



## **PLC Coach Note:** ***Responsibility and Opportunity***

This week's coach note is offered by Brian Metz, Social Foundations of Coaching Student.

Dear Coaches,

Your dedication to building excellent athletes and young men and women of character is inspiring. Coaches have the amazing opportunity to have a lasting impact on the youth who come to them for direction and leadership. Thank you for your steadfast dedication to teaching athletes how to be Champions on and off the field (or court, or pitch, or diamond...).

There is no best coaching philosophy. John Wooden is different than Mike Krzyzewski who's different than Lou Holtz and Bobby Bowden. Tactical decisions, schemes and play calling depend on preferences and strategies. But, memorable coaches must go beyond the X's and O's of the sport. It is every coach's job to mold athletes into men and women of character—individuals that will be stalwart spouses, parents, citizens and community members for a lifetime. A coach has the opportunity and the responsibility to create Champions: individuals who recognize that "I am third, after God and others."

Yet, just as there is no best coaching philosophy there is no best way to build Champions. In the words of sports mogul Phil Knight it's the coach's job to "Just do it" (I'm not sure if he ever actually said that). Some coaches lead by example, creating a positive environment for growth without ever explicitly acknowledging their motivation (we'll call this the "preach the Gospel and if necessary use words" St. Francis model). And others pray with the team before practices and write Bible verses like 1 Cor. 9:24 on the bulletin board ("Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run so as to win").



**"A good coach will make his players see what they can be rather than what they are."**

**~ Ara Parseghian**

No matter the method, coaches work on and better your approach to deliberate character development. A coach of character is measured by his/her impact on lives, not by the final numbers on the scoreboards. So be mindful of your **responsibility**, and your **opportunity** for an enduring impression on each child of God. Stay true to your belief in building, molding, and growing young people of character. Make a commitment to yourself and your team now to do something specific for character education. What will it be? We'd love to hear from you what your commitment is. Write to us at [plc@nd.edu](mailto:plc@nd.edu).

Yours in Notre Dame,  
Brian Metz