WBCA

TEAM CULTURE PRACTICE

COACHES GUIDE:

TEAMWORK

"WE **TIP** WITH
EXCELLENCE AND
INTEGRITY"

TEAMWORK. **I**NCLUSION. **P**ASSION.

TEAMWORK:

DEVELOPING COLLECTIVE SAFETY AND CONFIDENCE

Contents

OVERVIEW

No one person or leader can create a great team culture. Each individual on the team must demonstrate leadership by putting the right practices and behaviors into action in order to sustain the desired culture. Amy Edmunds' work on collective efficacy powerfully demonstrates that teams can surpass the talents and abilities of individuals when there is solidarity in our ability to collectively define our goals and our shared habits that contribute to a sense of team confidence.

Put simply: **WE** are stronger together—***especially when and if we have confidence in US***. This requires that **WE** empower one another to be safe and strong together. True, deep, and lasting teamwork reflects solidarity (unity of thought and action), emotional safety, and shared accountability. The **TIP** Team Culture Practice on *Teamwork* challenges teams to use a Leader-To-Detractor tool to define the actions of leaders, participants, and detractors in various situations for their team.

WARMUP

Compact for Excellence

Begin the Culture Practice session by creating or reviewing your team Compact for Excellence (template is included at the end of the Guide). Ask your team, *What do we need to do in order to do our best work and treat each other with care and respect during this practice*? Agreements may include:

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TEAM COMPACT

In order for our team to achieve excellence with integrity, reaching our performance goals in a respectful, safe, and trusting team culture, we each agree to.../not to... :

List the specific actions we will need to do—and avoid doing—for this team, at this time, and for our circumstances.

» *Be open.*

» *Be honest and fair.*

» *Assume best intentions.*

» *Share as if our success depends on it.*

Adapted from Lickona & Davidson (2005).

Coaching Point:

You may choose to create your own Compact for the Culture Practice or ask your team to help you create a Compact. If you plan to have your team help you create a team Compact, expect to spend 10-15 minutes creating the agreements. It is critical that each member of the team understands each agreement on the Compact and agrees to put those expectations into action. Once a Compact is created, it can be reviewed and re-used for future team conversations.

Community Builder

Our goal as a team is to continuously go from surface level connections to deep and substantive connections. Ask your team to answer a mix of surface and substance questions (see below).

> ### Coaching Point:
>
> *Coaches and other members of the team are strongly encouraged to participate in the Community Builder by answering the questions and engaging with student-athletes.*

Surface-to-Substance Questions:

- What's the best part about being on this team?

- Describe a memorable and meaningful moment you shared with teammates (this team or previous teams). What makes that moment so meaningful to you?

- What was the best team culture you were ever a part of? What specific qualities and habits made it so impactful?

- In your experience, what are the most difficult aspects of being a leader?

- What do you think we could *start, stop, continue, or improve* within our team culture to make it even stronger?

Coaching Point:

The Community Builder Warmup can be done in a number of ways. If you want student-athletes to have time to consider their responses, ask them to write their ideas down and be ready to share at a future Culture Practice. If you want your team to build more personal connections, ask them to share with a partner (assigned or chosen). If you want the entire team to engage with the conversation, engage your team in whole-group sharing.

You may also want to use a Belief Box Format. Here, provide questions in advance, give your team a chance to write or reflect to initiate their thinking, then give each member of the team a chance to "stand on their belief box" to offer their insights, experiences, and opinions.

If you find that a particular question is inspiring conversation, stick with it. You can always come back and use the other questions for additional conversation. Remember, there are ample opportunities to build connections within your team. Bus rides, stretch periods, before and after practice or film sessions, or team meetings — all of these provide opportunities to engage your team in culture-building conversations.

PRACTICE

Teamwork is an easy word to say and value to promote. But, putting teamwork practices into action can be much more challenging. Too often student-athletes wait for someone in a leadership position to give direction, tell them what to do, or hold them accountable. The best teams, however, take collective responsibility for leading a culture of teamwork.

Step One: Introduction

Today's goal is to think about the continuum of leadership behaviors around three main anchors: Leaders, Participants, Detractors. The goal is to help each member of the team understand what leadership looks like in different situations, and assume responsibility for putting those leadership expectations into practice. To do this, the team must work as a group to define team goals and expectations. It is essential to connect together the thinking, actions, and words that support — or undermine — goals and expectations. It is also important to clarify what we collectively believe leaders, participants, and detractors think, say, and do.

Step Two: Introduce the Leader-to-Detractor Continuum

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LEADER-TO-DETRACTOR CONTINUUM

Detractor ⟷ Participant ⟷ LEADER

✓ -   ✓ +

We become a Detractor, a Participant, or a Leader when we are...

Not responsible for self or others:	Responsible for self:	Responsible for self and others:
We personally do not meet the performance standards or commitment expectations, and/or prevent others from meeting the standards/ expectations.	We carry out our personal responsibilities, but do not demonstrate collective responsibility for the shared goals or collective good.	We demonstrate personal commitment, mastery, and focus on the shared goals, and we encourage others by our words and actions to do the same.

Adapted from Jeffrey Beedy

In every situation, we choose the actions of one of the following:

A) Detractor – hurts the team by not taking responsibility for their actions or the actions of others.

B) Participant – takes responsibility for their own actions, but doesn't hold others accountable for their actions.

C) Leader – takes responsibility for their actions and holds others accountable for their actions.

Whether coach or student-athlete, senior or freshman, starter or role player, each person on the team can demonstrate leadership by taking responsibility for their own actions and the actions of others. But, in order to do that, we must come together again and again to frame clarity of expectations, shared habits, shared accountability and collective mindset.

Step Three: Leader-to-Detractor Worksheet

Coaching Point:

There are two versions of the Leader-to-Detractor Worksheet in the Student-Athlete Playbook, one for team use/reflection and another for individual use/reflection. The directions written below are for use with the worksheet for the team, but you may use the individual Leader-to-Detractor worksheet for this activity if you want your team to define leader, participant, and detractor for themselves as individuals. Likewise, you may choose to use the team or individual worksheet for the additional scenarios listed in step four.

First, choose a specific situation in which your team needs to define what leaders, participants, and detractors look like. The example below focuses the Leader-to-Detractor Scale on Off-Season workouts.

EXAMPLE

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LEADER-TO-DETRACTOR CONTINUUM REFLECTION

Reflect on examples of Detractor/Participant/Leader actions:

We demonstrate personal commitment, mastery, and focus on the shared goals, and encourage others by our words and actions to do the same.

This looks like:
1) No unexcused absences for workouts.
2) Completes all sets.
3) Encourages other teammates to participate.
4) Exerts best effort in each workout.
5) Challenges teammates to do their best and celebrates achievements.

We carry out our personal responsibilities, but do not demonstrate collective responsibility for the shared goals or collective good.

This looks like:
1) Attends workouts, but doesn't encourage others to join.
2) Takes reps off or shortens workout.
3) Not focused on the workout.

We personally do not meet the performance standards or commitment expectations, and/or prevent others from meeting the standards/expectations.

This looks like:
1) Misses workouts.
2) Distracts others who are trying to work.
3) Misuses equipment.
4) Is unsafe in the weight room.

LEADER ← → Participant ← → Detractor

Once you have chosen the situation you want to explore, ask your team to brainstorm behaviors or actions for leaders, participants, and detractors. Encourage them to be specific. As you add behaviors to each category, ask your team if the action is clear and understood, and if they all agree with the suggested standard. Remember the adage, "Dig where you stumble." If at any point there is a lack of clarity or disagreement, dig deeper.

At the conclusion of the exercise, ask your team:

- Is there anything else that needs to be added?

- Is there anything that is unclear?

- Is there anything you cannot or will not do?

Coaching Point:

Some teams may choose to print their Leader-to-Detractor work-sheet and ask each member of the team to sign it as a commitment to put the leadership actions into practice. You may also choose to post your worksheet in the locker room as a reminder of what your team agreed to do.

Step Four: Additional Culture Practice

Time permitting, you may choose to complete a Leader-to-Detractor worksheet for other situations (within a single session or in a series of sessions), such as:

- Leader-to-Detractor Bench Behavior Expectations
- Leader-to-Detractor Travel Expectations
- Leader-to-Detractor Recruiting Expectations
- Leader-to-Detractor Overall Team Culture for Current Season

COOLDOWN

- **Affirm:** Affirm courageous sharing, enthusiastic participation, challenging one another and/or the process in a way that helped move us forward, etc. Positive reinforcement of team engagement will encourage positive participation in future practices.

- **Clarify:** As you move forward, specifically recapture what your team intends to *Do Better / Differently* to advance the team culture with regard to Teamwork. This may be a review of your Compact or Leader-to-Detractor agreements, when you'll revisit them, and/or how you will monitor them.

- **Challenge:** Seek praise-and-polish feedback regarding the process and participation of the group (What did we do well in our Culture Practice session? What could we do better or differently next time?).

MASTERING CULTURE FUNDAMENTALS

A single practice EXPERIENCE becomes a durable part of TEAM CULTURE when we practice it like we do our offense and defense—with intentionality, consistency, and focused attention. Below are four Culture Drills that you can incorporate into ongoing learning to further develop your culture of teamwork.

Drill 1: Leaders You Admire Activity

The Leaders You Admire activity will help your student-athletes recognize that being an effective leader isn't based on one's charisma or stature. Effective leadership requires putting leadership practices into action.

1. Split student-athletes, coaches, and other participants into groups of about 5 people.

2. Give each group a sheet of paper and ask each group to draw a vertical line down the center of the paper.

3. Each participant then identifies someone they believe is an effective leader and writes down the name of that leader on the left side of the paper. Participants can choose anyone they wish – a historical figure, a politician, an athlete, a family member, a teacher, a coach – any person they believe is an effective leader.

4. Then, for each name on the list, ask participants to identify two characteristics that make each person an effective leader, and write those characteristics on the right side of the paper.

5. Finally, ask each group to look at the list of characteristics on the right side of the paper and as a group determine which two characteristics are the most important traits for leaders to possess.

Process the Activity

First, note the different individuals identified as effective leaders. Typically, a wide spectrum of leaders will be written down. Emphasize that leaders can be any race, ethnicity, gender, socio-economic status, age, etc. In other words, one does not have to be a particular type of person or have a specific title or level of fame to be an effective leader.

Then, look at all the characteristics of effective leaders. Point out that even when each group chose the top two most important characteristics for leaders, they still identified different traits. There is no magic formula of character traits that one must possess in order to be an effective leader. Every leader brings different strengths and weaknesses to their leadership.

Thus, leadership doesn't require one to be a particular type of person, nor possess a specific set of character traits. So, what do effective leaders have in common? They all put leadership practices into action. Specific practices may be impacted by context and situation, which is why your team identified what leader, participant, and detractor looked like in certain circumstances for your team. You don't need to be a captain or a head coach to be an effective leader. Anyone putting into action the leadership practices your team identified can be a good leader.

Drill 2: CHAMP Teamwork

Use the CHAMP approach in the next section to determine clarity, habits, mindset, and accountability for teamwork. First, ask your team to identify an aspect of teamwork that could be improved. This could be anything from positive bench behavior, to on the court expectations, to celebrating successes, or giving and receiving feedback. Then, fill in each box of the CHAMP tool for the performance you want to improve so that there is clarity of expectations, identified behaviors to be practiced and made into a habit, the right mindset for the performance, and accountability methods for that performance. Once the CHAMP tool is complete, review it daily, weekly, or at some other consistent interval to ensure the team is demonstrating that aspect of teamwork appropriately.

Drill 3: Derek Sivers: How to Start a Movement

Coaching Point:

This activity focuses on other-study: identifying instances of leadership in external examples. Note that the video clip in this drill features a male speaker which may need clarification for your team as it should not distract from the purpose of the activity.

Show student-athletes the short video clip "How to Start a Movement" from Derek Sivers (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V74AxCqOTvg). As students watch the video, ask them to watch for examples of leadership in the video. At the end of the video, ask student-athletes the following questions:

- What was your main takeaway from that video?

- What did the "lone nut" do to demonstrate good leadership? What would that look like on our team?

- How is the "first follower" demonstrating leadership? What does that look like on our team?

- Are you the "lone nut" or "first follower" on our team? In other phases of your life?

- Describe a time when you've been the "lone nut" or "first follower" on our team. Why did you take on that role in that moment?

- Describe a time when you could have been the "lone nut" or "first follower" on our team and chose not to. Why did you step away from that role in that moment?

Drill 4: Continue Using Leader-to-Detractor Worksheet

Choose another situation or scenario for your team to consider using the Leader-to-Detractor worksheet. It's possible that unique situations or circumstances will arise that the team needs to address so that there is collective agreement on the appropriate actions to take, and the actions to avoid.

Drill 5: Leader-to-Detractor Reflection

Ask each member of your staff to meet with student-athletes either individually or in small groups to discuss how well each person (including the coach) met your Leader-to-Detractor expectations. Ask student-athletes to provide specific examples of a time they met expectations really well, and when they could have done something better or differently. These conversations can happen daily, weekly, or at any other checkpoint you establish.

PLANNING AND REFLECTION

Use this space for notes on the content or process
related to your implementation plan.

CHAMP APPROACH

Every team or organization strives for optimal performance – the best we can possibly do under the circumstances we are in. As a leader, it is your responsibility to shape the climate and culture of your team so that optimal performance can be realized each day. Drawn from 25 years of applied research, the "CHAMP" approach describes the four essential instructional processes needed to guide people to optimal performance: Clarity, Habit, Accountability, and Mindset.

Clarity, Habit, Accountability, Mindset → Performance

LEADERSHIP PRACTICES FOR SHAPING CULTURE

CLARITY
clear specific expectations for context, resources, abilities

HABIT
intentional, intensive, focused practice, real-world simulation

Performance

ACCOUNTABILITY
support, challenge, reflection for growth

MINDSET
mental preparation, emotional toughness, focus, resilience

CLARITY of Expectations and Communication

No person, team, or organization can achieve optimal performance if it is unclear what optimal performance looks like. To achieve optimal performance you must set, communicate, and reinforce clear expectations. Ask yourself the following questions:

- Have I identified the essential value, skill, or competency that needs to be addressed?

- Have I set clear expectations about what this performance (what's in the center) looks, sounds, and feels like?

- Do my expectations make sense for our current or upcoming circumstances and have I clearly explained the connection to others?

- Did I clarify the expectations for each role on my team?

- Am I readjusting expectations and communicating changes when needed?

HABIT Development Through Targeted Practice

As a leader, you must teach others what the skill looks like and provide opportunities to engage in deliberate practice of that skill. Ask yourself:

- Am I providing opportunities to put new knowledge and skills into practice?

- Are these opportunities meaningful and relevant?

- Am I providing feedback and tracking progress?

ACCOUNTABILITY Through Support and Challenge

Expectations have been set. Opportunities for deliberate practice have been created. Now, you must hold yourself and others accountable to the performance you expect. While self-accountability is ideal, as a leader you will have to support and challenge those you coach. Ask yourself these questions to ensure you are holding self and others accountable:

- Am I providing constructive criticism that specifically addresses what to do better or differently?

- Am I pointing out and encouraging behavior that meets or exceeds expectations?

- Have I established what data I can gather to measure performance? Am I using that data?

Mental Preparation and MINDSET Formation

No matter how clear your expectations, how well you practice your habits, how much you hold yourself and others accountable, those you coach will eventually face obstacles and challenges. You must help them build a mindset that allows them to learn from mistakes to overcome adversity. Ask yourself:
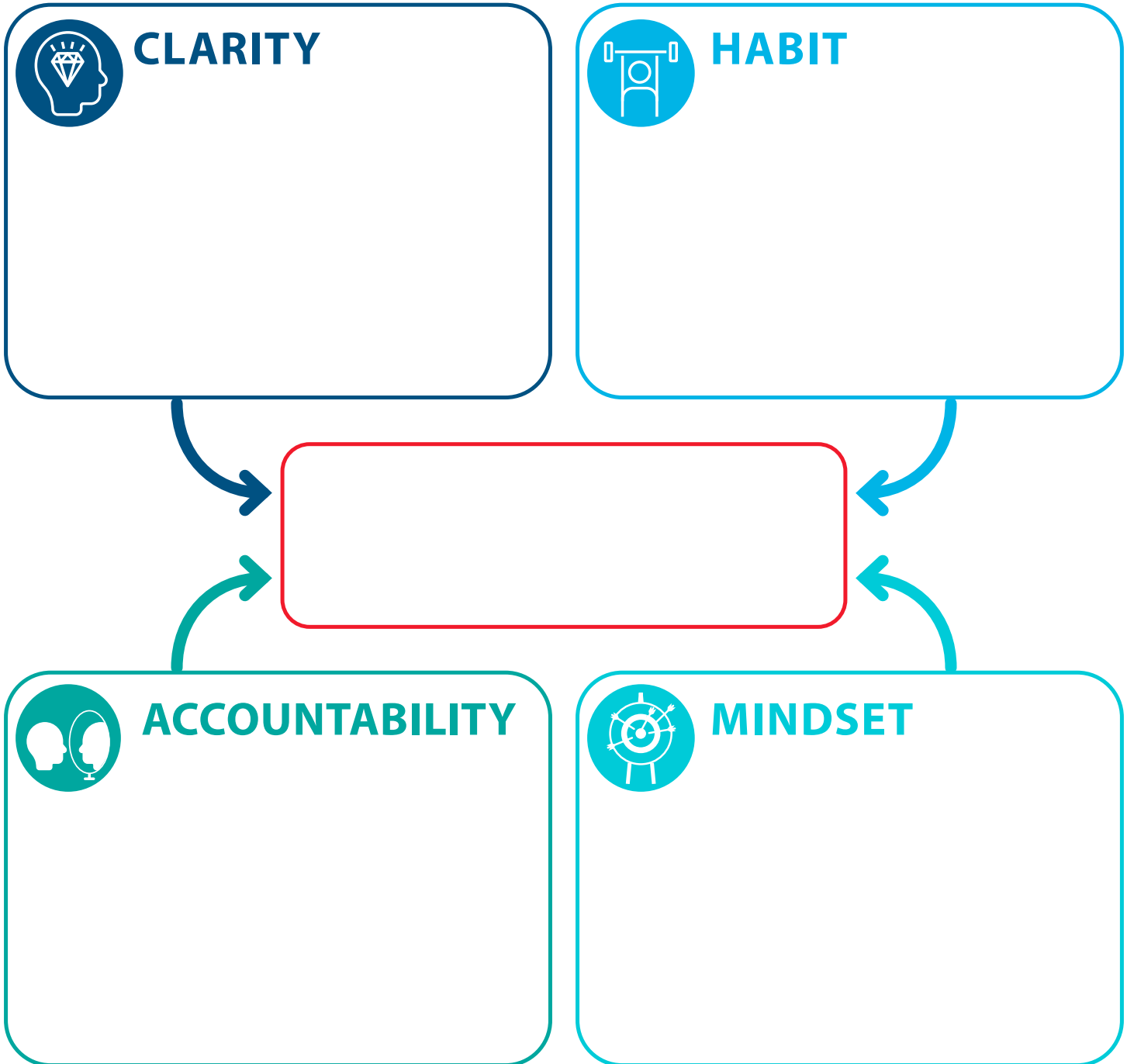
- Have I taught those I coach how to forget perfect and find optimal by focusing on what they can control?

- Am I teaching how to reframe challenges as opportunities?

- What am I doing to influence the mindset of those I coach?

Clarity, Habit, Accountability, Mindset → Performance

Example

CLARITY

Be a leader in my role by putting leadership practices into action.

HABIT

Establish and implement leadership practices specific to my role.

**Teamwork:
Excelling at Your Role**

ACCOUNTABILITY

Daily or weekly reflection/discussion: *Have I been a leader, participant, or detractor within my role?*

MINDSET

1) My role is critical for team success.

2) I can improve within my role.

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Clarity, Habit, Accountability, Mindset → Performance

CLARITY

HABIT

ACCOUNTABILITY

MINDSET

BACKGROUND BRIEF:
INSIGHTS TO ENHANCE PRACTICE

True belonging doesn't require you to change who you are; it requires you to be who you are.

~ Brené Brown, *Braving the Wilderness*[1]

There are two hallmarks of team culture that must be included in definitions of teamwork: safety and efficacy. Teams must trust each other enough to take risks (and emotional safety often precedes physical safety). And teams must develop collective efficacy (collective confidence in what WE can accomplish—confidence in US as a team). The greater our confidence in US, the greater the actual team success—even if by objective measures the individual talents and abilities of the team would not suggest it.

But safety and efficacy, trust and confidence cannot be achieved inauthentically. In other words, trying to get your team to have safety and trust by exhorting them, pandering to them, or demanding it from them, will only serve to undermine the very trust and confidence you are seeking to build up. Bottom line: teams cannot fake safety and confidence. It must be intentionally built.

Finally, as leadership guru John Maxwell says, "A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way, and shows the way." The responsibility for safety and confidence cannot be outsourced or assigned to a person or a role on the staff. It also cannot be an event (or even a series of events). It must be part of the fabric of "our" culture, a by-product of shared expectations, habits, accountability, and mindset. This means every coach and staff member on our team must be authentically involved in the deep work needed to incrementally build safety and efficacy, trust, and confidence.

What follows are insights to enhance our strategies for developing **T**eamwork:

1. **Believe it–achieve it. No, really.** *Believe it—achieve it* is actually the simplest way to express the science around collective efficacy. The research is based on the pioneering work of Albert Bandura on group dynamics that originated in the 1970's. The science continues to deepen and widen the evidence on the power of collective confidence. For example, Jenni Donohoo and her colleagues show how positive beliefs about a team's capabilities lead to greater achievements.[2] Put simply: *when a team of individuals* **share the belief** *that through their unified efforts they can overcome challenges and produce intended results,* **groups are** *more effective.* This isn't a reason to stop recruiting talented student-athletes. It is a caution that an individual's confidence in their own abilities, does not always translate into an individual's confidence in their team's abilities.

    The only way **WE** learn to have confidence in **US** is by intentionally shaping the culture—**OUR** shared beliefs, habits, mindset, and accountability. The Leader-to-Detractor culture strategy starts the process of defining what "**we do**" (and don't do) on our team. And, over time, through what we think, say, and do we **become** what **WE** aspire to be.

2. **High performing teams need psychological safety**. Laura Delizonna articulates very clearly (and simply) the essential need for psychological safety in high performing teams. Good teams with basic expectations and average goals can actually get away with *enough safety*. But if the goals are lofty, the expectations high, then deep, substantive safety is not optional. Delizonna defines psychological safety as "the belief that you won't be punished for making a mistake, speaking your mind, or sticking your neck out."[3]

    Do we have psychological safety on this team? It is easy to assume, "Yes. Check. Got it. All set." Often we assume or hope that we have psy-

chological safety in our teams—and we might indeed have it to some degree. The point is that this asset is so instrumental to high performing teams that you can almost never have enough. That means that it must be a priority to build a culture of psychological safety consistently and intentionally so that it becomes a core strength.

The Leader-to-Detractor tool provides a mechanism for teams to define the bold, confident, vulnerable practices of real leaders on the team. It seeks also to define the less confident participatory actions of team members who do their part but no more, from the detracting behaviors of team members who undermine the safety and strategy of team members by their actions. The clarity of expectations, habit of dialogue, the mindset formation and accountability allows the important idea (psychological safety) to be made real in our team such that it can respond to the inevitable ebbs and flows that occur within teams as they respond to different personalities, changing circumstances, and inevitable adversities.

3. Fearless play on the court requires a fearless culture off the court. Amy Edmunds is one of the pioneers in the work around psychological safety. Her work spans 25 years and she powerfully connects the idea of safety to the asset of fearlessness.[4] Put simply, being *sort of safe* isn't remotely close to being **fearless**. On a continuum this idea makes unsafe unacceptable, but more importantly safety becomes the floor and fearlessness becomes the ceiling. Imagine a team that is emotionally safe to make a mistake or fail or express themselves. Just think what they can accomplish, as compared to a team that feels unsafe. Now imagine that same team becomes fearless!

There are few limits for the fearless team. And this is how **safety** and **efficacy** interact or combine forces. Our love and trust for each other grows to a fearless level, which makes our collective confidence in what we can accomplish (efficacy) particularly potent. Are we psychologically safe to fail, to speak up, to stand out? Are we so safe that we become fearless in our willingness to share wars within ourselves and

the wars between teammates that inevitably emerge for those teams that truly aspire for greatness? If so, then we will be ready to be fearless in battles we face on the court.

A culture of safety and efficacy, trust and confidence has always been important—but arguably *never* more important than today. A constellation of forces has created a student-athlete today who needs more than ever to authentically be known, needed, safe, and cared for. They have been on a lifelong quest to develop their own talents and abilities, but likely have been a part of very few high performing, safe, confident *teams*. The challenges of our world require a different level of creativity, problem solving, and collaboration. The experience through women's basketball of authentic teamwork, rooted in collective safety and efficacy, can provide a transformational basketball experience, which in turn will create the transformational leaders our world so desperately needs.

ENDNOTES

1. Brené Brown, *Braving the Wilderness: The Quest for True Belonging and the Courage to Stand Alone* (New York: Random House, 2017).

2. Jenni Donohoo, John Hattie, and Rachel Eells, "The Power of Collective Efficacy," *Educational Leadership*, March 2018.

   https://www.ascd.org/el/articles/the-power-of-collective-efficacy

3. Laura Delizonna, "High-Performing Teams Need Psychological Safety. Here's How to Create It," *Harvard Business Review*, August 24, 2017.

   https://hbr.org/2017/08/high-performing-teams-need-psychological-safety-heres-how-to-create-it

4. Amy Edmonson, *The Fearless Organizations: Creating Psychological Safety in the Workplace for Learning* (New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons, Inc., 2019).

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

1. The Clinical / Counseling Sport Psychology Association (CCSPA) mental health and sport psychology resources: https://ccsportpsy.org/

2. Brené Brown Ted Talk on the power of vulnerability:

   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X4Qm9cGRub0

3. The Ideal Praise-to-Criticism Ratio:

   https://hbr.org/2013/03/the-ideal-praise-to-criticism

4. Amy Edmondson TED talk on building a psychologically safe workplace:

   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LhoLuui9gX8

5. Excellence with Integrity™ Sport Team Culture Assessment and Development Resources: https://ewii.org/sport-team-culture/

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TEAM COMPACT

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List the specific actions we will need to do—and avoid doing—
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Adapted from Lickona & Davidson (2005).

ABOUT OUR PARTNERSHIP

The TIP Team Culture Practices have been designed for the Women's Basketball Coaches Association by the consortium partnership of the Excellence with Integrity Institute and The Robert D. and Billie Ray Center at Drake University.

The Excellence with Integrity Institute's main focus is on research and development of instructional resources, assessment solutions, and tools and strategies for leadership and organizational culture development.

The Ray Center at Drake University's main focus is on coaching, training and expanding our collaborative implementation projects to improve civility through character development and ethical leadership.

Together, we pursue strategic opportunities in youth leadership, athletics, education, employment readiness, and organizational development in community and workplace environments.

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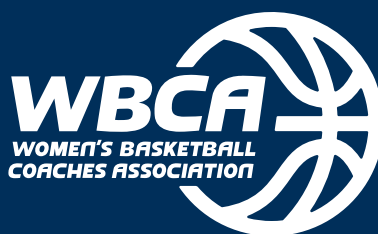
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www.drake.edu/raycenter/

For more information, contact The Robert D. and Billie Ray Center
at 515-271-1910 or **raycenter@drake.edu**.

The TIP with Excellence and Integrity culture shaping resources were initially
developed as part of the strategic plan of the NCAA Women's Basketball.

The Women's Basketball Coaches Association (WBCA) is pleased to provide
implementation and support strategies for the TIP Team Culture resources.

Please visit the WBCA website to learn more.

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