



Leading with the Heart: Coach K's Successful Strategies for Basketball, Business, and Life

By Mike Krzyzewski, Donald T. Phillips

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Hes led the Duke Blue Devils to five straight Final Four appearances, culminating in back-to-back championships in 1991 and 92. Hes received five National Coach of the Year Awards. Many of the players he coached in college have gone on to NBA stardom. The facts speak for themselves: Mike KrzyzewskiCoach Kknows how to get the best out of his players and win consistently. He now offers the insights he uses to coax peak performance from his team, relying on lessons he learned as a captain in the U.S. Army, sportsmanship, respect, and a genuine gift for leading with the heart.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

In some respects, a top-level college coach is a lot like a manager in any business. He has to turn a group of talented individuals into a smoothly running team, and he has to produce results that please the fans of his team--the shareholders of the athletic program. Thus, in *Leading with the Heart*, Krzyzewski reviews the lessons he's learned as basketball coach at Duke University, and tries to universalize them so they translate to any leadership position. For example, he writes, "Adjustments are not *unusual*, they are *usual*. So a leader's ability to think on his feet ... to do things without instruction ... is of paramount importance." Makes sense, as does this admonition: "When teaching, always remember this simple phrase: 'You hear, you forget. You see, you remember. You do, you understand.'"

The book has four sections--"Preseason," "Regular Season," "Postseason," and "All-Season"--and each of those has four chapters. Each chapter begins with three quotes ("Too many rules get in the way of leadership" leads off chapter 1), and ends with bulleted tips summing up the chapter's message. Between the quotes and the bullet points are anecdotes about Duke basketball games and (occasionally) Krzyzewski's life outside basketball. What you come away with is an understanding of why Krzyzewski is a great basketball coach, why former Duke assistants such as Tommy Amaker and Quin Snyder are probably going to become great basketball coaches, and how anyone who's currently a coach can become a better coach. It would be great if other types of managers in other types of businesses could incorporate these lessons in compassionate, focused, highly flexible leadership, but it seems unlikely. Most managers in business rise through the ranks not because of their ability to lead or inspire but because of their knowledge and competence (if not their connections). On the other hand, it would be nice if each of us, just once, could work for someone like Coach K, someone who could push the right buttons and lead us to our own version of the Final Four. Not likely, but a pretty sweet fantasy. --*Lou Schuler*

From Publishers Weekly

Duke basketball coach Krzyzewski, today's most successful NCAA coach, reviews significant games and key events in his career in addition to offering advice to coaches, players and everyone trying to do better in life. The son of working-class Polish immigrants, he got a scholarship to West Point, where he became an accomplished player before becoming a coach. His breezy approach is direct and simple: what's most important is working as a team toward a common goal--not necessarily to win the game, but to play the best possible game. Says Coach K, "There are five fundamental qualities that make every team great: communication, trust, collective responsibility, caring and pride." Approaching each season the same way, he extends himself to his players, encouraging them to spend time at his home and with his family, while emphasizing the importance of keeping up with academics and enjoying the overall experience of college. In fact, Krzyzewski tries to hire assistant coaches who have played for him because they're versed in on- and off-court problems. At the end of each chapter, he offers general pointers, such as that "business, like basketball, is a game of adjustments. So be ready to adjust." Although he occasionally refers to a coach as a "leader," for the most part he leaves it up to readers to connect the dots between his coaching strategies and useful business strategies. (Mar.)

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From Library Journal

For six-time National Coach of the Year Krzyzewski, head coach of the Duke University Blue Devils, coaching basketball is all about leadership and team building. His first step is to recruit good people with

strong character who are willing to be taught. The five fundamental qualities that he looks for in each team that he coaches are communication, trust, collective responsibility, caring, and pride. The basic principles he tries to teach each group include integrity, planning, remaining flexible in thinking and planning, always working to improve performance, and always thinking about what you are doing and how to do it better--the same principles that make a good leader or coach. Phillips is the author of several books, including Martin Luther King, Jr., on Leadership. The authors have written an excellent book on coaching and leadership principles. Recommended for most sports or coaching collections.

-Terry Jo Madden, Boise State Univ. Lib., ID

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Users Review

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Frank Huynh:

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