

Morris Hills H.S.

SCARLET KNIGHTS



Leadership Manual

Robert D. Haraka
Athletic Director

ATHLETIC PHILOSOPHY

We believe that the fundamental purpose of interscholastic athletics is to provide a wholesome form of physical activity in connection to our district's mission. Through these activities we will develop a spirit of good sportsmanship, a sound and healthy body a respect for team play, and a standard of conduct that inculcates the best moral values. We take for granted the importance of developing to a high level those skills and attitudes that make an athlete a better player. The sports program must support and guide the normal physical and mental development of the athletes.

Interscholastic sports at Morris Hills form a part of a diverse extracurricular activities program. The activities are regarded as vital parts of the total educational offerings of our school. The sound development of the physical capacities of youth complements and enhances the intellectual, emotional, and social development of every young man and woman. These opportunities are useful tools in the achievement of the goals of a comprehensive education.

The District's dedication to excellence extends to our competitive athletic program. In this endeavor, the Interscholastic Athletic Program serves as one of the extensions of the classroom, which attempts to meet certain district student goals through experiential learning opportunities and can only enhance and reinforce the learning that occurs within the classroom.

Revised 9/1/12

CAPTAIN'S JOB DESCRIPTION

A GOOD CAPTAIN SHOULD:

1. Put the interests of the team before their own. Be a *team first* person instead of a *me first* person.
2. Work hard to maintain team cohesiveness.
3. Maintain practice intensity and tempo when it is lagging.
4. Lead by example during conditioning work and drills.
5. Actively share their experience with underclassmen.
6. Demonstrate absolute integrity regarding personal behavior.
7. Demonstrate class and sportsmanship at all times.
8. Acknowledge the good play or efforts beyond expected levels of others at practice and during contests.
9. Maintain a good academic standing.
10. Be respected by their teachers and fellow students for being enthusiastic, cooperative, and having a positive attitude.
11. Be good at organizing. Captains have many responsibilities to their teammates. This includes making phone calls, setting dates for team events and activities.
12. “Go the extra mile.” These are intangibles that are difficult to describe but the coaches and players are aware of. It may be showing up to voluntary practices, keeping practice fun or lively, or stepping up to difficult challenges when they arise.
13. Develop good decision making skills. The “Do Right Rule.” When in doubt do what is right, even when it would be easier to do nothing.
14. Prevent inappropriate behavior by teammates, i.e. hazing, finger pointing, cursing, trash talking, bullying, etc.
15. Communicate with the coach regarding the teams’ attitude.

The people that earn the respect of others do so on their own merits; it truly cannot be designated or granted to them. As a Captain, you have to earn this respect every day. Your teammates and coaches will know if this is happening. *Remember, everyone will get the opportunity to lead; the true leaders are those that grab that opportunity.*

“A GOOD CAPTAIN IS LIKE HAVING ANOTHER COACH ON THE PLAYING FIELD AND IN THE LOCKER ROOM”

- Paul “Bear” Bryant (former Head football coach University of Alabama)

“A MAN’S STYLE OF LEADERSHIP IS A VERY TOP-TO-BOTTOM STRUCTURE. A WOMAN’S STYLE IS MORE LIKE A NETWORK.”

- Sally Helsenur, author, The Female Advantages

WHAT IS A CAPTAIN?

Webster's Dictionary defines captain as "a leader of a group," i.e. the captain of a team.

WHY HAVE CAPTAINS?

Some good teams have six or more. Others don't have any. Sometimes they're chosen by the players only to be removed for breaking team rules. Other times they're chosen by the coaches, but never earn the respect of their teammates.

Team captains can't make a bad team good, but they can determine whether a team gets the most of its talent. Consider the role they play: The best captains can bring a team together like no assistant coach ever could by serving as a conduit of communication between players and coaches, relieving the head coach of some basic chores, and overseeing the team during practices. The worst can create dissent and resentment from within a team and bring about its very demise.¹

Baseball Rules state that each team must designate a captain, but unlike other sports, the duties are largely ceremonial. In some sports, such as soccer, the captain is the only player allowed to communicate with the officials. Your coach should define your role. If they have not done so, ask for a meeting to get clarification on what they specifically want you to do. Many coaches will have a plan for their captains, other assume you will know what to do. You have assumed a leadership position on your team, take charge and move forward.

WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A LEADER.

"EITHER LEAD, FOLLOW, OR GET THE HELL OUT OF THE WAY."

- (Unknown Marine Lieutenant during the battle for Iwo Jima, World War II)

Whether you are a star player or a spark plug off the bench, a strong leader is essential to a team's success. Leaders have their ear to the ground, are vocal on the playing field, and provide an extra hand for the coaches. Some are titled captains. Some have no title at all. Either way, their contributions can be critical to the morale, organization, and performance of a team.

The concept of leadership, however, is a difficult one. We know what it is, we recognize it in others, but ask us to define it and we hit a wall. Ask how to generate it and you'll have better luck winning the lottery.² Good captains exhibit the following eight characteristics.³

¹"The Right Stuff," Guillermo Metz, Coaching Management, 2003

²"Setting Up a Leader," Shelly Wilson, Coaching Management, 1999

³"Eight Keys to Selecting a Team Captain," Craig Hill IAA Magazine, Winter 2003

1. PASSION for the game and their teammates.
2. TRUSTWORTHINESS in respecting coaches and teammates.
3. KNOWLEDGE of the game and the rules.

4. ORGANIZED to keep everyone focused and on track.
5. HONEST captains will be truthful to teammates and the program.
6. LISTENING skills are important. You may hear what someone said, but did you listen.
7. FLEXIBILITY in trying something new in practice and games.
8. CARING about teammates, coaches, and school.

Leadership for athletes is defined as shared influence, where the responsibility for what happens on any given team shifts from a few people who are formally designated as leaders to every person who participates. This framework recognizes the fact that every athlete has the capability to exert influence, both good and bad, within the group. And, since all athletes on a team can influence their teammates, they possess both leadership and responsibility.⁴

The basic tenants of leadership are as follows. Captains and/or team leaders should work at developing these qualities. You can do some; others require outside assistance.

THE FOLLOWING ARE SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP SKILLS:

1. Do a self-assessment to determine personal strengths and weaknesses. Until you understand yourself, it will be hard to change someone else. Personal positive actions and personal relationships with your teammates will have a sustaining influence. You don't have to be close friends with all your teammates, but a friendly attitude will work wonders.
2. Realize, as captain, you must accept personal responsibility. Be aware of what is going on in the locker room and on the field. If it is negative behavior, it must be addressed. You can either deal with it yourself or seek the help of the coaches. Remember that you are the captain, either elected or chosen, and this is a responsibility you have agreed to.
3. Learn the process of leadership action that involves assessing situations for leadership need, setting appropriate goals, establishing strategies for change, committing to action, evaluating outcomes, and hold yourself accountable. If it were easy, everybody would be a captain. Don't be afraid to confront tough situations. If your teammates respect you, they will understand that you are doing it for the team. Understand the difference between reasonable goals and unreasonable goals. Take baby steps first. If you want to make some changes, figure out what they are, how you will do it, and then *Do* it. "If at first you don't succeed, try, try, again."

⁴"An Athlete and a Leader," Staurowsky and Sullivan, Athletic Management, 1997

⁵"Ibid"

The most important leadership characteristic is the way you build personal relationships. In many ways, relationship building is the cornerstone of all leadership because

relationships serve as the vehicle through which coaches and teammates influence one another.

The task of relationship building requires team leaders to consistently demonstrate various combinations of these behaviors:⁵

- Concern for the welfare of teammates both within the structure of the team as well as outside of the team.
- An interest in the achievements and successes of teammates.
- Encouragement for the efforts undertaken by teammates.
- Respect for teammates regardless of background.
- Active inclusion of team members to the degree that team members will allow themselves to be included.

A final skill is **conflict resolution** because on any team there is always the potential for interpersonal conflicts. This skill is very refined and may not come easily, but as a captain, you should not be afraid to confront that are in conflict. **STEP ONE** should be to do it in private, not in an open locker room. **STEP TWO** is to find out why they are in disagreement and try to get them to see each other's viewpoint. **STEP THREE** is to appeal to their sense of team. The team should come before personal issues. If these basic steps don't work, let the coach know. Again, it is your job as captain.

THE 8 QUALITIES OF A GOOD CAPTAIN

(In no particular order)

1. Be respectful. Treat teammates, coaches, officials, and opponents, as you would want to be treated. Discourage trash talking and encourage classy behavior. Help an opponent up...you'll confuse them.
2. Practice being a good communicator. Understand what is being said (listen) and then seek to be understood (speak).
3. Set both personal and team goals and share them. You can't get from here to there without a **PLAN**.
4. Do what has to be done. You've been around and you know what goes on. Be responsible. Develop a work ethic. You only get better through experience and practice.
5. **TEAM**. Together-Everyone-Achieves-More. There is no "I" in team. Encourage teamwork. Discourage lack of cooperation.
6. Compliment others. People like to feel special. Be positive in your approach to things. View the glass as half full, **NOT** half empty. Give people hope.
7. Walk the Talk. You are the team captain on and off the field. Act like it. No lip service. Everybody can talk a good game. No excuses.
8. Be a good sport. You and your teammates represent Morris Hills High School every time you compete with another school.

"ONE PERSON PRACTICING SPORTSMANSHIP IS BETTER THAN 50 PEOPLE TALKING ABOUT IT."

- Knute Rockne (former Notre Dame football coach).

REMEMBER: As a captain and team leader, never underestimate the influence you have over your teammates. They will look to you in good times and bad for direction. A leader will totally commit to what he or she believes is right and pursue it with a passion.

“I HAVE WORKED TOO LONG AND TOO HARD TO LET ANYTHING STAND IN THE WAY OF MY GOALS. I WILL NOT LET MY TEAMMATES DOWN. I WILL NOT LET MYSELF DOWN.” - Mia Hamm, US Women’s Soccer

Before you can lead someone else and make demands on them, you need to know where you stand. Using the following scale, evaluate yourself in these four areas on the statements that follow: DISCIPLINE, ATTITUDE, PERFORMANCE, AND CHARACTER:

- A. Excellent Performance
- B. Good, but could use a little improvement
- C. Fair, but definitely needs improvement
- D. Poor, serious problems

If you find an area that you score less than an “A” think about what you need to do to make a positive change. If necessary, seek out help from your coach.

“BE A FORCE OF FORTUNE INSTEAD OF A FEVERISH, SELFISH LITTLE CLOD OF AILMENTS AND GRIEVANCES COMPLAINING THAT THE WORLD WILL NOT DEVOTE ITSELF TO MAKING YOU HAPPY.” – George Bernard Shaw

SELF EVALUATION⁶

DISCIPLINE

1. FITNESS-BASING: Has the understanding to maintain and, when necessary, deepen fitness-basing through aerobic, anaerobic, or interval work on a year-round basis.
2. SKILL DEVELOPMENT: Has the ambition to become the best player possible by improving on weaknesses and building upon strengths.
3. ONE V ONE: Has the psychological strength and desire to play one v one even when it is not required.
4. WEIGHT- TRAINING: Has the discipline to lift on a year-round basis because it protects from injury and maximizes your athletic potential.
5. NUTRITION and SLEEP: Has the understanding and discipline to know what, when, and how much to eat and drink. Proper rest and sleep habits enhance performance and alertness.

⁶Peer Plus-Communication and Motivation Resources for Organizations, David Allen

ATTITUDE

6. TEAMMATES: Being friendly, helpful, responsive and caring to teammates
7. COACHES: Respecting and supporting coaching decisions and direction
8. TEACHERS: Respecting and cooperating with teachers.
9. PROGRAM: Contributing to the reputation and growth of your program.
10. SELF-DEVELOPMENT: Showing the desire to take specific steps to improve as a player.

PERFORMANCE

11. ACADEMICS: Hundred-percent effort in attending classes and study hall and using available resources – library, etc.
12. PRACTICE: Always intense in practice; training on your technical and physical edge.
13. COMPETING: Always playing to win, feeling you are the margin of victory, never giving up.
14. COMMUNITY: Being non-judgmental and supportive of everyone in the program.

CHARACTER

15. MENTAL TOUGHNESS: Staying focused, doesn't get down on himself/herself, teammates, or coaches.
16. RELIABILITY: Making curfews, committing to practice, meetings, and games on time.
17. CONFIDENCE: Having faith in your abilities without being conceited or arrogant.
18. COMMITMENT: Promising to do your best, maintaining personal integrity.
19. CONDUCT: Displaying behavior consistent with program philosophy and moral principles.
20. POSITIVE LIFE FORCE: Always supporting teammates behind their backs to build a positive system and community where everyone is valued in our team organization.

REFERENCES
(By Title and Author)

1. Leadership for Dummies, Marshall Loeb
2. Leadership Lessons of Navy Seals, Jeff Cannon
3. Leadership Secrets of the Rouge Warrior: A Commandos Guide to Success, Richard Marcinko
4. The Girl's Book of Success, Catherine Dee
5. Leadership Skills for Women, Marilyn Jakad Manning
6. Go for the Goal, Mia Hamm
7. Leadership is Common Sense, Herman Cain
8. Strive to Excel, Vince Lombardi
9. Championship Team Building, Jeff Janssen
10. Leadership, Lucia Raatma
11. Leadership Secrets of Colin Powell, Oren Harari
12. Leadership Secrets of Atilla the Hun, Wess Roberts

A FINAL THOUGHT

*“THIS IS THE BEGINNING OF A NEW DAY.
GOD HAS GIVEN ME THIS DAY TO USE AS I WILL
I CAN WASTE IT OR USE IT FOR GOOD.
WHAT I DO TODAY IS VERY IMPORTANT BECAUSE
I AM EXCHANGING A DAY OF MY LIFE FOR IT.
WHEN TOMORROW COMES, THIS DAY WILL BE GONE FOREVER.
LEAVING SOMETHING IN ITS PLACE I HAVE TRADED FOR IT.
I WANT IT TO BE A GAIN, NOT LOSS – GOOD, NOT EVIL.
SUCCESS, NOT FAILURE, IN ORDER THAT
I SHALL NOT FORGET THE PRICE I PAID FOR IT.”*

- AUTHOR UNKNOWN
- FROM THE BOOK: JUNCTION BOYS