

Eddie Hill

How to Build True Team Character

Eddie Hill spoke about how to build character with in young men. Through much of the video Eddie used anecdotes and examples. The following provides these anecdotes, examples, as well as notes on his lecture and is principles of team character.

- Nothing is easy about building team character. It is tough because (these are crowd generated answers) because coaches are the only ones doing it, a lot of bad role models, there is no father or adult male figure in the picture, kids are raising themselves.
- He illustrated this point by having the people in the room turn to a partner and talk about who instilled some character trait in them, and what it was.
 - Most said their father
 - Again he is illustrating the point that many young men today do not have that father in the picture and therefore they turn to the streets or they can turn to their coaches.
- Why is important to build character?
 - For society and for the kids
- What are we talking about when we mention character?
 - Honesty
 - Commitment
 - Discipline
 - Confidence
 - Responsibility
 - Accountability
 - How to be a man
 - Sharing
 - Loyalty
- Anecdote: Eddie told a story about Bobby Beason. Bobby Beason was an army buddy of his father. He and his father visited Bobby Beason when he was about 12. When he arrived to Mr. Beason's home, Mr. Beason extended his hand, looked him in the eyes and greeted him. Eddie and his father spent the entire day at the Beason's. During the day, Bobby Beason's son was doing yard work and Eddie decided to go help him. He went out and began mowing the yard. Bobby Beason came out and stopped him. Bobby told Eddie that he was doing a good job and he appreciated the work, but that he was not doing it the right way. He needed to push the lawnmower forward down the row, and then pull it back down the same row to do it right. He said there is a right way to do it, and to do it the right way the first time. Eddie went on to say when he cuts the grass or even vacuums today that he goes up and comes back on each row.
 - The point of the story was to show that one piece of advice about character has stuck with him for over twenty years.
- Eddie then discussed a study done by NFL officials in 2002. The study was done to provide information and advice for coaches on how to build character with in their teams.

- Promote relationships – open door policy
 - Says you care about the players.
 - Says you the player can trust you.
 - Says the players can come to talk to you, and even if they never come they know that you are there for them anyway.
- Clear expectations-hold them accountable
 - To be held accountable means what we do means something to someone.
- Be flexible w/ players
 - Different people have different situations, and it is those situations which make a person who they are. Not everyone has the same benefits or struggles that others do.
 - Talk to them to find out what is going on at home.
 - When you talk to a player about that guy doing something wrong you should use something like the following model: “Hey, *Jimmy*, let’s talk after practice.” Then after practice you can say something like; “This is what I have observed (referring to the unwanted behavior).” Don’t indict him but let him this is what you have seen. Then describe the behavior, and ask if that is an accurate description of what is occurring. Typically the kid will say “yea.” Then go on and talk about how the behavior is affecting the whole team, and ask what are, “we” going to do about it. And conclude the conversation with “Do I have a commitment from ya now?”
 - Eddie mentions how this generation participates in decisions, and by approaching the behavior in this manner, the desired outcomes are more attainable.
- Player discipline emphasized
 - If you don’t do this, then this happens.
 - There has to be repercussions for actions that unwanted or inappropriate.
- Teamwork instilled – Topic of the day
 - Working together is important and it needs to be talked about every day.
 - We are really better together, then alone.
 - Eddie discusses several examples he had used or heard of being used to demonstrate this.
 - At many of his lectures, he gives the participants a Mensa quiz. He tells the participants to take the Mensa quiz by themselves. By the time most get to the tenth question, than the quiz becomes very difficult. After about five minutes, he then places them in teams of four or five, and most of the time the teams are able to work together and answer a majority of questions correctly.
 - Eddie picked one up from and Oklahoma St. coach. The coach uses tongue depressors. He gives a player a single tongue depressor and asks him to break, he does with relative ease. Then asks another to break two, then three and so on. By the time he reaches ten tongue

depressors, the players cannot break it. Thin sticks along can easily be snapped, but several thin sticks together are unbreakable.

- Eddie then gets about six or seven volunteers to stand in a circle. He has two seven pound dumbbells. He asks one volunteer to hold both dumbbells, one in each hand. He instructs him then to pass the one in his right hand the guy on his right. And for the next guy to do the same, until the dumbbell comes back to the original holder. He then asks the guy which dumbbell is heavier feeling; he says the one that he has been holding in his left hand. It takes the whole team to carry the weight.
- Eddie discussed something he has done with cliques on a team. He takes several different cliques and puts them in huddles. He then will tell one huddle, whatever they do not to let someone into their huddle. Then tells another huddle to do whatever they have to do get in the other huddle. He emphasizes they cannot hurt anyone while trying this. Within several minutes of initiating this it becomes very comical. Once Eddie stops the team, he then asks the “how did it feel to be on the outside,” and someone will say not good. He is making the point not keep people on the outside.
 - The best motivation is self or internal motivation
 - “Motivation last for only so long, inspiration lasts forever.”
 - Eddie talked about some advice he had received from his grandfather prior to going to college. His grandfather told him, “Don’t be worried, and be concerned. When you are worried you are just there. But when you are concerned, you act.”
- Goal setting – positive attitude
 - To demonstrate a positive attitude he gets two volunteers. He gives each volunteer a potato and a straw, and instructs them to stick the straw into the potato. One guy doesn’t, and even says before that it is impossible. The second guy finds a way. Eddie said if you think you can, you can, then takes his straw and jabs it right into the potato. (He took his thumb and placed it over the end of the straw).
- Tough Love – Father figures
 - A coach may be the only adult male figure they see.
 - Kids want to believe and belong. Two driving forces.
 - Be a good example.
 - Eddie talked about a conversation with an official he had. The official said the best advice to give to some coaches, is to teach the players how to give the ball back to the official. He said he can tell in the first five minutes of a game how a team is going to be, by how they give the ball back after a play. Either the play has tossed it down, or nonchalantly flipped the ball back OR they actually walk over and hand it to the ref. It also tells the ref what type of coach he is dealing with.

- People always remember how you made them feel, not what you said to them.
- Building a True Team by using the VICTORY method.
 - V – Vision
 - Proverbs: 3, where there is no vision, the people perish.
 - Vision comes from the Coach.
 - A coach has to have a vision, have known where you are going and how to get there.
 - It starts with the idea.
 - I – Inclusion
 - Have you included everyone?
 - Eddie mentions getting kids to come out. Did you hang a flyer or go talk to the guys.
 - Young men are dying to come out and play, but won't, so go get them.
 - Does everyone feel a part of the team?
 - Make them feel special.
 - Eddie mentioned not letting players wear the team logo, until they know what it means and have earned.
 - C – Competition
 - Most people who have left the game, this is the most missed thing. The thing they wish they could experience again.
 - T – Teamwork
 - Instill the whole work into the team.
 - O – Obtainable Goals
 - Set realistic goals for the players and the team.
 - R – Respect
 - Lead by example.
 - Be careful what you say, you are always being watched, and they look to see if you are giving respect.
 - Applaud respectful behavior
 - Talk about it always.
 - Mentioned how there was a coach who had a word of the day, and the team discussed this daily.
 - Y – Yes we can attitude
 - Do we have the right attitude?
 - Your body language says so much.
 - What you do is heard more.
 - Does it mean you have to be in la-la land, no, but you need to be positive.
 - Do you get up and go for it always.
 - People want to follow a positive influence.
 - Especially a community.

- Eddie told a story about three men working in a rock quarry. The three men were busting rocks, and were all asked the same question, “What are you doing?”
 - 1st man says he is busting rocks.
 - 2nd man says he is busting rocks because it is job.
 - 3rd man says he is building a cathedral.
 - What are you building?
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