

‘Talent wins you games but it takes teamwork to win championships’

FAITH IN SPORT

Fr Vlad Felzmann

Collaboration, for today’s younger generations, is no longer a dirty word, though in the context of World War II, the term “collaborators” applies to those who aided the Nazi.

The prefix *col* is a variant of *com*, meaning “together.” At the heart of the word is *labour*, meaning “work.” Until 1933 it was a clean word. It’s a bit like my father’s name when in 1909 he was baptised Adolf.

In the Olympic and Paralympic Games, competitors return to the origin of that word *com* – *petito*: to strive together.

Many clubs, in various sports, are exploring ways to collaborate with organisations, communities, and local clubs to develop and facilitate inclusive health and wellbeing opportunities.

Liverpool FC currently provide a range of youth sessions a week from a young ambassador programme, IT workshops, yoga, to supporting local organisations such as Army Cadets and the Jamie Carragher Academy.

Arsenal Football Club has always had community at its heart, and celebrated 100 years in the Borough of Islington during 2013/14.

As well as its charitable endeavours, The Arsenal Foundation supports an array of good causes in the community, providing practical and financial support to a number of initiatives in the local boroughs of Islington, Camden, Westminster and Hackney.

Freddie Hudson, head of Arsenal in the Community, is one of two loyal Arsenal staff members to be named a Premier League Community Captain to recognise his outstanding contribution to our local area.

QPR Football Club and QPR Trust cares about its local community. It is empathetic, supportive, professional and passionate.

Here is the QPR vision: ‘To create a stronger, healthier, more active community where everyone can thrive.’ Its mission? ‘To address local needs and make a difference to individuals and our communities.’

Its core values? ‘Driven by local needs by partners, funders and stakeholders. To be positive role models promoting positive change.’

Now we face a new leadership challenge in sport: it is the era of coaching by collaboration. It is the time where everyone associated with the team – players, coaches, staff and management – must take full responsibility for every aspect of their own preparation and performance.



Collaborative team leadership is a management practice that aims to bring managers, executives and staff out of silos to work together. In collaborative workplaces, information is shared organically, and everyone takes responsibility for the whole.

The importance of communication in sports is clear to researchers and integral to successful sports organisations. Teams that promote positive communication and respect among players improve overall motivation.

The modern mindset makes coaching strategy about more than just winning; positive language and clear communication are paramount.

It is beneficial to praise the players on their strengths, and be vocal on how the players can work together and help each other. Experience shows that using clear, positive communication, avoiding singling out players for mistakes and being generous with positive feedback produces better results.

A good coach, like any good parent, teaches those under their care to play for each other and not just themselves. Playing for each other means helping make the key pass, giving others opportunities to score, and celebrating others’ wins.

When players understand how each individual position supports the other, they can visualise working together and show them the significance of their role outside of their own glory. This kind of approach keeps them from feeling a joint mission, knowing that each person is crucial.

While having lofty goals can be motivating, it’s important to have team-oriented goals that are within reach. Consider listing out goals around fitness achievements, or team bests – things that have less to do with winning against the opposing team and more about

celebrating positivity and group wins. Players can also share their personal goals with the team, who can help offer support and encouragement throughout the season.

We have all heard a lot about team-building exercises, but there’s a reason these have value. Learn more about the kinds of team-building exercises you can work into your coaching routine. Key tips: keep the activities movement-oriented – and keep it fun.

When thinking of coaching strategies for better teamwork, it is good to prioritise building connections among players by staying positive, reinforcing strong values, and making it all about having fun.

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much,” said Helen Keller (1880-1968), an American author, disability rights advocate, political activist and lecturer. Born

QPR in the Community Trust has worked hard to bring all members of the community together: ‘To create a stronger, healthier, more active community where everyone can thrive.’ Its mission? ‘To address local needs and make a difference to individuals and our communities.’

in West Tusculum, Alabama, she lost her sight and her hearing after a bout of illness at the age of 19 months. For her work she was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Michael Jordan, widely considered to be the greatest basketball player of all time, said: “Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence win championship.”

“It is literally true that you can succeed best and quickest by helping others to succeed” – Napoleon Hill (1883-1970). Oliver Napoleon Hill was an American self-help author. He is best known for his book *Think and Grow Rich*, which is among the 10 best-selling self-help books of all time. Hill’s works insisted that fervid expectations are

essential to improving one’s life.

“None of us, including me, ever do great things. But we can all do small things, with great love, and together we can do something wonderful,” encouraged Mother Teresa (1910-1997) also known as Saint Teresa of Calcutta, an Albanian-Indian Roman Catholic nun who, in 1950, founded and was an active member of the Missionaries of Charity.

“Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress, and working together is success,” declared Henry Ford, (1917 – 1987). The performance of his motorcar factory proved the accuracy of his policy.

Amy Poehler (born 1971) an American comedian, actress, writer, producer, and director, made a fine statement with which any parent would agree when thinking about their offspring: “A group of people who challenge and inspire you. Spend a lot of time with them, and it will change your life.”

Truly, it is better to work together and to collaborate together than to work alone. This, indeed, is how the Trinity works – love passing continually between the Father, Son and Spirit. We are stronger together.



Left, Michael Jordan, widely considered to be the greatest basketball player of all time, said: “Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence win championship.”