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## ***Focus of Week 11: Holding an Effective Team Meeting***

*Coaches who regularly hold team meetings find their team "gels" more readily thus producing increased team performance and greater player satisfaction. Some ground-rules for coaches on holding an effective team meeting follow:*

*1. Use "We" and "Our" and "Community" language.*

- Coaches may begin a discussion with personal observations, but shift to discussing the issues for OUR team community and what are WE going to do about it.

*2. Discuss: Don't Lecture.*

- Listen more than you talk.
- Elicit athlete participation. Don't tell your athletes what to think and feel, but help them to identify it themselves.

*3. Ask Open-Ended Questions*

- These are questions that cannot be answered with a simple Yes or No.
- "How do we feel about practice today?"

*4. Make sure issues are seen as community issues*

- Encourage the athletes to "own" the issue.
- "Is X a problem for our team? Why or why not?"

*5. Ask "Should" questions.*

- Should questions are moral questions.
- "What should our team do to welcome our opponent to our gym?"



**"The way a team plays as a whole determines its success. You may have the greatest bunch of individual stars in the world, but if they don't play together, the club won't be worth a dime."**

~ Babe Ruth

6. Ask "Why" questions.

- Moral reasoning develops when we are forced to give reasons for our positions. Justifications are important.
- "Why should we all show up on time for practice?"

7. Get every team member talking.

- Try to balance the dominate talkers with those who remain quiet.
- Go "around the horn" when you ask every person to weigh in/comment on a specific topic/question.

8. Show respect for others' opinions.

- Never belittle a person for expressing him/herself.
- If an athlete is misguided, gently guide him/her to a correct understanding.

9. Encourage Role Taking

- Ask athletes what they would do if they were in the shoes of another player on the team or even their opponent.

10. End discussion with an action.

- Bring closure to a team meeting with a tangible action the team will take together.
- "Since we all agree that we should put forth our best effort in practice, let's remind ourselves of this commitment by doing a team huddle and chant TEAM EFFORT to begin each practice."