

Title: Leadership in Athletic Coaches

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The purpose of this study is to examine excellent leadership in a coach as potentially exemplified by two wrestling coaches, both widely recognized for their success and effectiveness. The leadership of the two coaches will be assessed using the principles found in the Transformational Leadership Theory, the Attribution Theory of Achievement Motivation, and the Self-efficacy Belief construct, a component of Social Cognitive Theory.

The following three major questions guided this qualitative study: (a) Transformational theory posits that leaders are charismatic, show strong morals and values, set high standards and motivate, and make their followers want to emulate them. Therefore, this research will determine whether or not these two coaches were transformational leaders. Will the subjects interviewed describe the coaches in terms that would be consistent with a transformational leader? (b) The four attributes of the Attribution Theory of Achievement Motivation are effort, ability, luck, and difficulty of task. This theory provides a way for an individual to understand the cause and effect of an event by recognizing these four attributes. This research will determine if the two coaches were attributional leaders. Did the subjects interviewed describe the coaches in terms that would be consistent with an attributional leader? (c) Self-efficacy is an individual's belief about his or her capabilities to achieve a specific task through modeling, mastery experiences, social persuasion and psychological responses. This research will determine if the two coaches used self-efficacy in their leadership. Will the subjects interviewed describe the coaches in terms that would be consistent with leaders who use self-efficacy?

The former wrestlers of the two coaches were the first group to be interviewed. These interviews were done in two stages. The first stage of interviews was conducted over the phone. The second stage of interviews was at predetermined locations. Interviews with two athletic directors and four former coaches will follow the same exact format. The last group of people to be interviewed will be Coach Bubb and Coach Flynn. The same format as previously stated was followed.

Specific questions which will reveal both Coach Bubb's and Coach Flynn's leadership will address elements found in the Transformational Leadership Theory, Attribution Theory of Achievement Motivation, and Self-Efficacy Belief construct. The same questions will be used when discussing these coaches' leadership with the Athletic Directors who supervised them and the coaches who worked under them, as well as the athletes whom they trained. The response from the interviewees will provide insights into the leadership exhibited by these particular coaches and will aid in comparing the leadership of these two coaches as leaders in their field.