

KEY READINGS

Ongoing Learning for Elite Sport Leaders

THE READING

Rieke, M., Hammermeister, J., & Chase, M. (2008). Servant leadership in sport: A new paradigm for effective coach behavior. *International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching*, 3 (2), 227 – 238.

WHAT IS THE POINT?

Examining how coaches who were perceived by their athletes to possess “servant leader” characteristics were associated with their athletes’ use of mental skills, motivation, satisfaction, and performance.

HOW WAS THE INFORMATION OBTAINED?

Several characteristics of servant leadership were identified including trust, humility, and service. The participants were 195 male high-school varsity basketball players. They completed questionnaires assessing athlete satisfaction with leader behaviors. The researchers wanted to find out how ‘servant leader’ coaching behaviors impacted a variety of different variables important for sport performance. A similar study was conducted with college athletes.

WHY IS IT RELEVANT?

- We must consider how the win-at-all-costs attitude that permeates virtually every aspect of athletic programs affects the moral character and development of participants.
- Servant leaders who emphasize trust/inclusion, humility, and being service-oriented do an outstanding job of enhancing the sport satisfaction in both high school and college athletic settings, according to the two studies done relating servant leadership to sports.