

## **Profile Strategies**

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# Employer's Advantage

### **From Jim Sirbasku:**

*Winning the Gold with Vision, Chemistry, and Balance*

**Top Advice:** *Why Teams Lose (Even Teams with Talent)*

**Product Focus:** *Share the Vision with Profiles Team Analysis™*

**Book Review:** *Dream Team Coach Sees Life beyond Basketball*

### **From Jim Sirbasku's Desk**

#### ***Winning the Gold with Vision, Chemistry, and Balance***

In the race to lure talent to our organizations and make ourselves more competitive in the global marketplace, we need to make sure we maintain a careful balance in our teams. Anyone who believes that star talent alone will lift an organization to top performance need only look to the Olympics, where teams have failed to bring home the gold in recent years. This year, this country sent a brand-new Dream Team to Beijing – some are calling it the Redeem Team, on a mission to redeem the U.S. reputation as a basketball powerhouse.

Top basketball players competed in the 2004 Olympics and even in the 2006 World Games, but the teams did not appear. A key ingredient was missing: the chemistry that smoothly blends a group of stars into a unified whole. Uneven team play by superstars led U.S. planners to build a foundation for 2008 that would send an actual team to the Olympics. The formula included rounding up the superstars (NBA elite), requiring them to play together in early qualifying matches, and, finally, making sure both defenders and shooters were part of the mix.

This is a simple formula and a no-brainer for a coach or team leader. And yet the Olympian shortcomings of the Dream Teams are but one example of how heads of organizations repeat the same mistakes when seeking the success that top team performance leads to. Instead of throwing money at the problem,

they throw talent at it. And they quickly discover that a bunch of talented people is just a bunch of talented people. Players, and workers, need a reason for being and a plan for working together to have the beginnings of a team.

Let's look at some of the key ingredients that go into making up a team:

- Balance, of the kind that Coach Mike Krzyzewski attempted to bring to this year's Dream Team redeemers
- Vision, or a common focus
- Chemistry that allows team players to make progress and reach their goals because they believe in the mission and respect their teammates

Let's pretend we are advising a team leader who needs to improve the productivity of a group of talented people. Each one performs well individually, but they do not function well together. Squabbles push them off track, and meetings reveal disagreement on even the fundamental issue of how to work together. The group must complete a project that requires detailed focus and reaching regular goals along the path to completion. After meeting for several months, team members have not produced anything useful.

Using the example of this year's Dream Team, we will help the team leader assemble and shape the group into something more than just a group of individuals.

First, we will:

#### **Find the balance.**

The first thing the leader will want to do is discover the strengths and weaknesses of people making up the group. Assessments that review employees' strengths and weaknesses will help. The group needs a mixture of those who immediately grasp the big picture and know how to create a plan, and those whose strengths lie in checking the fine details. Additionally, the group requires performers who can help move the project along at a regular clip so that no one misses a deadline, and those who are able to hear differences of opinion and build a verbal bridge between them. In the ideal situation, the team needs

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**It doesn't matter who scores the points, it's who can get the ball to the scorer.**

- Larry Bird, retired professional basketball player

to be in charge of moving itself and taking responsibility for its actions without a boss hovering nearby. Someone, or several someones, need to encourage open and lively communication.

Obviously, it is a rare person who possesses all of these strengths in equal amounts, although many people will possess some of the necessary qualities. The more likely scenario is that the team will include people good at many things and people who excel at a few things. A team leader wants to ensure that he has the right strengths for the specific project and a good mix of all necessary qualities.

After assembling our team, we will:

#### **Share the vision.**

A team must know why it exists. The team leader's job is to ensure that this knowledge is imparted, described and repeated as often as necessary to keep key players on track. If the team is just forming and/or includes new members, top management can show support by discussing and describing the organization's vision and the team's specific mission. This is a good time to let members ask questions or voice doubts, and to treat each concern or idea with respect. This is an important example to set. If members hear someone making light of their fears or playing down their ideas, they will be reluctant to speak up in the future.

Now that the team knows what it is supposed to do, we will:

#### **Mix carefully for good chemistry.**

As the team leader learned when he was checking the balance of strengths and skills, everyone is different. That does not mean the differences will not mix well. In fact, they can play off each other to create charged

discussions, enthusiasm for projects, and spectacular results. It is essential that team members respect each other's differences and learn from one another. Becoming best friends at work or doing things together outside work is not necessary, but they do need to get along at work. The highest performing teams learn from each other, and the best team leaders find ways to coach players over the bumps that conflicts cause and use them to the team's advantage.

Even when a team is performing beautifully, it will still need coaching. Disagreements will erupt, or the waters may calm too much for progress to occur. The coach needs to monitor team balance constantly as members leave and others come in, and as the mission changes. But if the coach remembers to build the team on a firm foundation, assembling and regrouping productive Dream Teams is not an impossible challenge.

Profiles Advantage is focusing on the five perspectives of the coach. With this message we have examined three – employee job fit, employee motivation, and compatibility between the employee and his/her work team. Upcoming themes will examine:

- Compatibility between the employee and the manager
- The employee's effectiveness as a leader

We hope you are finding the discussion beneficial and are enjoying this exploration of the leader/manager as coach.

*Jim Sirbasku, CEO  
Profiles International*



## **Why Teams Lose (Even Teams with Talent)**

### **COACH ASSEMBLES AN ARRAY OF TALENT, RATHER THAN CONSIDERING WHAT THE TEAM LACKS.**

#### RESULTS:

- Everybody talks; nobody listens
- Disparate players have little in common
- Team members work on their own agendas

### **COACH'S DIRECTION IS HAZY.**

#### RESULTS:

- Individual members want to control, not participate
- Indifferent players are absent at meetings, or arrive late and otherwise disrupt activity
- Communication is poor or absent
- Performance standards are too low or non-existent

### **NEITHER COACH NOR TEAM PUTS ENOUGH TIME INTO DEVELOPMENT.**

#### RESULTS:

- Team is marching in place with no growth evident
- Goals are not set and projects do not get finished

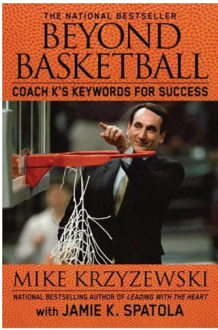
### **COACH IGNORES TEAM MEMBERS' FEARS AND WORRIES.**

#### RESULTS:

- Communication is poor or absent
- Team members do not trust one another

## Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence win championships.

-- Michael Jordan, retired professional basketball player, businessman



### BOOK REVIEW: Dream Team Coach Sees Life beyond Basketball

Coach Mike Krzyzewski had a good reason to look beyond basketball when he took the 2008 Team USA to the Beijing Olympics. Although U.S. teams are still competitors, they performed just well enough to bring home a bronze medal in 2004, not the highly prized gold. Olympic talent has gone global,

and basketball is the sport that shows it off.

So what does a coach do when faced with such a challenge? Just as any competitive leader would do, he looks beyond the game itself to see what he can do to get his team to play as a unit instead of individual stars. Krzyzewski's **BEYOND BASKETBALL: COACH K'S KEYWORDS FOR SUCCESS** might have served him as a guide, even though he knows it all by heart.

In an interview, the Chicago-reared Krzyzewski reveals that teaching was his lifelong dream. The Duke University men's basketball coach for almost three decades, he obviously lives his dream both on and off the court. Coach K co-wrote the book with daughter Jamie Spatola by selecting about 40 words or phrases to create the book's central message. He explores each word in a chapter, and although one can imagine the importance of every one of them to a basketball team, they are words that transcend sport as much as Krzyzewski does.

Take the word adaptability, which Coach K explores in a story about playing for West Point under the tutelage of Bobby Knight – and of a particularly grueling daily drill, called Zig Zag. When he later was Knight's graduate assistant coach at Indiana, he was puzzled that his mentor did not require the Zig Zag drill of his players. When Krzyzewski

worked up the courage to ask about it, Knight told him that not all players were alike and not all required such a drill.

He remembered the lesson well. From it, Coach K learned to create different coaching plans for different players and different teams, with changes sometimes coming from day to day. He learned to adapt.

**BEYOND BASKETBALL** explores such words as collective responsibility, courage, empathy, failure, guidance, integrity – taking readers from one end of the alphabet to the other. Finally, the book discusses The Fist, or five concepts of cooperation: communication, trust, collective responsibility, care and pride. Although Krzyzewski and his players use The Fist as a visible symbol of unity, this teacher is not just out to coach a stellar team to greater performance. He is also educating his players and students about life.

Like many coaches, Krzyzewski was also a college player, a three-year letterman at the United States Military Academy. After a stint in the Army and as Knight's assistant, he became head coach at Duke in 1980. His teams have enjoyed great success and Krzyzewski has been a National Coach of the Year 12 times. He is also enshrined in the Basketball Hall of Fame.

#### ABOUT THE BOOK

ABOUT THE BOOK

**BEYOND BASKETBALL: COACH K'S KEYWORDS FOR SUCCESS**

Author: Mike Krzyzewski and Jamie K. Spatola

192 pages

Publisher: Business Plus

ISBN-13: 978-0446581875

**People want to be on a team. They want to be part of something bigger than themselves. They want to be in a situation where they feel that they are doing something for the greater good.**

-- Mike Krzyzewski, Duke basketball coach and United States national head coach

## PRODUCT FOCUS: Share the Vision with Profiles Team Analysis™

Imagine yourself as the leader in a room full of people, and the task requires them all to look up. Instead of directing them to do so, you look at the ceiling, intending for everyone to follow your lead.

Is it luck when all eyes in the room also look up? And if all eyes do NOT look heavenward, is that a sign of poor leadership? Should you have said, "Now, everyone look UP"?

Not necessarily, but it is healthier for the team – and the team leader – if all players share the same vision. A sure approach to help build a team that is unified in its focus is to use Profiles Team Analysis™, a development tool for departments, work groups or committees.

A team works toward organizational objectives, as opposed to individual members working on their own goals. But to work well together, individuals must connect to each other. Profiles Team Analysis helps leaders maximize the effectiveness of the team by analyzing its dynamics to ensure a strong connection.

Profiles Team Analysis is put together from data collected through the Profiles Performance Indicator™. Profiles Team Analysis reveals the team-building strengths of each team member in 12 areas. Further helping team leaders are reports that include an analysis of key factors the team lacks, an analysis of each team member's strengths, and a summary that the leader can use to assign tasks to individuals. The information helps eliminate conflict, build cooperation, improve communication, and assure the team achieves results.

Obviously, not everyone is the same, but certain characteristics must be part of any successful team. So the Profiles Team Analysis looks at team members' tendencies in these 12 essential areas:

- The tendency to take charge, be assertive, and take control of a situation
- To be outgoing, people-oriented and extroverted
- To show patience, tolerance and understanding
- To focus on details, precision and accuracy
- To show a desire to compete and win
- To reveal a positive attitude regarding people and outcomes
- To be easygoing and casual
- To enjoy identifying and analyzing problems
- To desire to meet deadlines and take action quickly
- To show emotions and share feelings
- To take part in the team and work well with others
- To show concern for standards and high quality of work

### **The Profiles Team Analysis report includes:**

#### **A Team Balance Table**

A visual summary of how the leader and each member scored on each of the 12 factors.

#### **The Overall Team Balance**

An exploration of characteristics not well represented on the team.

#### **Behavioral Factors**

The characteristics of team members who scored moderately high or high on each factor.

#### **Team Leader Action Summary**

Action steps that provide a quick review of guidelines for supervising the team.

Each team member can complete the assessment in 15 minutes, using an Internet connection, or by writing responses in a booklet. A computer compiles the results and prints them in minutes.

The completeness of the Profiles Team Analysis and its simplicity, make it easy for a leader to build a team that delivers. If successful teams are eluding your organization and impeding progress, don't look at the ceiling -- call Profile Strategies at (800) 406-0087.

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**Sometimes a player's greatest challenge is coming to grips with his role on the team.**

-- Scottie Pippen, retired professional basketball player