

WEEK 48 | DO AS YOU SAY YOU WILL DO

I was talking to a coach who had an athlete who was struggling with playing time. She wasn't doing everything she needed to do to earn the playing time, but worse, she wasn't being truthful with her parents. She was telling her parents that the coach was playing favorites and she wasn't one of them, and the parents were giving the coach a hard time because of it.

The advice that I gave the coach was to make sure that he was giving clear and effective feedback to the girl and her parents that explained why she wasn't playing, and how she could earn more playing time. Author and speaker Ashley Merryman says effective feedback does three things:

- 1 - Makes people **think differently**
- 2 - Helps people take **ownership of the problem**
- 3 - Helps apply **new thinking** and **new behaviors**

I told him that Merryman has an acronym called T.R.A.C.K.E.D. that gives a guideline for how to give effective feedback that accomplishes those three things:

- T - Trustworthy** - Can they trust you?
- R - Relevant** - Will this help them?
- A - Accurate** - Is this really what happened?
- C - Clear** - Are you clear and easy to understand?
- K - Kind** - Are you kind and helpful?
- E - Examples** - Do you have examples?
- D - Dialogue** - Can they communicate what you are asking them to do?

We decided to communicate to the athlete three things that she wasn't doing and to give clear examples. We then gave her three relevant things she could do to earn more playing time, with clear examples. Most importantly, we did it in a kind way that wasn't meant to embarrass her but to bring her in and feel like we cared about her and her success.

Finally, we asked the athlete and her parents if they understood and were on board so that they too could take ownership of the situation.

Sometimes this process works, and in this case, it didn't. The athlete did not follow through with what she said she would, and it was a long season for her, her parents, and the coach.

Sometimes we do everything we can, and it still doesn't work out in the end. This story reminds of The Parable of the Two Sons in the book of Matthew in the Bible.

In Matthew 21, Jesus and His disciples come to Jerusalem. When Jesus rode into town on a donkey, the crowd stirred and celebrated His arrival. Jesus then went to the temple and famously turned over the tables and benches saying, "My house will be called a house of prayer,' but you are making it 'a den of robbers.'" (Matthew 21:13).

The next morning, Jesus again went to the Temple. After being questioned by the chief priests and the elders, Jesus told them the parable of the two sons:

There was a man who had two sons. He went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work today in the vineyard.'

"I will not,' he answered, but later he changed his mind and went.

"Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. He answered, 'I will, sir,' but he did not go.

"Which of the two did what his father wanted?"

"The first," they answered.

Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him.

Like the second son, our athlete said she was going to do something but didn't. All coaches want to coach athletes who will do their job and do what they say they are going to do.

And parents and athletes want the same thing. They want coaches who will be true to their word and who will also do what they say they will do. When we don't, we lose trust and we lose credibility, and we lose it quickly. Trust is gained in drops and lost in buckets.

What I liked about including the first son in this story is that at first, he did not have the right mindset. He told his father no. But he then changed his mind. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "The time is always right to do what's right." No matter

what we have done or said in the past, we can always change and make the next, right choice.

If you want to gain the trust of those around you, do what you say you will do, and do it well.

THIS WEEK

1 - Figure out 1-3 things that you need to do to accomplish a goal you have. Write them down.

2 - Decide to do what you say you will do. Commit to keeping your word to the three you wrote down, and commit to keeping your word to whoever you speak to.
