



## Champion Coach Note: Steps to Holding an Effective Team Meeting

Play Like A Champion coaches are encouraged to build their athletes OWNERSHIP over their sport teams. One excellent way to effectively do this is through team meetings. These meetings will help you to directly develop the character and moral reasoning of your athletes. Another benefit is that 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 around the issue of bullying in sport follow:

1. Use "We" and "Our" and "Community" language.
  - Coaches may begin a discussion with a personal observation, but shift to discussing the issue 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.



**"A good head and  
a good heart are  
always a formidable  
combination."**

~ Nelson Mandela

- “How do we feel everyone on the team is getting along?”

4. Make sure issues are seen as community issues.

- Encourage the athletes to “own” the issue.

- “Is bullying 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 the new player?”

6. Ask “Why” questions.

- Moral reasoning develops when we are forced to give reasons for our positions. Justifications are important.

- “Why should we be respectful of every team member?”

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 them 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 our team will be kind to and include everyone because we are like a family, let’s remind ourselves of this commitment by starting our practices and games

with a team huddle and chanting TEAM  
UNITY.”