efforts to the coaching community. A special thank you to the writers this season as we have a great line up in store covering all things football.

As you go through the articles, there are many live links to recommended materials, articles and videos.

If you would like to contribute to Headsets, email Coach Simpson: FBcoachsimpson@gmail.com and let him know.

Also, please help us spread the word via social media and email about our Magazine as it is our hope to help as many coaches as possible.

Thank you,

CLICK ON ANY TITLE TO GO STRAIGHT TO ARTICLE

TIME TO RAISE THE BAR



JAMESIMPSONDESIGNS
SPORTS GRAPHIC DESIGN

JOB SEARCH PREP FOR COACHES

TIPS FOR TRANSITIONING FROM A HIGH SCHOOL COACH TO A COLLEGE COACH



Bill Vasko
Head Softball Coach,
Frostburg State University,
NCAA DII/Former College
Football/Baseball Coach
CEO: [The Coaching Portfolio](#)
[@xo_coach](#)

Every year, I get questions from high school coaches who want to make the jump to college coaching. I've written on the topic before based upon my experiences, but I wanted to give a more traditional outline for steps to take. As always, my number one piece of advice is just find a way to get college experience. Becoming a college coach is easy.....making money at it, is not. Most college programs at the lower levels are always looking for additional help, typically in the form of volunteer or part-time assistants. If you have had success as a high school coach and want to try your hand at college coaching, reach out to local college programs to see what types of opportunities may exist.

With that said, here are a few of my other top tips:

1. Build a Strong Coaching Resume:

Develop a comprehensive coaching resume that highlights your coaching experience, achievements, and contributions at the high

school level. Include details about your coaching philosophy, leadership roles, and any notable successes with your high school team.

2. Pursue Coaching Certifications:

Obtain coaching certifications and credentials recognized by college programs. This might include certifications from organizations like USA Football, the American Football Coaches Association (AFCA), or other relevant coaching clinics and workshops.

3. Network within the College Coaching Community:

Attend coaching conferences, clinics, and networking events where college coaches are present. This provides opportunities to make connections, learn about coaching opportunities, and gain insights into the college coaching landscape.

4. Connect with College Coaches:

Reach out to college coaches to express your interest in transitioning to the college level. Attend college practices, games, or recruiting events to establish connections and showcase your passion for coaching.

5. Develop a Strong Online Presence:

Create a professional online presence by updating your LinkedIn profile, creating a coaching portfolio or website, and engaging with college coaches on social media platforms. Highlight your coaching philosophy, accomplishments, and any relevant content that showcases your expertise.

6. Seek Guidance from College Coaches:

Approach college coaches for advice on making the transition. Seek guidance on what college programs are looking for in coaching candidates and how you can enhance your qualifications.

7. Build a Winning Program at the High School Level:

Continued success at the high school level enhances your coaching reputation and makes you a more attractive candidate for college coaching positions. Winning records and player development can draw attention from college programs.

8. Volunteer or Intern with College Programs:

Offer to volunteer or intern with college football programs during their offseason or summer camps. This provides valuable experience, exposes you to the college coaching environment, and allows you to build relationships with college coaches.

9. Pursue Graduate Assistant Positions:

Many college coaches start their careers as graduate assistants. Pursue graduate assistant positions at the college level, which often involve coaching responsibilities combined with graduate studies. This can serve as a stepping stone to a full-time coaching role.

10. Stay Current with Trends and Strategies:

Stay informed about the latest coaching trends, strategies, and technologies in college football. Attend coaching clinics and workshops to continuously improve your coaching knowledge and skills.

11. Highlight Transferable Skills:

Emphasize transferable skills from your high school coaching experience that are applicable to the college level. Showcase your ability to develop players, create effective game plans, and contribute to a positive team culture.

12. Apply for Open Positions:

Monitor job postings for college coaching positions and apply to openings that match your skill set and aspirations. Tailor your application materials to demonstrate how your experience makes you a valuable asset to a college program.

13. Be Patient and Persistent:

Transitioning to the college coaching ranks may take time. Be patient, stay persistent in your efforts, and continuously work to enhance your coaching profile and qualifications. Remember that persistence, networking, and a commitment to ongoing professional development are key components of a successful transition from high school coaching to college coaching. Building relationships within the college community and demonstrating a strong commitment to excellence will enhance your chances of securing a position at the college level.

Need Additional Help?

If you need help with your coaching resume, your portfolio, or the interview process, be sure to sign up for one of our job prep packages at [The Coaching Portfolio Guide!](#) We provide services that assist with all aspects of the job search process for coaches. Visit www.coachingportfolio.com to get started today!

ATHLETIC DEVELOPMENT

UNLOCKING EXCELLENCE: A DEEP DIVE INTO YEAR-ROUND ATHLETIC DEVELOPMENT FOR FOOTBALL PROGRAMS



Sa'Quan Hicks
Linked in: Sa'Quan Hicks
[@Darealcoachtrap](#)
Certified Personal Trainer
Writer
Defensive Coordinator, Ben Franklin HS - MD

In the realm of football coaching, the pursuit of excellence is an unending journey, one that transcends the boundaries of the playing season. As a football coach, your mission is not just about winning games; it's about sculpting athletes who consistently perform at the pinnacle of their potential. This comprehensive guide delves into the intricate strategies, practical methodologies, and real-world examples that football coaches can leverage to maximize the potential of their players throughout the entire year.

1. Foundations of Physical Training: Crafting Resilient Athletes

a. Periodization: Tailoring Training Phases to Football's Rhythms

Effective periodization is the backbone of year-round success. Consider the seasonal demands of football and structure training phases

accordingly. For instance, in the offseason, emphasize hypertrophy and foundational strength. Transition to power-focused workouts in the preseason, aligning with the approaching competitive season. As the season unfolds, adjust training to maintain peak performance while managing fatigue.

Example: In the offseason, a focus on hypertrophy can involve compound movements with higher rep ranges to stimulate muscle growth. As the preseason approaches, shift towards power-focused exercises like box jumps and explosive medicine ball throws.

b. Strength and Power Training: The Core of Football Athleticism

Building functional strength is non-negotiable. Incorporate compound movements into training routines, emphasizing proper form and progressive overload. Power training is equally critical, enhancing an athlete's ability to generate force rapidly.

Example: Integrate Olympic lifts like cleans and snatches to develop explosive power. For strength, consider a foundational workout featuring squats, bench presses, and deadlifts with a focus on strength gains.

c. Speed and Agility Workouts: Translating Quickness to the Field

Football is a game of split-second decisions, demanding agility and rapid changes in direction. Tailor drills to mimic football movements, integrating ladder drills, cone exercises, and shuttle runs.

Example: Implement the "L-Drill" to enhance lateral agility. Players start at the base of an L-shape and sprint to the tip, touch the ground, shuffle sideways to the next corner, shuffle back, then sprint to the starting point.

d. Cardiovascular Conditioning: Endurance Tailored to the Game

Football's dynamic nature requires a blend of aerobic and anaerobic endurance. Interval training that mirrors the stop-and-start nature of the game is key.

Example: Implement high-intensity interval training (HIIT) sessions, alternating between sprints and brief recovery periods to simulate the demands of football.

2. Nutrition as a Game-Changer: Fueling Performance from the Inside Out

a. Balanced Nutrition Plans: The Engine for Optimal Output

Educate players on the importance of a balanced diet, emphasizing the role of macronutrients and micronutrients. Customized nutrition plans can address individual player needs.

Example: Create individualized meal plans based on players' positions and energy requirements. A lineman's diet may differ from a wide receiver's, aligning with their distinct physical demands.

b. Hydration Protocols: Quenching the Thirst for Victory

Dehydration can compromise performance. Establish clear hydration protocols, ensuring

players consistently consume water throughout the day.

Example: Track individual hydration levels using urine color charts and encourage players to maintain pale yellow to clear urine as an indicator of proper hydration.

c. Strategic Nutrient Timing: Precision in Pre- and Post-Game Nutrition

Optimize nutrient intake around training sessions. Pre-game meals should provide sustained energy, while post-game nutrition focuses on recovery.

Example: Pre-game meals might include complex carbohydrates like whole grains and lean proteins. Post-game, emphasize protein-rich options for muscle repair and carbohydrates for glycogen replenishment.

d. Supplementation Guidance: Enhancing Performance Safely

Collaborate with sports nutritionists to identify appropriate supplements. Emphasize that supplements should complement a well-rounded diet, not replace it.

Example: Consider the use of branched-chain amino acids (BCAAs) during intense training periods to support muscle recovery and reduce muscle soreness.

3. Recovery: Preserving the Athlete's Body and Mind

a. Prioritize Quality Sleep: The Ultimate Recovery Tool

continued on next page

Quality sleep is a linchpin of recovery. Establish sleep hygiene practices, emphasizing consistent sleep patterns.

Example: Implement team-wide strategies such as blackout curtains in team hotels to create an optimal sleep environment during away games.

b. Active Recovery Sessions: Balancing Rest and Movement

Incorporate active recovery sessions, including activities like swimming or yoga, to enhance blood flow and reduce muscle soreness.

Example: Introduce a post-game yoga session focused on stretching and relaxation to aid recovery and mental rejuvenation.

c. Massage and Bodywork: Treating the Athlete's Canvas

Invest in regular massage and bodywork sessions to address muscle tension and prevent injuries.

Example: Schedule weekly massages for players during intense training periods, targeting areas prone to tightness, such as the lower back and shoulders.

d. Cryotherapy and Hydrotherapy: Harnessing the Power of Temperature

Alternating between hot and cold treatments can accelerate recovery. Consider cryotherapy and hydrotherapy options.

Example: After a grueling practice, implement contrast baths, alternating between hot and cold water immersion, to reduce inflammation and promote recovery.

4. Mental Conditioning: Forging Warriors of the Mind

a. Visualization Techniques: Shaping the Mind for Success

Introduce visualization exercises to enhance mental focus. Encourage players to visualize successful plays and scenarios.

Example: Before a crucial game, conduct a team visualization session where players mentally rehearse successful plays and strategies.

b. Mental Toughness Drills: Building Resilience through Challenges

Simulate high-pressure situations during practice to fortify players against adversity and build mental toughness.

Example: Create scenarios in practice where the team is behind on the scoreboard, challenging players to maintain composure and execute under pressure.

c. Mindfulness and Relaxation: Calming the Storm Within

Teach mindfulness and relaxation techniques to manage stress. Incorporate deep breathing and meditation into routine practices.

Example: Implement a brief meditation session before important games to help players stay focused and calm.

d. Goal Setting and Team Bonding: Unity in Purpose

Facilitate goal-setting sessions for individual players and the team. Establish clear objectives

to foster a sense of purpose and camaraderie. Example: Set specific team goals for the season, whether it's winning a championship or achieving a certain win-loss record. Regularly revisit these goals to maintain focus and motivation.

5. Skill-Specific Training: Sharpening the Tools of the Trade

a. Position-Specific Drills: Precision in Role Mastery

Tailor drills to specific positions, ensuring players hone the skills essential to their roles on the field.

Example: Quarterbacks can benefit from specialized passing drills, while linemen may focus on agility and blocking techniques.

b. Game Simulations: Replicating Pressure Scenarios in Practice

Integrate game simulations into practice sessions. Create scenarios that replicate in-game situations for strategic decision-making.

Example: Simulate a two-minute drill in practice, challenging the offense to execute under time pressure while the defense works on clock management.

c. Technical Proficiency Clinics: Perfecting the Fundamentals

Conduct regular clinics to refine technical skills. Dedicate time to perfecting fundamentals, from tackling techniques to route running.

Example: Host a tackling clinic with a former

1. Foundations of Physical Training: Crafting Resilient Athletes

2. Nutrition as a Game-Changer: Fueling Performance from the Inside Out

3. Recovery: Preserving the Athlete's Body and Mind

4. Mental Conditioning: Forging Warriors of the Mind

5. Skill-Specific Training: Sharpening the Tools of the Trade

6. Injury Prevention: Safeguarding the Team's Physical Capital

7. Strategic Planning: Crafting a Blueprint for Seasonal Success

continued on next page

professional player or coach to provide insights into proper tackling form and techniques.

d. Film Study Sessions: Decoding Success and Identifying Areas for Growth

Use film study as a valuable tool for player development. Analyze both team and individual performances to identify strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement.

Example: After a game, conduct a thorough film review session, highlighting successful plays and discussing areas that need improvement.

6. Injury Prevention: Safeguarding the Team's Physical Capital

a. Preventive Strength and Conditioning: Building Resilience Against Injuries

Design strength and conditioning programs that address common football-related injuries. Strengthen vulnerable areas to reduce the risk of injuries.

Example: Incorporate exercises targeting the hamstrings and quadriceps to prevent common football injuries like strains and tears.

b. Biomechanical Assessments: Precision in Injury Mitigation

Collaborate with experts to conduct biomechanical assessments. Identify and rectify imbalances or weaknesses that may contribute to overuse injuries.

Example: Work with a sports biomechanics specialist to analyze players' movements and

identify any imbalances that may lead to injury.

c. Comprehensive Warm-Up and Cool Down: A Ritual for Physical Preparedness

Prioritize thorough warm-up and cool-down routines to prepare muscles for intense activity and aid in recovery.

Example: Implement a dynamic warm-up routine that includes joint mobility exercises and dynamic stretches before every practice and game.

d. Strategic Player Rotation: Managing Workload for Longevity

Develop a rotation strategy to manage player workload. Avoid overtraining and minimize the risk of fatigue-related injuries by strategically rotating players during practices and games.

Example: Rotate players during practice drills to ensure they get adequate rest between intense activities, preventing fatigue-related injuries.

7. Strategic Planning: Crafting a Blueprint for Seasonal Success

a. Long-Term Development Plan: Navigating the Journey with Purpose

Collaborate with coaching staff to establish a comprehensive long-term development plan. Set team-wide goals and individual objectives, ensuring alignment with the overall vision for the program.

Example: Outline a five-year plan that includes goals for player development, team achievements, and program growth. Regularly

revisit and adjust the plan based on progress and evolving objectives.

b. Regular Assessments: Data-Driven Decision-Making for Continuous Improvement

Conduct regular assessments to track progress. Use objective data to evaluate the effectiveness of training protocols and make adjustments as needed.

Example: Implement regular physical assessments, such as speed tests and strength benchmarks, to measure players' progress over time.

c. Adaptability in Coaching Approach: Embracing the Unpredictable Nature of Sports

Embrace adaptability in your coaching approach. Recognize the uniqueness of each player and be open to adjusting strategies based on individual needs and team dynamics.

Example: If a player demonstrates a particular aptitude for a new position, be flexible in adapting their role to maximize their impact on the team.

d. Rest and Periods of Deloading: Preserving Physical and Mental Freshness

Integrate planned rest periods and deloading phases into the annual plan. These breaks are crucial for preventing burnout, allowing physical recovery, and maintaining mental freshness.

Example: Schedule strategic breaks during the offseason to give players time to rest and recover

before ramping up intensity for the next phase.

Conclusion: Nurturing a Legacy of Excellence

Maximizing the potential of football players is a multifaceted endeavor that requires a holistic and unwavering commitment. As a football coach, you are not merely a strategist; you are a sculptor, molding athletes into champions. By weaving together the threads of physical training, nutrition, recovery, mental conditioning, skill-specific drills, injury prevention, and strategic planning, you craft a tapestry of athletic excellence.

As you guide your team through the year-round challenges and triumphs, may your dedication be mirrored by the resilience and achievements of your players on the field. The pursuit of excellence is a continuous journey, and with the right guidance, commitment, and passion, your team can ascend to new heights, leaving an indelible legacy of success. Here's to a season filled with triumphs, growth, and the relentless pursuit of excellence in every kick, tackle, and touchdown.



DRILLS

OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSIVE TIP OFFS



Chris Haddad
Bellingham HS - MA
Defensive Coordinator
[Coach Tube](#)
[@chrsviQtory](#)
[@viQtorySports](#)



Every team has tendencies. Whether it be how often coaches run plays, blitz or bring in different personnel packages.

Aside from the chess match that the coaches play, there is a "game within the game" that is also played with the players.

Each player on the offensive and defensive side of the ball can be studied and checked for tendencies. Here are some of our favorites and a cheat sheet you can use:

Studying The Offense

Wide Receivers Breaking The Huddle - In run heavy offenses, WRs spend most of their time blocking. When their number is called they will (naturally) get excited. How does their demeanor change? Do they spit on their gloves? Do they point to the referee only on pass plays?

Offensive Lineman Stance + Presnap - Things to look at: 2pt to 3pt? Chest up vs chest down. Heavy lean on hand vs light on the knuckles.

Outside foot position - further back on pass? Eyes before getting in their stance - do they look at who they block?

QB Tendencies - Does he lick his fingers only before pass plays? Does his head sway and recenter when he is ready for the ball? In gun, does his hands flash for the ball? What's the cadence? Whenever you scout a game in person, get the verbal cadence + tempo.

WR Alignments + Stance - If he's always inside foot up, why did he switch his stance (out cuts/only on certain routes)? Cut Split = why? Jog on runs? Fast get off on pass? Can they get off a press? How does their stance change on run/pass vs press?

Running Back Tipoffs - Depth - does it change on certain plays? Eyes Presnap - first look to hole? Last look? Straight up staring at the hole? 3pt Vs 2pt Stance? Relation To QB - Wide alignment = power read? Speed option? Lined up to only 1 side vs pass?

Studying The Defense

Staggered Safeties - Coverage rotation could be coming. This is something that is best seen as the QB is getting set. Safety rotation is important for the OL because it often means blitz is coming. If you can identify a lower-than-normal safety, you may sniff out the blitz.

Defensive Line Stances - Do they change up their stance based on their assignments? For example, are they normally in an outside hand stance or R/L stance, but when they slant, do

they have their inside hand down?

Linebacker Eyes - Linebackers get excited to blitz (naturally). Similar to WRs getting excited on pass plays. They will often telegraph their gap responsibility with their eyes as the cadence begins or as the offense gets set.

Corner's Posture - What are the corner's intentions when playing man coverage? Are eyes, hips, and toes locked on the man? If the ball is on the hash, are they now looking in? Why are they looking in? To blitz? To time up the bail coverage?

Defensive Line Alignments - Head up interior alignments can often signal movement. (Slanting to a 3/1 or Double A's, Torch stunt, NAT/TAN). When scouting an opponent, check to see if these alignments are consistent with movement.

If you have any tipoffs, I'd love to hear about them! Feel free to reach out on Twitter [@chrsviQtory](#) or [@viQtorySports](#). Thanks, coach and best of luck this upcoming season!

POSITIONS

PULLING GUARDS



Michael Fields
La Grande HS, OR
JV Head Coach/OC
[CoachTube](#)
[@CoachMichaelF](#)

On the offensive side of the ball, it is unclear how the names of the positions became what they are. Some

Googling returns a few plausible results of why the guard is the guard on the line. Generally, in the early days of what has become modern football, there were no neutral zone rules and the two linemen on either side of the center were to guard him from opposing defenders. So, what does the guard look like in today's game? Well, to begin, linemen today are athletes, although I am a bit old school and refer to linemen as "Bigs" and the receivers', running backs, and QBs as "Skills", linemen are also very skilled. The guard is usually the position that have to pull more than the other offensive linemen, so they are not just big, but fast too.

The guard often has to help with double teams, blitz pick up and blocking at the second level, so yes, they are a "skill" player too. In the passing game the guards often are uncovered and have to help on the outside once they determine no one is rushing their inside position. In reality, all 11 players on offense are skilled in many ways. So how do we train the guards? Like all linemen, he has to be able to run block, pass block and

as mentioned above, pull and lead block. The daily work with guards is very much the same as all offensive linemen. There is a heavy dose of footsteps and kick steps, hand placement and double-team work. The main separator is the work on pulling. In many offenses, the guards have to trap block, pull and kick, and/or pull and wrap. Most offensive systems have the guards pull more than tackles or the center.

The physical attributes of the guards are not that different than tackles or centers. Guards may be a little lighter or smaller than the other positions usually due to the fact that they are often the fastest, their physique may be slightly smaller in nature. Size and strength are still important with guards as they still must block defensive linemen who may weigh up to 300 pounds even at the high school level. Footwork for a pulling guard is one of the biggest factors in addition to speed as they pull.

Drills that guards should be doing include the EDDs that all linemen are doing. Stance, start, hand placement and punch, and kick/power steps. While the birdcage and other first step drills will have pull steps, guards may need additional time to work on their pulls as well.

Some drills we like for guards pulling include the hurdle drill. We built different sizes of hurdles to teach the pullers to stay low throughout the path of their pulls and to drop the hips just before contact with the defender. The hurdles are built from PVC pipe purchased at the local hardware store. To keep them upright in the wind we added small rocks and sand to the

feet of the hurdles. The basic idea of the hurdle drill is to set one lower hurdle to the side of the guard in the direction he is pulling, then another hurdle at the point of contact that's slightly higher than the first hurdle so he has to stay low and/or drop his hips to initiate contact. Coach Kenny Simpson has a good video explaining his version of the drill [here on his YouTube channel](#)

We have also used a version of the hurdle drill without hurdles, instead cones, bags, or trash cans to work on the path of the guards. In this pulling drill the main focus is to get the athletes to get to the right spot for the play. While in football defenders move and blocking a moving target is hard, getting them to a spot allows them to gain the muscle memory of getting there. Then we add a player or coach holding a blocking shield at the spot and they move as a second level of this drill.

When run a lot of guard trap, so we rep this pull as well. The trap block is shorter and usually not as deep of a pull than buck sweep or other outside plays. There are less steps to get to the point of contact, so the guards have to stay low and accelerate through the defender at contact. In the trap play, the defender to be blocked is usually untouched by another linemen so he could also be deep in the backfield so working different angle and contact points helps the guards learn to adjust in a short space to the block.

In the passing game, the guards are usually going to block inside out. This means they kick step, with their head on a swivel looking for an inside threat, then as they kick step back, they

look to the outside if there is not an inside threat and help with the edge rushers. To do this they have to leave the kick step and get to the outside of the tackles to chip or help with the edge rushers. This is not usual footwork for most players, so having time to work on this is critical in the passing game.

One other area that the guards need to practice is double team and climb and just climbing to block at the second level. For double teams, one player is usually designated as the post, and the other player the climber. Against many defensive fronts, the guards are the climbers. For the double team it is critical to work this every day to get the shoulders, hips and feet aligned so the defender cannot split the block. Then the guard has to slip up to the second level and pick up a moving linebacker. In climbing to the second level alone, the guards must get up to the linebacker and cut off his pursuit angle to the ball carrier. This block requires the guard to fire out low and then run to a spot and make a block on a moving target. This is a skill that must be worked on daily as well even if for a couple minutes during indie time.

To wrap this up, the guards, like all linemen, have to have good footwork, hand placement and punch, and pass blocking. The skill that usually separates the guards is the ability to pull and make the block at the point of attack. This requires quickness and speed, and most importantly, this requires reps in practice. Having time set aside for the guards to work on pulling will help them be better athletes and help your team move the football down field.

TRENCH TRAINING

BEING AN ADAPTABLE COACH



Joel Nellis
Head Coach Brookfield
Central HS
Owner of [Trench Training](#)

Two years ago, I was invited by Coach Tony Shiffman to participate in the HogFBChat Clinic in Whitewater, WI. I was honored that Coach Shiffman thought of me to participate in this clinic. I was in a speaking lineup that featured a number of prominent college coaches, and I wanted to be smart about my topic selection. Not that I didn't have scheme related content to talk about, but I thought it would be good to talk about being adaptable and the changes I had to make throughout my career. It's not something that would fetch the most views on CoachTube, but it certainly is worthy of consideration, as the world of football is rapidly changing across all levels. The talk was titled, "[Becoming an Adaptable OL Coach](#)" and the following excerpts are two big takeaways for OL coaches at any level.

We > Me

In 2014, I wanted to return to coaching high school football after a 6 year break when my wife and I started a family (3 kids in 5 years). Jed Kennedy, currently the head coach at Dothan HS (AL), had just taken over at Brookfield Central (BC). I was in the building as a PE teacher and had coached at BC in 2006 and 2007 as the offensive line coach. Within that two year span I coached 5 all-conference performers, and sent 6 kids on to play college football. Needless to say, I thought I was pretty good at my job.

However, Jed had plans to bring in another offensive line coach and make us Co-Offensive Line coaches together. Jake Ruff had been with Jed at Kenosha Bradford as both a 9th grade coach and varsity assistant. He had also been a varsity offensive coordinator at another school leading up to that season. He had a wealth of experience in the single-wing system that we were going to implement at BC, to which I had none.

While I accepted the position as co-offensive line coach, I had strong feelings about being "wronged" by the whole situation. I was extremely confident, given the success that I had, in my own abilities to coach the O-line and didn't feel I needed any help. I didn't see the value in having another coach. And I couldn't have been more wrong.

Having two people coach the O-line allowed for a couple important things to happen in my development. First, I got to learn the system from someone else, instead of being solely responsible for a new system on my own. Jake had experience running the single wing and he got to lead me along through the intricacies of the calls and techniques. Second, it allowed us to split the line in half (OL & TE) and coach only 3 positions, instead of all 6. In the single wing, there's a "strong" side and a "quick" side with the lines flipping to/away from the strength. Each season, Jake and I would decide which side we would focus on and then dive deeper into the nuances of the positions, and be able to coach our collective group better. Lastly, it created a great balance in personalities and philosophies. Jake and I have different personalities and ways

in which we go about getting the most out of our players. We could each use our own strengths and balance each other out when needed.

Be Open to New Techniques!

Sometimes in the coaching world you fall victim to not evaluating new techniques because of the coaching tree that you came from. If a specific type of block or footwork isn't how you were taught in high school or college, then there becomes a hesitation to believe in something with the same conviction.

In 2016, we brought in Wisconsin High School Hall of Fame coach George Machado to help upgrade our pass game. We had a very talented QB and WR group that we thought could be a real advantage for us. Part of that upgrade involved using the Tony Franklin system where the offensive line would pass set moving their inside foot first and almost pedaling to get back into proper position. My first thought was naturally, "There's no way this can work! That's not how you REALLY pass set. It has to be done with kick steps."

Reluctantly, I started watching the instructional videos and digging into the film. While I was trying to be objective, I'd still get these thoughts, "What would Coach Hueber think about this?" I was concerned about my college OL coach, Jim Hueber and how he would perceive this technique. I was also worried about how college coaches evaluating our players would view this technique.

While I was battling these irrational thoughts, the more I watched, the more I thought about how simple the technique was compared to

traditional pass pro. We had an OL group with heights from 5'8 to 6'5. Using the inside foot technique, we could get the whole group to the same level and they could all use a different amount of steps to get there. It also lent itself well to our balanced stances upfront (single wing).

In spite of all of my initial fears and doubts, for the first time in my career, I felt that our pass pro was a strength of our O-line group. Until that point I didn't believe we were strong with technique or handling blitzes. Using this technique gave our players confidence to handle pressure and passing on a more consistent basis. The two seasons after the implementation of the new pass pro and passing game, we were able to make it to the state championship games.

In the end, you need to evaluate the techniques and strategies that will give the players at your school the best opportunity to be successful and to win football games. Every coach should actively question their current techniques and strategies. Are they REALLY the best? Is there someone out there doing it better? Can I learn and apply these techniques?

I hope the ideas presented can help at least one coach be more adaptable in this upcoming season and in their career. Change is never easy, but we ask our players to make changes and adaptations every single day in practice. We should expect to have to make changes ourselves. We never arrive at being a "great coach." Just like the players, it involves competing, failing forward and challenging our old ways of thinking to become the best coach for our players, our team and our community.

LEADERSHIP

DO



Daniel Chamberlain
Football Coach
Co-Host of "The Football
Coaching Podcast"
Co-Host of "Coaching 101
Podcast"
Cell: 580-222-8381
Email: [ChamberlainFootball-
Consulting@gmail.com](mailto:ChamberlainFootball-Consulting@gmail.com)
Twitter: [@CoachChamboOK](https://twitter.com/CoachChamboOK)

So, our leadership series comes to an end. On this 6th Issue of the 4th Volume of Headsets Magazine, we learn about the "Do" pillar of the "Be, Know, Do" Leadership Model. Your research, comprehension, and practice of this model do not have to end with this article, however.

As we get into the "Do" side of the model, we finally get to talk about competencies, or the things a leader does. See, the "Be" and "Know" side of the house is all attributes, or things that a leader is. We have to differentiate because these things are developed differently.

There are 3 Competencies that make up a leader. Leads, Develops, Achieves. It doesn't matter what you're a leader of, you will constantly be measured against these pillars. You may be a coach, the leader of your bowling team, a teacher, a representative for your community.. It all leads back to the same place.

Leads:

The leadership competencies are broken down into even more smaller actions. To be

a complete leader you must start by Leading Others. It sounds redundant, but it's definitely still a measuring stick. Think of how you judge your players' leadership skills. They may be the perfect leader, but no one follows them... so are they leading?

A leader must Build Trust within their subordinates, peers, and superiors. Regardless of what they're intending to do, or what they're actually doing, they will never make true progress without the trust of those around them. "...if you want to go far, go together."

Leaders must extend their influence beyond their given piece of the pie. As a Head Coach, this may mean influencing the entire community to be better people, by always being a professional. As a position coach, this may simply mean the receivers are taking a liking to how you've developed the O-Line and want to start acting in the same manner (of course they'll want to join in on O-Line meals too). For players, this may be more classroom based. Act right, do your work, make the grades, be a man of character. Those following you will imitate you. Most of these actions are examples of leading by example. You must also do that on a daily basis. Leadership is a daily practice.

The last action under the "Lead" competency is communication. A leader must communicate. Obnoxious communication is a statement you'll hear me use many times around the field house. Never stop communication, or you've stopped being a leader.

Develops:

To begin developing others, you must first prepare yourself. This may sound familiar... we make practice plans, game plans, play books, weight room programs, etc to ensure our players and our programs are developed. But, if we don't take the time to make sure these tools are organized, we can quickly fall flat on our face. Prepare yourself to develop others.

You must Create a Positive Environment. Look, I've been places where I've felt more anxious about what the feel of the room was rather than the work I needed to get done. This can happen to your players too. They don't just turn off their everyday life when they hit the field, no matter how many times you say, "leave everything in the locker room when you come out here."

Part of developing is the actual act of developing others. Once again, I know this sounds redundant, but you need to have a plan to take your players from where they are to where you, and they, need them to be. The same goes for the players that are leaders on your team, they need to have the room, and coaching, to develop the other players in their ranks.

Last of the development actions is to steward the profession. If you want to be one of the greats, you have to CARE FOR the career that you've chosen. Being a Steward, or a care taker, of the coaching profession means you leave things better than you found them. It means you look after those in your stead. It means you spread a good message so others can see that not all coaches are arrogant, screaming, fit throwing,

official cussing, kid punishing... people. We want others to follow in our footsteps, and we should be pushing them to go further than we can/did.

Achieves:

As expected, part of being a leader means you have to actually get some things done from time to time. As I've stated before, even if you're the perfect person... sitting in neutral all the time and never taking action will mean you will never be a leader.

The key actions for achieving things start with getting results. This doesn't mean you have to win the State Championship every year to be a great leader. But people follow successful people. You need to win games to keep your job, and you need to win jobs to advance your leadership capabilities. People will quit following a coach (or a player) when the 0-? Seasons begin to stack up.

You, as a leader, must give feedback to those around you to successfully achieve. This means your Asst Coaches, your QB, your scout team MLB. You need to give feedback to help develop them. You'll be lifted as a leader when those around you know what you need/want them to do better.

Execution is another huge action for the achieve competency. You have to be able to make plans to start, but you also must be capable of carrying them out. On the football field this may be calling plays as you've planned to all week.

continued on next page

It may be managing time at the end of a half or the game. It may be getting your extras in to prevent unnecessary injury when the game is out of hand for either team.

The last action we will focus on is the ability to Adapt! Adaptation is the name of the game in leadership. "Adapt and overcome," has been a mantra for more than one mission in my life, and it will continue to be the answer moving forward. If you allow yourself to either grow stale to the point you can no longer answer questions, or become so rigid in your ways that you get left behind, you'll watch your leadership crumble before you. Adaptation is a lot of problem solving and, "Leadership is problem solving."

Now, you have all the pieces to gauge, measure, get a feeling for, build, develop, and/or create the leadership in your life, your office, your program, your staff, your team, your locker room, and your school. Leadership isn't too big or too small for any echelon of our lives. Your boss's leadership ability can be judged by these principals, just as your 6th grade Corner can be. Thank you for taking the time to read through my deranged ramblings, and for letting me share the light of leadership with you.

COACH LIKE A TEACHER AND TEACH LIKE A COACH

CARD DRAWS



Tom Walls
Oakbank, Manitoba,
Canada
[FB: tom.walls.104](https://www.facebook.com/tom.walls.104)
[Insta: tom.walls.104/](https://www.instagram.com/tom.walls.104/)
[Twitter: @TomWalls6263](https://twitter.com/TomWalls6263)
[MATERIALS](#)

Card Draws: A simple technique that uses humour, hope, and team building to address negative behaviour.

I went chest to chest with a student once. I was a young teacher fresh out of university and a former football payer. I didn't know anything about dealing with kids whose brains were flooded with adrenaline. I saw deescalation as a sign of being weak. My solution to bad behaviour was to employ the NYC bus transit rule of "might makes right". Because it was the 90's, none of us feared getting stabbed or shot by a student. Most times the kid backed down (again it was the 90s) but on this occasion the student did not. I matched his volume with a louder volume. When that wasn't enough, I moved into his personal space. He reacted by stepping closer and bumping me like an angry baseball manager with the home plate umpire.

After regaining my footing, I stepped to get back into his face, when another student got between us. The offending student overturned two desks, kicked open the door, and stormed down the hallway. I was left breathless and feeling victimized. How dare he? I knew this happened to other teachers, but this was me! Thank God cell phones were not around then. The student's offence? He was late.

As I look back on this moment I am embarrassed as to how I handled classroom management. However, what truly troubles me, is that this type of confrontation was not uncommon in many high schools. My memory of being a high school student in the 80s and being a young teacher in the 90s is filled with examples of teachers using bullying tactics to control classrooms. The football field was worse. Grabbing facemarks, kicks in the backside, and drill sergeant spittle-yelling was commonplace.

If these techniques worked back then, that math no longer calculates. In the classroom, I found my discipline issues declined as the lessons became more engaging. On the football field I found that the less I made it about me, the more responsive players were to instruction.

However, there are still times when I need to hold young people accountable to the rules. My friend Coach Hugh Wyatt introduced me to a technique that combines humour, hope, and team building. This can be done through what we call, "Card Draws." Card Draws are a pretty simple idea. When a young person breaks a rule, you give them the options of a straight forward

**LIFETIME ACCESS
BUNDLE**

**HEAD COACH
ACADEMY**

**DIGITAL
WORKBOOK**

- 182 PAGES WITH 12 CHAPTERS
- COMPATIBLE WITH PPT/GOOGLE SLIDES/PRO QUICK DRAW
- EDITABLE AND PRINTABLE

**VIRTUAL
ACADEMY**

- OVER 12 HOURS WITH EXPERT COACHES
- INCLUDES: GETTING THE JOB, HIRING COACHES, SETTING UP SCHEME, ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE AND MORE!

VISIT WWW.THEHEADCOACHACADEMY.COM TO SIGN UP

punishment (stay after class/ run three laps), or take a card draw. The Card Draw involves four to five index cards that have various punishments on them and one "get out of jail free" card. This technique has allowed us to take a negative scenario and turn it positive.

In the classroom our Bad Cards are reserved for students who come in late, or commit another minor transgression. Our current cards include:

Sombrero of Shame- if you draw this card you have to have your picture taken wearing a giant blue sombrero. Those pictures are then posted in the Wall of Shame.

Pig, Puppet, Song- if you draw this card, you have to come to the front of the classroom, put a pig puppet on your hand, and sing it a song.

Soul Train Stroll- if you draw this card the entire class goes into the hallway and line up against the lockers like a gauntlet. The offender then needs to dance their way from the beginning of the gauntlet to the classroom. While this is happening the other students perform a grapevine step and clap in unison.

Classroom Dance Party- if you draw this card, you get to sit while the entire class stands and dances to Smooth Criminal for 30 seconds.

Get Out of Jail Free- no punishment.

These choices are all funny to watch. It is not uncommon for other classes to joyously join in when they hear someone has to do the Soul

Train Stroll. However, the effectiveness of this strategy goes beyond just humour. It releases endorphins in the brain. Neurologists believe that the endorphin enkephalins are released when people feel hope. This endorphin mimics the effects of morphine. The hope of drawing a Get Out of Jail card releases this endorphin and the student receives an organic high. You can actually see the effects on the student's face as they ponder which card to pick.



On the football field we also use card draws, but we call them Surprise Cards. We bring them out whenever a player negatively surprises us. This could be arriving late, forgetting a piece of equipment, or needing to leave early. When you manage 40 kids, over three months, all of these things are bound to happen. However, a coach should never be informed of these issues 30 seconds before practice starts. We call that a "surprise!". When coaches are surprised, the offending player is given the choice of three laps after practice or a card draw. Our Surprise Cards consist of the following:

40 yard pencil roll- this is when the player lies flat on the ground and rolls for 40 yards. It is surprisingly brutal. I remember one boy claiming he would not be able to have children after this exercise.

25, Five and turns- the player gets in a stance, sprints five yards, turns around, gets back in a stance, and then sprints five yards again.

3 Sabre Makers (exercise formally known as Man Makers)- the player sprints five yards and back, ten yards and back, fifteen yards and back, twenty yards and back.

Bee Hive Run- the entire team must run a lap around the field while clumping together shoulder to shoulder.

Get Out of Jail Free- no punishment.

When a player chooses the card draw, we see a unique form of team building. As the cards are presented, the rest of the team gathers around and watches with intense concentration. If the player draws a punishment card, the team erupts in cheers. If the player draws the Get Out of Jail Free card, the other players howl in discontent while the offender skips away. Recently, I have noticed a new trend; with the addition of the Bee Hive Run card, the coaching staff becomes involved. If a player pulls this card, I have seen the coaching staff erupt into cheers, as vindication that the entire team should be punished for the transgression.



Card draws have been a great addition to both my classroom and football team. I do reserve the right to punish directly for serious transgressions. However, this strategy has allowed us to use humour, hope, and team building, when addressing minor negative behaviour. Unlike cell phones, I wish this had been around when I first started teaching.

[Here is a link to a video of the Bee-Hive run in action:](#)



ORDER NOW!

- DURABLE DESIGN
- COMFORTABLE FIT
- SIZES: M, L, XL
- ADJUSTABLE STRAP
- BUILT IN FOX 40 WHISTLE



COACH'S CAP