

INTERCOLLEGIATE BASKETBALL COACHES' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR
LEADERSHIP STYLE ON RECRUITING

By

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Dedicated to, Mom Mick and Pop Pop, my loving grandparents, as well as my devoted mother and father, Mr. and Mrs. John W. Niland. Pop is the cornerstone of our family, for whom without, none of us would be where we are today. Mom Mick, without hesitation or reservation, told me early and often, I could be and do anything I set my mind to, and my parents have been there the whole way through, supporting me in every endeavor.

Words can't express my gratitude.

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This study is an exploration into intercollegiate Division I Men's basketball coaches' experiences in recruiting top student-athletes. Its contributions are manifold. The profession is dominated by practitioners who don't spend time researching and writing about their trade. Therefore, this study enhances an area where little has been done. Likewise, it bridges a gap between higher education academic administration and intercollegiate sports management. While previous studies have individual areas and outcomes in coaching leadership style, this study links together major themes, establishing it as a foundational contribution to the body of research. The results of this study have established my framework for successful recruitment of student-athletes and they are: creating a family dynamic among a dynamic group of individuals, harboring a relentless work ethic, establishing and working towards long-term oriented goals, looking at each potential candidate on a case by case basis, and that recruitment is the life blood of a program.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Intercollegiate athletic coaches are often compensated with vast salaries for their roles in their respective academic institutions. Within the scope of duties, they are given a number of responsibilities such as the athletic development of their student-athletes, athletic leadership development for their players and staff, service as a representative of the institution, representation as a leader to the local community and the role of a spokesperson for the advancement of their institution to the broader sports and education communities nationally. Their primary role is in line with the objectives of the athletic department, most directly, winning intercollegiate competitions. In order to meet the objectives of their athletic department and to promote the reputation of their institutions, these coaches must travel to recruit the best student-athletes available to maintain the greatest level of competitiveness within their respective sport and conference. The capacity of athletic programs to build capacity for higher education institutions through resource development, donor relationship building, and economic development for the broader community places a high level of emphasis on the position of head coach, and as a result top talent in the coaching world is accompanied by high salaries. Recently, (John) Calipari agreed to an eight-year, \$31.65 million deal, which would make him the highest-paid coach in college basketball (Thamel, 2009).

Intercollegiate coaches and their student-athletes make contributions to their scholastic institutions. They bring recognition to their schools and elevate the visibility of the institution through the venue of sport. Often times, they are involved in a wide variety of community service activities like outreach programs, camps, clinics, and read aloud sessions at schools. They are perceived to engender school spirit across the

campus by promoting the student body around a common mission-celebrating and cheering for the team. They also generate vast amounts of revenue to support a wide array of activities, such as recruitment, scholarships, and academic endeavors. With respect to their specific sport, coaches and their student-athletes are believed to improve the revenue stream and reputation of their school building on its individual brand, shown by Dawes and Brown, 2004; Lawlor, 1998; Judson et al., 2006 (Johnson, Jubenville & Goss, 2009). However, it is not entirely clear what leadership styles among coaches draw their student-athletes into their institutional community.

This study differs from previous work in that the sites selected for the study focus on courting and acquiring the highest caliber student-athletes available. Previous work has looked at recruitment, selection, and the coaches themselves but has not explored the strategies or leadership styles of the head coach. (Becker & Solomon, 2005; Becker & Solomon, 2009; Johnson, Jubenville & Goss, 2009; Letawsky, Schreider, Pedersen, & Palmer, 2003; Sullivan & Kent, 2003).

Three areas of research pertain to this study, leadership, institutional selection, and coaches. Leadership is comprised of goals, behaviors, relationship building, and the theories that support and promote particular leadership styles such as transactional and transformational leadership. Work by Martin, Rocca, Cayanus, and Weber, 2009; Jackson, Knapp, and Beauchamp, 2009; Lorimer, 2009, among others address these different aspects of leadership among intercollegiate coaches. Some of these qualities are highlighted by behavioral alteration techniques like verbal aggression towards players. Techniques also included; immediate reward from behavior and self-esteem as well as positive messaging, satisfaction with work, relationships, coaches' involvement

in their work as well as extrinsic and intrinsic motivation of coaches. Also, influencing behavior, taking ownership, and coaching interaction are core qualities of leadership among intercollegiate coaches.

Armstrong, 1993; Bird, 1977; Branch, 1990; Buckiewicz, 1975; Chelladurai & Carron, 1983; Cusak & Schraibman, 1986; Kent & Chelladurai, 2001; McKay, 1986; Quarterman, 1998; Scott, 1999; Snyder, 1990, and Watkins, 1983 have addressed intercollegiate coaches' leadership styles (Miller, 2003). Jowett (2008), Amorose and Horn (2000) as well as Beam, Serwatka, and Wilson (2004) have studied the individual behaviors and traits in the context of leadership theories. Studies have shown that success is predicted on more than just knowledge alone (Miller, 2003).

Selection of post-secondary institution is another relevant area of interest for this study because it addresses the interests of the athletes, the general student body, as well as the recruitment and fundraising efforts used to attract individuals. Letawsky, Schneider and Pedersen (2003) addressed the selection process of both non-student athletes and student-athletes finding that even with additional athletic considerations, academic factors showed equal importance in school selection. Sander, 2008 and Kostoff, 2008 have explored recruitment and fundraising for student-athletes. Several researchers have studied the experiences, knowledge, efficacy, and accountability among individual coaches in terms of their abilities and responsibilities. However, no one has explored the specific leadership styles among individuals or a group of coaches and how their leadership style impacts recruitment of student-athletes.

The results of this research adds to the existing body of knowledge as well as advance an understanding of the educational phenomenon concerning how student-

athletes are recruited and the role that the coach's leadership style contributes to this process from the coaches' perspective. This study provides an understanding of the styles at different research sites that makes student-athletes inclined to select one school over another as well as what properties allow these coaches' to maintain the interests' of their student-athletes, thereby promoting and elevating the athletic program and institution. Research concludes that whether a coach has the ability to garner the best available athletes is likely to dictate the success or lack thereof for the institution on a particular field of play (Armstrong, 2001; Schroeder, 2010). Examples of higher education institutions that recruit the best available student-athletes include Duke University, the University of North Carolina, University of Connecticut, and the University of Kentucky.

Some student-athletes opt out of college and/or were unable to meet eligibility requirements in addition to the student positions that are filled. Research also shows that it is critical to a head coaches' individual and collective success that they discern who among the pool of potential successful student-athletes best fits their team. Also, how they will be able to use their individual leadership style to convince a prospective student-athlete that their school is the best choice in higher education academics and athletics (Armstrong, 2001; Schroeder, 2010). Additional research shows that without the appropriate application of coaching leadership style necessary to acquire the best student-athletes, intercollegiate head coaches will be unable to fulfill the expectations of their individual program, the athletic department, and the school at large (Cunningham, Dixon, 2003; Gurney, Weber, 2008; Letawsky, Schneiter, Pedersen, Palmer, 2003).

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to explore the leadership styles of intercollegiate athletic coaches and their effectiveness in acquiring the highest caliber student-athletes available to their program from the coaches' perspective as the senior administrator of the program. The method of inquiry is a narrative approach, focusing on specific programs, using individual interviews in order to discover data and better understand the role that leadership style plays in recruiting student-athletes. The unit of analysis is the coaching experiences and this study is entirely qualitative in nature. The research design is narrative. Findings from the interviews are used for the purpose of focusing on the macro-analytical picture of head coaches as opposed to a broader lens of cultural norms in the field.

Research Questions

By concentrating on individual coaches of an intercollegiate athletic program at specific sites, this study provides insight into what head coaches perceive to be the best way to recruit the best talent available to their program, by exploring successful intercollegiate athletics programs. Another purpose is to expand the knowledge base of information regarding how head coaches utilize their leadership style to garner the highest caliber of student talent accessible to their program:

1. How does Coach X describe his experiences in selecting potential recruits for the program?
2. How does Coach X describe leadership strategies and/or practices that enable him to acquire the best available talent for the specific athletic program with respect to personal values and beliefs?

Significance of Study

Recruitment of the most talented athletes is the heart of an intercollegiate program, however, to this point; previous studies have not explored the practices and strategies of a successful head coach's influence on student-athlete acquisition. Generally, studies have delved into the leadership of intercollegiate head coaches exploring the impact of behavioral techniques (Mannie, 2005; Martin, Rocca, Cayanus, Weber, 2009), relationships qualities between coaches and their players (Lorimer, 2009), intrinsic and extrinsic motives of coaches (Drury, 2009; Jowett, 2008; Ryska, 2009), perceived coaching behavior by student-athletes (Amorose, Horn, 2000), and student-athlete preference for leadership behavior for coaches (Beam, Serwatka, Wilson, 2004).

The selection and recruitment of student-athletes is another area where research has been conducted, including research into factors that influence college choice from the student-athlete perspective and sources of information used to determine athlete ability, but student-athlete selection has not been explored from the coaches perspective (Becker & Solomon, 2005; Goss, Jubenville, Orejan, 2006; Johnson, Jubenville, Goss, 2009; Letawsky, Schneider, Pedersen, Palmer, 2003). Most specific to the nature of this study is the research done regarding individual styles of head coaches. These studies have explored perceptions of great coaching from the student-athlete perspective (Becker, Solomon, 2009), performance appraisals of intercollegiate coaches (Cunningham, Dixon, 2003), coaching accountability (Gurney, Weber, 2008), individual efficacy (Jackson, Knapp, Beauchamp, 2009; Sullivan, Kent, 2003), factors affecting team unity (Aghazadeh, Kyei, 2009) as well as the development and acquisition of coaching knowledge (Carter, Bloom, 2009).

The results of this research adds to the existing body of knowledge as well as advance an understanding of the educational phenomenon concerning how student-athletes are recruited and the role that the coach's leadership style contributes to this process from the coaches' perspective. This study provides an understanding of the styles at different research sites that makes student-athletes inclined to select one school over another as well as what properties allow these coaches' to maintain the interests' of their student-athletes, thereby promoting and elevating the athletic program and institution.

The relevance for this research to theory and practice is manifold. This study advances the knowledge base in leadership throughout intercollegiate athletics by providing insight into those styles that allow head coaches to obtain the greatest potential student-athletes. This study also sheds light onto an area of higher education that is dominated by practitioners who most often haven't studied or published in academic journals about their profession. Additionally, current and future practitioners in the coaching profession may greatly benefit from the perceptions garnered through recruiting athletes who were perhaps previously uninterested in their programs.

The practice of player acquisition is paramount to the success of a head coach (Sander, 2008; Schroeder, 2010). Given the benefits of revenue-generating sports like basketball and football, it is in the interest of all members of the institutional community to advance the knowledge base of the leadership styles of these coaches' that will draw top athletes. Implementation of these stylistic cues allows head coaches to bring in the highly talented student-athletes as well as respond to their educational and sports related training needs. Head coaches' are leaders to these young men on and off the

field of play. Outside of their teammates, these young men will spend the majority of their collegiate experience involved and interacting with their coaches'. Previous research has lent itself to the further development and identification of positive and productive leadership style of coaches, not only for their own benefit but also the benefit of the young men they serve as leader.

Given the wide range of activities and systems that intercollegiate coaches and their athletes promote and support, this study offers great value for learning how a coach utilizes leadership style to draw the greatest talent to their institutions. This study is valuable to academic and athletic administrators as well as prospective and current coaches because it advances the general knowledge base regarding the relationship between leadership style and recruitment of top athletes.

Current and potential coaches, athletic administrators, as well as the academic community benefit from the study of this problem because identification of the necessary styles can lead to advancement and excellence in the areas surrounding the athletic program and potentially extending out into the academic community. The positive outcomes include facility enhancements, scholarship opportunities, notoriety and branding, as well as direct financial benefits.

Further reasons of significance for this study are the enduring practice of recruitment of intercollegiate athletes. So long as there is sport in higher education, there will be competitive recruitment of athletes. Through the extension of understanding that is derived from this study leadership practices can be honed and improved, leading toward the advancement of intercollegiate student-athlete recruitment phenomenon.

Limitations

This study was bounded by the specific threats of the types of data that was limited to the individual interviews done only with the coaches, thus restricting a variety of data sources. Also, this study sought to identify leadership styles for success and it behooved the researcher to select participants with substantial qualifications and/or credentials.

Subjectivity of the participants based on their individual experiences came as a limitation of the study because each participant had a unique set of experiences that came with their individual positions at their given institutions as well as through their years of experience. Different schools have different cultures and expectations of their coaches and this was reflected through the participants. Likewise, the individual perceptions of both the researcher and the research participants are individualized personal perceptions that are not transferrable from one person to another.

Interview authenticity was a possible limitation. Participants are highly polished public speakers who at time may have utilizing their skills to side step questions or mask their intent, possibly over generalizing responses in order to avoid a firm position.

Sampling limitations include using only three of the possible three hundred sixty-five Division I basketball institutions. The researcher was fortunate to get the time and efforts of three programs at the highest level of intercollegiate competition; Analysis limitations include exclusion of other possible analytical tools in favor of the one chosen for this study as well as selection of the specific episodes and/or stories that are used to describe the experiences of the participants. Geographic location was not a limitation of the study directly as the researcher was able to accommodate all participants at their individual institutions across the country.

The findings are not transferable beyond the scope of this study. Limitations for interpreting the findings are the lens with which the researcher views the data. Potential threats to the study came with an inability to conduct the desired research with participants who are outside of the resources for this study. Recruitment of participants was done through known channels while using purposeful sampling of Division I coaches at state institutions. Those coaches who were outside of this sample and/or unable to participate over certain periods of time given their stature and commitments to their program were not pursued.

Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this study, the following terms were used:

Leadership is the way in which intercollegiate coaches guide their teams, using their individual style to advance both their individual players and the overall program.

Mid-Major Conference is representative of a Division I conference including Atlantic Ten, Big Sky, Colonial Athletic Association, Conference USA, Horizon League, Mid-American, Missouri Valley, Mountain West, Sun Belt, West Coast, and Western Athletic Conference. This term is also interchangeable with non power conference.

Power Conference is identifiable with any of the six major power conferences including the Atlantic Coast (ACC), Big Twelve, Big East, Big Ten, Pacific ten (Pac ten), and Southeastern (SEC). This term is also interchangeable with major six conferences, and/or elite power conferences.

Recruitment is the pursuit and acquisition of student-athletes for positions to be filled on an intercollegiate team roster for the purposes of bolstering the team.

Team Culture is a social and psychological environment that maximizes a team's ability to achieve success because it creates an environment in which all members think alike, talk alike, and act alike so they can support and reinforce the best in one another.

Top Student-Athlete is determined by any student athlete deemed worthy of an intercollegiate athletic scholarship by the granting institution at the Division I level.

CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In order to develop the conceptual framework and better understand its contribution to the literature, this chapter will delve into the peripheral areas surrounding the specific leadership attributes of intercollegiate head men's coaches. This will serve twofold, first addressing the current body of knowledge and second showing a gap in the literature that will be addressed throughout this dissertation. This review of literature is divided into three sections that are critical to the development and understanding of the leadership attributes that allow head coaches to draw top student-athletes. Each section; Leadership Goals, Selection, and Coaches will discuss the relevant attributes of importance to the head coaching position.

Leadership of Intercollegiate Head Coaches

Leadership goals of intercollegiate men's head coaches vary throughout the profession with respect to the coaches' responsibilities to the institution and the players while still maintaining consistency in their pursuit of victory. The behavior of the head coach, the relationships they build, and the theories they employ to reach their goals are essential to the head coach's leadership abilities. Through these qualities, a head coach can try to recruit future student-athletes in the promotion of their goals and the expectations of the institution.

Martin, Rocca, Cayanus, and Weber (2009) explored the impact of coaches' use of behavior alteration techniques, verbal aggression on their players' motivation as well as the affect for the coaches. Based on their coaches' communication behaviors as well as overall motivation for the sport and the appreciation for their coach, student-athletes reported that positive behavior alteration techniques were positively related to

motivation and affect whereas negative behavior alteration techniques were negatively related to motivation and affect (Martin et al., 2009).

Numerous positive behavior alteration techniques were found to be beneficial to players' motivation as well as affect for the head coach. These techniques were most commonly immediate reward from behavior and self-esteem (Martin et al., 2009). Internal rewards showed to be more effective for player motivation than external rewards and coaches' who used positive messages to influence their players provided them with a sense of internal reward leading to higher self-esteem. Additionally, there was no evidence that verbally aggressive messages are effective in motivating others (Martin et al., 2009).

This literature builds on previous work as well as provides insights into styles that may prove beneficial in the recruitment of top student-athletes. While the study focused on experienced player-coach interactions, applying these values to prospective student-athletes could help in the recruitment process. When going into the school or home of a prospective student-athlete, coaches must be able to articulate why they should come to their institution and what they have to gain from the experience. Some researchers such as Haselwood et al. (2005) have suggested that communication skills are the most important skills for coaches to possess (Martin et al., 2009).

Intercollegiate head coaches spend a great deal of time fostering relationships with their student-athletes. Building a strong relationship with the young men that work so closely with these coaches is paramount for both parties. Lorimer (2009) studies the association between coaches' satisfaction using an adapted Athlete Satisfaction Questionnaire and coaches' perceptions of the quality of their relationships with their

athletes using a second questionnaire measuring the coach-athlete relationship. The results of these analytical tools showed that relationship quality was a significant predictor of variance in coach satisfaction.

Fulfillment of coaches' leadership goals is embodied in their satisfaction with what they are doing. A coaches' "satisfaction can be multidimensional, covering such things as satisfaction with work, relationships, or other personal experiences such as involvement in sport (Lorimer, 2009)." Specifically, their involvement in sport encompasses their work, many of their relationships, as well as their personal experiences with their athletes. Lorimer (2009) notes that, "As such, the success and effectiveness of one (coach/athlete) are likely dependent on the success and effectiveness of the other. Therefore, not only is coach satisfaction a potential indicator of effort, and the success and effectiveness of the coach's experiences, it is also an indicator of the success and effectiveness of their athletic relationship." Satisfaction can play a large role in successful recruitment of top student-athletes. If a head coach is dissatisfied at some level it can have a negative impact on the current program adding to the dissatisfaction and making the program a less desirable location for potential student-athletes.

A coaches' motivation can be strongly influenced by the fostering of relationships. Different individuals are fueled by differently, leading to their level of satisfaction and the degree to which they are able to perform their jobs. Jowett (2008) investigated the influences of intrinsic and extrinsic motives that initiate coach related behavior. The work showed that "while intrinsic motivation was moderately and positively related to all facets of coach satisfaction, extrinsic motivation was only related to coach satisfaction

with the coach-athlete relationship.” While intrinsic motivation has often proven to be the preeminent force motivating both player and coach, Jowett (2008) found that there was a significant interaction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. This presented a potential issue of undermining the benefits of intrinsic motivation at times where morale and self-confidence may be low. The motivation of a head coach is an important characteristic in their capacity. It can establish different attributes of coaching behavior that are carried out in their position such as the intensity, form, direction, and duration of their behaviors (Jowett, 2008). Also, “coaches who endorsed a high extrinsic-low intrinsic motivational attitude were distant, tense and private in their approach with their athletes, while coaches who endorsed a low extrinsic-high intrinsic motivational attitude were more autonomous, yet more closely connected with their athletes. (p. 665)” It is also suggested that intrinsic motives provide for affiliation while extrinsic embodied dominance, each lending itself to an impact on student-athletes’ satisfaction and performance. Coaches’, whose behaviors are dictated intrinsically, foster greater relationships through their actions towards their current and potential student athletes. This intrinsic motivation can yield both self-satisfaction and external rewards such as victory, showing importance because it “positively affects behavior, performance, and well-being causing a coach to experience satisfaction, happiness, and a sense of achievement (p. 665).” If a head coach is able to experience all of these positive emotions that provide for better performance and well being, they are likely to enhance their abilities in recruitment endeavors and elevate on court performance.

Motivational factors influence the leadership role of intercollegiate head coaches’ with respect to how they act and how they are perceived. The individual coaching

behavior has a greater impact on the perception and performance of student-athletes that play for these head coaches. Amorose and Horn (2000) have explored the relationships among athletes' intrinsic motivation, scholarship status, gender, perceptions of the number of their teammates receiving scholarships, and the perceptions of their coaches' behavior. Of specific interest from this study, they showed that perceived coaching behaviors were related to athletes' intrinsic motivation. In particular, "athletes with higher intrinsic motivation perceived their coaches to exhibit a leadership style that emphasized training and instruction and was high in democratic behavior and low in autocratic behavior. Additionally, athletes with higher levels perceived that their coaches provided high frequencies of positive and informational feedback and low frequencies of punishment-orientated and ignoring behaviors (Amorose & Horn, 2000, p. 63)."

It is important to emphasize the perception of coaches' and the consequences of their actions because these attributes can prove pivotal in the recruitment of future student athletes. Coaches risk dissension among players if unwilling to promote positive values and intrinsically motivate. This can manifest into players taking out their frustrations while recruits are visiting campus. Current student-athletes play a role in the recruitment process. If they are not on the same page as the head coach and/or do not feel appreciated potential incoming athletes may view the program negatively. Amorose and Horn (2000) show that athletes who perceived their coaches to exhibit the democratic style, responding to their performances with high levels of encouragement are more highly motivated than those coaches who did not. Furthermore, coaches' who promote these values "should be successful in facilitating athletes' intrinsic motivation,

because such coaching behaviors enhance both athletes' perceptions of competence and a sense of self-determination, (p.78)" pointing towards the importance a coach's behavior has on players' perceptions.

Beam, Serwatka, and Wilson (2004) explore differences of student-athletes' preferred leadership behavior for their coaches based on competition level, task dependence, task variability and gender. Their findings suggest that student-athletes preferences for leadership behaviors are affected by task dependence and task variability of their sport. Interdependent sports athletes such as basketball and football players had a significantly higher preference for positive feedback leader behaviors. Insights into this preference show that it might represent "fulfillment of individual student-athlete needs" that in the team environment "might go unfulfilled (p. 14)." It is noted that the performance and satisfaction of student-athlete are "functions of the congruence between actual and required behaviors" and the coaches' "behaviors preferred by the student-athlete (p. 4)." Encapsulated in the motivation of the student-athletes and their preferred means of leadership, there are also individual elements to each player that is not representative of all student-athletes. Even with the emphasis that is put on intercollegiate sport Beam, Serwatka and Wilson (2004) point out that "it appears the amount of research devoted to sport leadership does not correspond with the growth of the sport environment (p. 4)." The preferred leadership of intercollegiate student-athletes can be delineated by competition level, gender, player needs and/or many other variables but none of the research shows preference for negativity or false pretenses, something head coaches should be mindful of in their pursuit of future student-athletes.

Deference is needed to fully understand the time and effort that goes into the leadership of an intercollegiate athletic program. Relationships between leadership styles, program goals, and individual burnout are important considerations for head coaches' and the promotion of their programs. Ryska (2009) investigates the relationship between these factors from a multivariate perspective finding that head coaches: who emphasized the pursuit of prestige and public relations program goals through means of a high strategic-low collaborative style experienced high emotional exhaustion and low personal accomplishment. In contrast, lower depersonalization and greater personal accomplishment were related to the pursuit of athlete development goals by means of low bureaucratic-high collaborative leadership. (p. 476)

Simply put, individuals whose personal attributes are inadequate to meet the high demands of the head coaching position are increasingly prone to perceive their environment as stressful leading to burnout. The indications from Ryska's study (2009) show that the coaches that report greater occupational burnout are those who "may view the attainment of public relations and prestige goals as incompatible with satisfying the needs of athletes and other personnel, and thus pursue these goals at the expense of team member input, positive task-based relationships and resolution of program conflict (p. 484)." The inverse of these actions will go a long way in preserving the confidence and competence of a head coach. In the preservation of confidence and exhibition of competence, head coaches pursuit of achieving athlete personal growth and excellence can be fostered through the development of deeper personal connection with others in the program, personal investment in others success, and deriving greater personal satisfaction from coaching their student-athletes (Ryska, 2009). Drury (2009)

notes that “the ability to manage stress and be adaptable are essential of a coach is to think clearly, make ethical decisions and act decisively in competitions and dynamic training situations (p. 52).” Through the implementation of these values head coaches’ can promote their program and provide for a solid foundation for each incoming class of student-athletes to build upon.

There are different ways to look at leadership of head coaches and how to implement its traits. Mannie (2005) cites influencing behavior, uniting players for a common cause, delegating responsibility, working with a purpose, and taking ownership of the program as the essence of leadership. Drury (2009) points to interaction as a core competency for head coaches stating that “interacting is a foundational coaching competency that influences the coach’s ability to build relationships” adding that “leadership is a relationship, not a position (p. 50).” Breaking down leadership to the element of interactions Drury (2009) emphasizes the need for “quality, meaningful interactions to build relationships and the need for quality relationships to strengthen the connectedness of each interaction (p. 50).” This is critical when head coaches go into the homes and/or schools of prospective student-athletes. Each interaction is an opportunity to build the relationship between the two parties. It is an opportunity to strengthen the bond between the player and the coach, and can lead to solidifying the potential recruit’s intent to commit to a given institution.

Schroeder (2010) investigated the organizational cultural perspective to explore the degree to which team improvement featured change in team culture. It sought to identify the leadership behaviors used by coaches to change team culture. While team culture is common lexicon in the coaching profession, outside of the field there is not a

high level of comprehension surrounding this concept. Using qualitative analysis, the findings indicated that turnarounds in team culture created changes, changes that were initiated by the coaches through a process of core sets of values specific to the individual teams. Several tactics were employed to ingrain the values including recruitment of athletes who would embrace team values as well as punishment and rewards consistent with the established values. Schroeder (2010) highlights that “the essence of coaching is developing a team culture or a social and psychological environment that maximizes a team’s ability to achieve success because it creates an environment in which all members think alike, talk alike, and act alike so they can support and reinforce the best in one another (p. 64).”

This study points out three phases that leaders must take their organizations through in order to create cultural change including “unfreezing, cognitive restructuring and refreezing (p. 66).” These steps embody acknowledgement of issues causing the problems within the organization or unfreezing, establishing a vision for change or cognitive restructuring and providing a common purpose and sense of importance to the work that is being completed or refreezing (2010). Through these steps a head coach can present issues to his players, create buy in by the players and work to achieving the goals set out through his intended vision for future success. While on the recruitment trail coaches can enhance their teams by courting players who want to be vested in the coaches’ goals and visions for the future. Likewise, coaches will achieve these goals by extending offers to players who fit their vision for the future and can have a positive role in the team.

According to Schroeder's research, positive cultural change was enacted in three ways. "First, coaches were all attuned to the concept of team culture and guided their teams through modified cultural change processes. Second, coaches spent considerable time developing and using a variety of tactics to facilitate this change process. Third, culture change seemed to be accelerated by the unique nature of the intercollegiate athletic environment (p. 70)." The research also notes that "very specific recruiting profiles and scouting techniques were developed by coaches to recruit players who embodied the team values (p. 71)." Through this study, Schroeder discovered that the recruitment process is key to the promotion of cultural change and organizational success of a program showing that specific criteria was established by every coach in the study for desired recruits. This process proves to be arduous for coaches, so detailed scouting procedures are implemented as well as scrutiny from the current members of the team to develop a picture of who the head coach wants on his squad. While rating systems such as Rivals.com top 150 recruit list provide on court assessments of players, talent is not the sole criteria for selection of a potential recruit. Looking at athletes who are going to buy into the program, show attributes consistent with being "passionate," "high self-esteem," "intelligence," "maturity," "character," "low-ego," "coachable," "team-oriented," and "into winning (p. 76)" as highly valued qualities in recruits.

Also of great value from this study, Schroeder (2010) identifies that location and acquisition of recruits capable of enhancing a team culture is often done through the establishment of geographical and budgetary parameters. Head coaches' with larger staffs contacted "people on the periphery around a player," talking not just to parents

and coaches, but to opposing coaches, officials, and teachers. Several coaches also paid special attention to body language and the way recruits dealt with their parents (p. 77).” Additionally, coaches’ indicated patience as a necessity for recruitment. Coaches were adamant about waiting for the players who are the correct fit for the program sharing that early commitments are no good if it is not the right player for the team. Ultimately, “Patience and strong recruiting philosophies created teams that were very apt to buy into the values and teachings of a particular coach. Coaches also felt that as players began to embrace the program's values that those values would begin to perpetuate (p. 78).”

Cultural change can often be brought on through leadership style or the theoretical perspective of the head coach. One of the most dominant and effective forms of leadership is the transformational leadership model. Armstrong (2001) points out that the head coach is “the definer, provider, and deliverer of sport experience for the athlete, (p. 44)” showing that successful coaches’ provide sensitivity to both athletic and non-athletic needs of their athletes. Successful coaches’, expertly use sport to help their players learn lessons on and off the field of play allowing them to “appreciate their increased knowledge (p. 44).” Transformational leadership provides effectiveness in choosing the best leadership style for a respective sport as well as the individual athletes that comprise the team. This behavior on the part of the head coach “often leads to improvements in athlete performance, team cohesion, and team and coach morale (p. 44).” Transformational leadership is not overarching or all encompassing of different organizational structures or programs. That is to say, what works with one team may need to be altered for another and/or how a coach behaves with one player

may not be conducive to the promotion of another's interests and development.

Armstrong (2001) defines transformational leadership as "superior leadership performance that is seen when leaders broaden and elevate the interests of their followers, when they generate awareness and acceptance among their followers of the purposes and mission of the group, and when they move their followers to transcend their own self-interests for the good of the group, adding that 'such leaders are created, not born.'(p. 44)" There are different characteristics that exemplify this leadership style. These characteristics include motivation by "end values" focusing on the team and equality over personal interests. "Fair play, total group effort, and honesty (p. 44)" hold the greatest meaning for the team and head coach while showing that winning is no less important. Due to the fluidity of this leadership model, the "transformation" can occur from both the bottom up and the top down. Armstrong (2001) states that "edification of the group tends to raise not only the effectiveness of the subordinates, but that of the leader as well, (p. 46)" providing that such coaches see their players "as capable individuals who can make positive contributions." Looking at a head coaches' vision for future success, transformational coaches' are most often "compelling and contagious" showing that "united effort tends to enhance performance (p. 45)." Also, Armstrong indicates that self-confident, charismatic coaches who show self-determination are generally held with high regard by their players and staff because they lead by example and practice what they preach. Charisma and charismatic leadership "infers that leaders' ethical behavior reflects followers' passion and loyalty for the purpose of the organization, (p.23)" leading to belief, respect, and followership with high levels of expectation and trust (Choi, 2006). Such coaching greats like Phil Jackson are cited as

being transformational leaders. Coach Jackson “begins with a simple articulation of his goal. Followed by how it will be manifested in each individual. (p. 45)” Assignments vary by player and their abilities, ultimately leading to wholesale buy in to the coaches plan (Armstrong, 2001). While results and attributes may vary, Armstrong (2001) states that the transformational leadership model is “the one style of leadership that results in unparalleled performance as well as the edification of both coaches and athletes. (p. 46)”

Choi (2006) investigated the relationship between the athletic directors’ transformational leadership and service quality as perceived by the student-athletes via the organizational outcomes including organizational citizenship behavior, organizational commitment and job satisfaction. His research revealed charismatic leadership as well as responsiveness and empathy as prominent dimensions of transformational leadership and service quality concluding that transformational leadership was correlated to all organizational outcomes.

As part of his research, Choi (2006) addresses transactional and transformational leadership styles stating that “transactional leaders have the individual dispositions that interact with their followers on an exchange of task effort for reward (p. 20).” These leaders identify the steps their players need to take in order to achieve the desired outcomes. Additionally, transactional coaches’ can identify their players’ wants and needs as well as clarify how they can be satisfied providing the necessary efforts are made. The transactional leadership style is represented by the two primary behaviors of management by exception and contingent reward. This leadership style is also part of the transformational leadership style which extends beyond the initial tenets of

transactional leadership. “Neither transformational nor transactional leadership are totally independent dimensions (p. 21).”

Building on previous research Choi (2006) shows that transformational leadership centers on strong relationships between coaches’ and their players’ past the transactional behaviors that focus on exchange of reward. Also, these transformational coaches “strive to raise the consciousness of followers by appealing to higher ideals and moral values such as liberty, justice, equality, peace, and humanitarianism, not to baser emotions such as fear, greed, jealousy, or hatred (p. 22).” Through the results of his study, Choi discovered that transformational leadership positively impacted organizational citizen behavior, commitment and job satisfaction as well as the generalized compliance by the student-athletes, enhancing their perceptions of the service quality they were receiving. Through the implementation of the leadership style and the potential benefits that can be garnered as a result of its execution, head coaches’ can share a vision, identify how players fit into that vision, and execute the steps needed in order for that vision to come to fruition. This plays into recruitment because part of the recruitment process for a head coach is identifying restrictions that may be placed on his search such as budgetary and/or geographical issues. Also, learning the potential recruit’s personalities and how they will fit into the team organization as athletes but also as students proves to be an important consideration of head coaches. Additionally, drawing the greatest level of commitment and effort from the players while meeting internal and external goals are variables that can be addressed through a transformational leadership style.

Another study focusing on transformational leadership in intercollegiate athletics pays attention to the perceived leader-member exchange quality and its association with perceived transformational leadership behaviors. In this study, Kent and Chelladurai (2001), using correlation and regression analysis, indicated that transformational leadership was significantly correlated with leader-member exchange quality. Their study also echoes others like Armstrong (2001) and Choi (2006) in its assessment of transformational leadership defining the leadership style as “the process of influencing major changes in attitudes and assumptions of organizational members and building commitment for the organization’s mission and objectives (p. 136).” Their work with leader-member exchange revealed that a high quality of interpersonal exchange between a coach and their student-athlete enhances mutual respect and support whereas the opposite will reduce the trust between a coach and his player(s) lessening the support given by either party. They further state that “While transformational leadership has been linked to several attitudinal and perceptual outcomes, such a link has been quite strong in the case of organizational commitment (p.141)” with transformational leadership advancing loyalty to the organization.

Leadership goals of intercollegiate head coaches’ are fueled not only by their individual visions for advancing their program, but also that of their athletic department they work for and the student-athletes that work for them. A significant part of a head coaches’ leadership and promotion of their goals is fostering relationships with the players they coach along with balancing the demands of the position. In order to go beyond simple maintenance of a program and excel competitively, a head coach needs to employ a theoretical perspective that will promote the wants and needs of his players

while advancing their development in order to achieve the vision set forth for the enhancement of the program. The above research shows instances and insights into these areas providing a base line to move forward from.

Selection and Recruitment

Selection of an institution of higher education is something that is done by prospective athletes and general student body alike. For the student-athletes, there is a significant level of recruitment and fundraising for the promotion of this recruitment. This process is much more in depth and involved for student-athlete recruitment. It entails home visit, contacting family, relatives, and friends of the prospective recruit, and making a high level of communication throughout the recruitment process via telephone, internet, and physical face-to-face visits at a recruits school or home. Given the importance of this process in acquiring top student-athletes, the following section will detail research in this area as well as touch on selection criteria for the general student body. In defining top student-athletes for the purposes of this study, it was established that student-athletes determined by the program to be worthy of an athletic scholarship were to be considered top student-athletes.

Letawsky, Schneider, Pedersen, and Palmer (2003) investigated factors that influence the college choice of top student-athletes and potential differences with non-athlete selection of schools. Their findings indicated that while student-athletes have additional factors to school selection beyond that of non-athletes, school selection based on non-athletic factors showed to be just as important for student athletes as the athletic factors drawing them to an institution of higher education. Still, athletic departments and head coaches go to great lengths to recruit and acquire top student – athletes. “The transformation of college athletics over the past 30 years into a multi-

billion dollar, internationally recognized business has changed the focus of intercollegiate athletic departments (p. 605)". It now shows that, "success within an athletic department can positively impact the institution's overall reputation and ultimately lead to higher numbers and caliber of undergraduate applicants (p. 605)." Student-athletes take a number of things into consideration when selecting a school to attend. Among the considerations, "college coach and campus environment were most important in the student-athlete decision making process (p. 605)" as well as coach reputation, an opportunity to play as a freshman, and receiving scholarships all are very important considerations for student-athletes (Letawsky et al., 2003). Additionally, Letawsky et al. discovered that the most influential factors for student-athlete selection are degree-program options, the head coach, academic support services accessible to them, the type of community surrounding the campus, as well as the school's sports traditions. These findings indicate that academic accomplishments are of equal importance to athletic accomplishments, showing academic reputation to be of great importance for recruits with degree options surfacing as the highest rated factor in the decision process for recruits (Letawsky et al., 2003). With respect to the athletic expectations and factors for selection, the head coach, institutional sports traditions, facilities, and the official on-campus visit topped the selection criteria for recruits (Letawsky et al., 2003).

Exactly what a head coach looks for in a prospective recruit will vary coach by coach team by team. Becker and Solomon (2005) explore sources of information coaches use to develop expectations for athlete ability. In their results, it is revealed that Division I head basketball coaches rely predominately on psychological attributes when

assessing athletes. They also found that the student-athletes' perceptions of the "evaluation criteria served to predict team success (p. 251)" and that "differences in team success are more dependent on the coach's ability to communicate expectations than the actual criteria used to form expectations (p. 251)." Becker and Solomon (2005) point out that expectancy theory is a way head coaches determine potential coach-athlete relations. This theory is a four-step model whereby in the first step, the head coach develops his expectations for athletic performance rating personal, performance, and psychological factors like body size, speed, agility, confidence, and anxiety. Then, based on these expectations, the coach moulds their behavior and treatment toward the athlete. The third step is where "athletes perceive differences in their coach's treatment, which provides them with information regarding their own level of competence, further impacting the athletes' performance. (p. 252)" Finally, Becker and Solomon show the athlete conforms to the coach's expectations completing the self-fulfilling prophecy.

Through the analysis of this model and the results generated from the head coaches', Becker and Solomon (2005) determined that specific sources of information coaches' used primarily relied on psychological factors in determining an athletes' ability. "The top five factors were Hard Worker, Receptivity to Coaching, Willingness to Learn, Love of the Sport, and Willingness to listen. Physical sources of information, such as Athleticism and Coordination, were not in the top one-third of items reported (p. 257)." It is also noteworthy that there was no significant difference between successful coaches and less successful coaches with the information they used to evaluate athletic ability whereas the athletes' perception of "sources of information their coaches used to assess ability (p. 257)" predicted athletic performance on successful teams.

Active recruitment is a necessity in the competitive world of intercollegiate athletics. The pursuit of this venture requires resources that are often generated through fund raising. If not for funds generated through these means head coaches would be less effective in their recruitment of athletes and unable to compete with other schools vying for the same athletes. This process lends itself to an adage in the field that “recruiting is like shaving. If you don’t do it every day, it’s going to show (Delisio & Fleming, 2005, p. 50).” Looking to bring in funding for the promotion of a program goes hand and hand with recruitment of student-athletes because both endeavors share similar attributes. In both fund raising and recruiting Delisio and Fleming show head coaches must identify the pool of prospects, qualify this pool, identify their abilities and/or fit with the program, create contact with the prospects, research these contacts, interact with them on a personal level and maintain personal connections. Skilled recruiters are often skilled fund raisers and through these steps head coaches will be able to enhance and promote their program and their vision for the future success of the program.

Recruitment and fundraising can take different forms at different institutions throughout the Division I level as well as between the different levels of competition. Resources or lack thereof can dictate how a program markets potential student-athletes. Johnson, Jubenville and Goss (2009) identified important college choice factors for entering freshman student-athletes at small, private schools. Their research showed that playing opportunities and relationships with the head coaches were top-rated factors. Also, that for major and minor-sport athletes, different strategies should be used in order to draw them to these small institutions. According to Johnson et al.,

(2009) part of the recruitment process for head coaches is recruiting players that meet institutional goals as well as the athletic goals of the head coach. This entails attracting players who will be successful both academically and athletically with special attention to these details at smaller institutions because of potential budgetary restrictions.

Awareness of selection considerations on the part of the head coach will prove beneficial in attracting recruits because it will allow them to potentially market their institution in a way that is appealing to the student-athlete. A three stage process is discussed by Johnson, Jubenville and Goss (2009) whereby students take in vast quantities of information about schools. They then distill this information down to more detailed information about schools tailored to their specific wants and needs. Finally, in the third stage, students apply to a select group of schools that are very similar based on “how well students feel they fit on campus, financial aid available, (p. 4)” and the positive elicitation from their peers approving their decision. While both student-athletes and non-athletes go through this process, “recognizing that different students respond to different messages in different ways (p. 4)” is key to highlighting what the institution has to offer for a specific recruit.

In the case of small private institutions used in this study, Johnson et al. (2009) found that these schools prioritize a distinctive image in the marketplace as well as making sure their coaching staff is on the same page in this branding effort. These efforts lend themselves to the notion that head coaches need to be a part of the institutional community and not on an athletic island focused solely on their program. In order to draw in top student-athletes to their school, head coaches need to be in tuned with what the school is all about, what it offers socially, academically, and athletically.

These coaches are not just selling themselves or the team but also the institutional community and all it has to offer these student-athletes.

In line with previous studies, opportunity to play, head coach relationship and athletic facilities were the top three considerations of recruits (Johnson, Jubenville & Goss, 2009). Another study by Goss, Jubenville and Orejan (2006) explores institutional selection factors that prove most influential for small college student-athletes, finding that recruiters would best be able to attract student-athletes with “strategies incorporating amenities, public relations, and academics.”

Recruitment of student-athletes is not an exact science. While there is quantifiable statistical data, there is still a level of subjectivity that comes along with selection of recruits. There are two primary considerations for head coaches in recruitment. There are quantifiable evaluations and subjective evaluations that are comprised of “intangible” attributes that the player possesses. An “athlete’s potential for improvement, leadership qualities, work ethic, team chemistry or past experience (p. 52)” all play into the subjective attributes that a recruit may possess (Coaches Plan, 2008). It is the responsibility of the head coach and his staff to evaluate these attributes in addition to the quantifiable characteristics of the player to determine how beneficial an addition to the program they will be and/or if they are worth investing the time and effort.

Sander (2008) refers to the recruitment process as “The Chase” stating that “Early in the morning, late at night, on weekends and days off and spare moments in between, college coaches work to lure the next generation of talent to their teams” adding that “many coaches, mindful that their salaries and recruiting budgets are tied to their win-loss records, sacrifice all semblance of a personal life to do battle with their peers and

woo those young athletes (The Chase).” There are rules in place that govern how coaches can recruit, when and where they can contact athletes, and what can be discussed but with the competition for the most talented student-athletes lines can get blurred and rules can be circumvented. “It is not uncommon for a coach to offer an athlete a scholarship and give the teenager just a day or two to decide. Yet as the rules become more restrictive, many coaches say they are scrambling to develop relationships with a widening circle of club coaches who exert influence over prospective athletes (Searching for Balance).” NCAA rules prohibit coaches from contacting athletes by telephone until July after their junior year. However, it’s common for them to communicate via e-mail during the athlete's junior year, and athletes may contact a coach unrestrictedly (Sander, 2008). For head coaches, there is a moral and ethical balancing act they must perform in the recruitment process. There are a number of stakeholders involved in this process and a lack of adherence to rules and procedures may compromise the efforts put in by these stakeholders. To the coaches’ credit and the institutions that employ them, the majority of student-athletes surveyed on their experiences of the recruitment process said that “for many athletes the process was neither as intrusive, nor as lavish” and “the institutions they now attend were fairly portrayed to them during the recruiting process (Sander, 2008b).”

The benefits of student-athletes recruitment extends beyond the playing fields into the classrooms and across the campus. Enrollment often goes up with investments in athletic facilities and athletic programs. These investments lead to elevated recruiting classes which in turn lead to elevated classes of student bodies. Sander (2008c) points out that “Since 2005, enrollment has surged 57 percent, to 1,470 students, the highest

number in at least two decades” at a small liberal-arts college. “More than half of those students play varsity sports.” Selectivity is down to 72 percent of its 4,200 applicants whereas three years ago the school accepted 93 percent of the 1,200 students who applied. “Faculty members, pleased with the trend, say the caliber of students in their classrooms has improved (Sander, 2008c).”

While it can be a great benefit to school and its athletic programs, keeping up with competing schools, maintaining facilities and recruitment budgets and staying ahead of the curve requires vast sums of revenue. Across the NCAA, it is clear that staying competitive means increased budgets with “Nearly half of the nation's largest athletics programs have doubled or tripled their recruitment spending over the past decade, as their pursuit of elite athletes intensifies and becomes more national in scope. Forty-eight percent of NCAA Division I athletic departments at least doubled their recruiting budgets from 1997 to 2007 (Sander, 2008c).” Specifically, “Of the 300 Division I institutions for which data were available, 21 each spent more than \$1-million chasing talented players in the 2007 academic year,” illustrating the level of resources head coaches find themselves exerting to stay competitive in conference and nationally (Sander, 2008c). The highest individual spender was the University of Tennessee, shelling out \$2 million dollars on recruitment in 2007 followed by Notre Dame, the University of Florida, Auburn University, Kansas State, and Georgia with Kansas State tripling its spending to reach national prominence (Sander, 2008c). According to their athletic director, “That’s the price of doing business (Sander, 2008c).”

With the escalating expenditures, the largest programs competing with each other and smaller ones trying not to get left in the dust, head coaches are left to try and figure

out what kind of return they are going to get on their investments with respect to years of attendance by student-athletes. In the cases of the elite programs there is an almost continual turnover of talent leading players to professional athletics and coaches having to reload rosters after an unfulfilled commitment for whatever the reason. Kostoff (2008) points out that the academic past and future academic aspirations of student-athletes are pivotal to the decision for recruitment. He adds that many student-athletes “don’t understand that becoming a college recruit is a four-year process approximately 740 days (p. 28).” In order to evaluate these recruits, Kostoff (2008) takes aim at their transcripts. Student-athletes’ “high school transcripts is the one piece of paper that will tabulate every one of these days- a student-athletes’ resume toward college athletics.” He goes on to note that “the first question asked by every recruiter is ‘what is the player’s GPA and class rank?’ the higher the GPA and class rank, the greater the number of athletic opportunities that will be made available to him (p. 28).” While there can often be no lack of effort for these student-athletes, Kostoff shows statistically, they will experience more professional opportunities upon graduation than non-athlete students.

Individual Styles of Head Coaches

Intercollegiate head coaches are viewed through a multitude of different lenses with a wide array of tasks and responsibilities for which they are accountable. Their individual experiences and the experiences they create for others, namely their players, are part of the foundation for their profession. In addition to the experiences derived through and from coaching, the knowledge base that goes into the position along with the efficacy of the coach all play into the accountability of intercollegiate head coaches (Gurney, Weber, 2008).

Student-athletes are the primary stakeholders for head coaches. As such, “coaches are responsible for developing athletes’ mental, physical, technical, and tactical abilities, and in addition to all of these responsibilities, they are also expected to win (Becker & Solomon, 2009, p. 93).” In their study, they investigate the experiences of great coaching through the lens of the student-athletes. Their study led to the development of a final thematic structure providing six major dimensions of great coaching that include the influences and coaching actions, coach attributes, the environment, relationships, and the system in which they play and operate. From the perspective of the student-athletes Becker and Solomon yielded results showing that a stable consistent coach who maintained strong relationships with their athletes and managed a positive team environment within the set system or vision set forth by the coach were found to be of greatest quality. Also, those coaches who avoid breakdowns between themselves and their players were perceived to be more than just a head coach but rather someone to look up to often embodying the role of a parental figure to the athletes (Becker & Solomon, 2009).

Becker and Solomon (2009) show that veteran coaches who were highly respected within their field were granted an “automatic level of credibility” as a result of being well known with a positive reputation. This emphasis on reputation would prove important when recruiting student-athletes because if a level of credibility is granted by the recruit it could help facilitate the recruitment process according to student-athletes in the study.

Cunningham and Dixon (2003) look at performance appraisals of intercollegiate coaches and propose an updated system that addresses and measures team athletic

and academic outcomes, fiscal responsibility, ethical behavior, athlete satisfaction, and quality in student-athlete recruitment. Their proposed team appraisal instrument addresses administrative issues such as pay raises and contract renewals as opposed to developmental issues such as improvements in weak areas of performance. Through the team appraisal instrument the researchers build on previous research measuring performance on the field, ethical behavior and academic progress. However, Cunningham and Dixon work also evaluates the effectiveness of the coaching staff in blending skill sets and knowledge with those other attributes to identify and create a high quality team product, encompassing not just the head coach but the various stakeholders involved in the program.

Gurney and Weber (2008) suggested as a means of accountability that head coaches be responsible for graduation rates of their student-athletes because of their elevated role in the recruitment progression of their student-athletes. Head coaches “are the ones who gauge their institutions' priorities and academic demands, select recruits, and convince those athletes of the fit between their academic preparedness and the institution's academic expectations (Why Focus on Head Coaches)”. With respect to their program, coaches “largely determine whether a team's culture will encourage a student to engage fully in the institution and seek a degree, or whether that team will judge a student-athlete based only on his or her athletics contribution (Why Focus on Head Coaches).” Furthermore, they note that “it is the coaches who have recruits sign letters of intent, often without input from faculty members or administrators (Why Focus on Head Coaches).”

If only informally, head coaches do maintain efforts to keep their athletes eligible and graduating. In addition to on the court wins and losses, coaches are tasked with the development of their players into capable men, ready to move on after their athletic experience in college. This is evident in the relationships coaches build but also the level of efficacy that is fostered individually and through the players. Jackson, Knapp and Beauchamp (2009) explore “putative antecedents and consequences associated with self-efficacy, other-efficacy, and relation-inferred self-efficacy,” between elite coaches and their athletes. The results of their study indicates both coaches and student-athletes believed that the efficacy beliefs originated from oneself and that the efficacy constructs were interrelated as well as independently associated with positive consequences pertaining to relationship orientated and task-related consequences.

The efficacy constructs addressed in Jackson, Knapp and Beauchamp (2009) highlight Lentz and Lopez (2002) indicating that the efficacy constructs “play a fundamental role in the healthy development and sustenance of mutually beneficial relationships (p.227).” Specifically, the formation of relationships between head coaches and their athletes’ shows only to be initiated when strong beliefs about the other’s capabilities are present. Additionally, student-athletes were willing to maintain relationships with those coaches for whom they held a high level of other-efficacy and demonstrated high levels of self-efficacy (Jackson, Knapp & Beauchamp, 2009). Confidence in self and others’, correlates to increased communication, going as far as to “initiate communication, seek advice, pay attention to coach feedback and feel close to their coaches (p. 227).” Furthermore, elevated efficacy on the part of the coach and athlete promotes improved performance and motivation solidifying the importance of

efficacy of self and other between coaches' and their players' (Jackson, Knapp & Beauchamp, 2009).

An intercollegiate head coach typically has a leadership style that is comfortable for them and that fits their sport and team. A coaches' efficacy can play a role in the leadership style they choose for their program based on the value they place on themselves and those around them. Sullivan and Kent (2003) investigated coaching efficacy as a predictor of leadership style in intercollegiate athletics, examining the relationship between the efficacy of these coaches and their leadership style. They found that coaching efficacy accounts for a large portion of variance in leadership style with motivation and technique efficacy serving as significant predictors.

Sullivan and Kent (2003) determined that there are sources of coaching efficacy, coaching efficacy dimensions, and outcomes of the coaching efficacy. Sources of the efficacy comes from coaching experience and preparation, prior success, perceived skill of student-athletes, as well as school and community support. The different dimensions they address are game strategy, motivation, technique, and character building which ultimately builds into the outcomes for the coaching efficacy, identified as the coaching behavior, player and team satisfaction as well performance and confidence. The research showed that "high efficacy coaches had significantly higher winning percentages and higher levels of player satisfaction (p. 3)." Also, that "high efficacy coaches displayed a greater frequency of praise and encouragement and less instruction and organization than low efficacy coaches (p. 3)."

With higher coaching efficacy, come higher levels of player satisfaction. However, in the pursuit of excellence and the attainment of top student-athletes in each recruiting

class, head coaches must find ways to promote unity and provide for positive team chemistry in the pursuit of integrating new talent as well as maintaining a level of excellence in competition. Head coaches must provide players with all necessities needed to maintain an attitude of cohesion and unity. Aghazadeh and Kyei (2009) have investigated factors affecting team unity and found that variables such as academic policy, team record, class standing, funding, travel accommodations, and coaching staff are considered by the student-athletes to improve team unity. Of these factors, “travel accommodations, coaching staff and academic policies are the most important factors that can contribute to unity among athletes in college sports (p. 294).” Within the list of most important factors that can contribute to unity among athletes in college sports, Aghazadeh and Kyei conclude that “coaching staff” is the most important factor due to the influence and power over the student-athletes.

For head coaches to have the abilities to identify and assess the needs of their team they have to employ the knowledge and skills that they have learned through their experiences. Some head coaches were previously student-athletes in the sport they coach; others have not had the same athletic backgrounds but have shown success in their sport. Carter and Bloom (2009) explored the development and acquisition of coaching knowledge, revealing that successful coaches have shown commonalities between their personal characteristics and current coaching knowledge. Through their research, countless meaning units were distilled down to three categories that represent the knowledge and expertise gained by head coaches. These categories are career path, coaching knowledge, and personal factors of the head coaches. All research participants played sports as a youth leading to their ultimate profession as athletic

coaches. The leading personal factor for the research participants was communication skills and knowledge acquisition came from observing other coaches, participation in sport, studying physical education and kinesiology in college. Another attribute that was discovered to be important was teaching skills. Coaches identified teaching skills as requisite for excellence and “in some instances, coaches chose to work harder on improving their teaching skills than their sport-specific knowledge (p. 433).” Individual coaches will have specific experiences and backgrounds that provide them the knowledge base to coach and lead their program to success. While not all intercollegiate head coaches played elite college sport or college sport at all, there are commonalities between those coaches who did and those who did not, showing that personal factors and developed coaching knowledge can lead to successes for their program.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to explore the leadership styles of intercollegiate athletic coaches and their effectiveness in acquiring the highest caliber student-athletes available to their program. The method of inquiry is a narrative approach, focusing on specific programs, using individual interviews in order to discover data and better understand the role that leadership style plays in recruiting student-athletes. This research was guided by the following research questions:

1. How does Coach X describe his experiences in selecting potential recruits for the program?
2. How does Coach X describe leadership strategies and/or practices that enable him to acquire the best available talent to the specific athletic program with respect to the values and beliefs of the coach?

Answers to the presented research questions were pursued through the analysis of individual interviews, grounded in the constructivist epistemology, using a constructivist theoretical perspective. This epistemology can take a variety of forms as indicated by Hatch, 2002 and Grbich, 2007. For example, a researcher can create contrasting stories between two research participants to create the interpretation of content as noted in Grbich. (p132). For the purposes of this study a positioning of the actor and the research are utilized to create the interpretations of the data.(p.132) The subsequent findings bring forward an understanding of the educational phenomenon concerning how students are recruited and the role that a coach's leadership style contributed to this process.

Leadership transcends the field of play for intercollegiate coaches. From individuals in the athletic department outwards to the academic community and the community at large, Leadership permeates a wide range of areas and activities. Armstrong, 2001; Choi, 2006; Kent and Chelladurai, 2001 are among those researchers who have looked at leadership, specifically transformational leadership and how it's model impacts organizational outcomes, commitment, behavior and service quality throughout intercollegiate athletics. Kent and Chelladurai, 2001 utilize Bass's model whereby there are three primary dimensions that comprise the leadership model:

“Charismatic leadership concerns "the faith and respect in the leader and the inspiration and encouragement provided by his or her presence" (p.209).

Intellectual stimulation is defined as "the arousal and change in followers of problem awareness and problem solving, of thought and imagination, and of beliefs and values, rather than arousal and change in immediate action" (p. 99).

Individualized consideration refers to the leader treating each subordinate "differently according to each subordinate's needs and capabilities" (p. 82).

Research has shown that these dimensions of transformational leadership have positive effects on other organizationally relevant variables such as satisfaction.

Commitment, and motivation, and that these effects go beyond those of transactional leadership behaviors (e.g., Basu & Green, 1997; Doherty & Danylchuk, 1996; Hater & Bass, 1988; Howell & Avolio. 1993; Koh, Steers, & Terborg, J995; Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, J990).”

Hatch (2002) shows that in constructivism, research paradigms have multiple realities that are constructed, with knowledge as a human construction where the

researcher and participant build the understandings of this knowledge. He cites Guba and Lincoln (1994) who say that “constructivists assume a world in which universal, absolute realities are unknowable, and the objects of inquiry are individual perspectives or constructions of reality.”(p. 15) He adds that “multiple realities exist that are inherently unique because they are constructed by individuals who experience the world from their own vantage point” (p. 15). Hatch (2002) also calls on Mishler’s (1986) work showing that researchers take time interacting with and observing the participants in their natural environment in order to better reconstruct the constructions the research participants use to make meaning of their world (p.15). These constructivist interviews performed by the researcher work with the participants to co-construct the understandings that are reported as narratives (p. 23). Constructivism “fits most comfortably” with narrative works while it can be used elsewhere as noted by Polkinghorne (1995).(p. 28)

Constructivism shaped this study by providing the cues to follow when collecting and analyzing data. In this study, multiple realities were constructed with the knowledge of the participant guiding the researcher to develop a co-constructed understanding of the knowledge. Furthermore, constructivism shaped this study in the time and interaction that took place between the researcher and the participants. The researcher spent anywhere from a day to a full week in observation and interaction with the participants in their natural environments to develop a rapport as well as to better reconstruct the constructions that the participants use to make meaning of their world.

The researcher and the participant collectively co-constructed the knowledge generated from the interview process with the participant leading in that construction and the researcher filling out the full understanding of the content. The participants were

given a very active role in the process. Editing content such as questions and elaboration on their answers as well as who else and what additional artifacts might be involved to enhance the study such as assistant coaches or colleagues along with personal artifacts such as news paper clippings, championship rings or trophies. They had a hand in the final product through member-checking as the sessions' progress and conclude.

The Setting

The coaching climates at these institutions are ones with expectations of performance on and off the field of play for all those within the program. The day to day operations of the programs are highly compartmentalized with each stakeholder having specific tasks and expectations. Responsibilities are delegated to and from the head coach to assistant coaches, strength and conditioning coaches, academic advisors, and support staff who comprise the program in order to make things run smoothly and efficiently. Challenges that come along with this position are both internal and external with expectations from senior administrators and boosters as well as the general public.

Each program was chosen for; the level of intercollegiate competition, subsequently conference membership as well as a representation of a state institution. Program selection first entailed differentiating between different division levels, Division III, Division II, and Division I. After determining Division I, the highest intercollegiate competitive level, would best suit the study, the researcher set out to find programs that embodied the different conferences throughout the Division I competition level. This included selection of programs that represented both Mid-Major Division I programs as well as programs representative of major conferences such as the Big East, Big Ten, SEC, ACC, PAC Ten, or the Big Twelve, defined by the NCAA. Once the participant

pool was narrowed down to viable candidates the solicitation process began. The individual programs in this study represent both mid major conferences and major power conferences achieving the intended goals of participant selection.

Individually, the settings ranged from fully dedicated and independent facilities to accommodations where the given program shared court time and facilities with a host of other teams as well as the student body. Individual characteristics between any given schools will vary depending on the prerogative of that institution and its emphasis on athletic endeavors.

Participants

Participation in this study was first determined by a willingness to take part in the research followed by the timeliness of responses to the request for participation in this study. Access to the individual coaches was gained first through written communication followed by telephone and/or e-mail communication. Participation was finally secured through a face-to face meeting where details of participation and intent of the study were discussed. Permission to attract the participants was first approved through the supervisory committee and cleared through the IRB. Then, the ultimate approval from the research participant was received. There were three coaches included in the study, selected through their position as a Division I coach at a public institution. Informed consent was obtained in person through a face-to-face meeting with the research participants who are male, in their mid forties to early sixties.

The research participants have had many years of experience coaching and leading student-athletes through different programs as low as the high school level and as high as Division I. Each of the coaches has served at a variety of different programs. All participants were male and presided over a men's program. The individual coaching

experience of participants ranged from 14 to 35 years of coaching service with an average of over 20 years head coaching experience. Additionally, over the past ten seasons, 41 recruits representing the top 150 recruits in their class have been garnered by two of the three coaches, while the third, a mid-major has secured none based on Rivals.com top 150 rankings.

Coaching Profile

A coaching profile for one of the research participants includes; over 30 years of head coaching experience starting at the community college level for four years before moving up to the Division II ranks for 15 years where he led three different schools. After his time in Division II, he made the jump to Division I where he has currently been for the past 14 years. He has over 500 wins in his career while only taking nearly 400 losses. This coach has had a number of former players go on to play professionally overseas as well as in the NBA. This coach is a former intercollegiate athlete himself playing basketball in college. He has compiled a winning record in multiple Divisions for a number of different schools and has a career winning percentage of roughly .600. His staffing resources include three full-time assistant coaches, two programs and sport specific strength and conditioning coaches, as well as a support staff of four that includes an administrative assistant, director of basketball operations, video coordinator, and a graduate assistant, as well as numerous members of the student body who attend and work at practices. Coaches noted that it can be an exhausting process consuming anywhere from 70 to 90 percent of their time and effort by their own estimations. Recruitment is a year-long process that involves countless hours of travel, communication, preparation, and evaluation of the program as well as the potential student-athletes that are under consideration to be brought in and offered athletic

scholarships. Coaches interviewed did a large portion of the regional recruiting with one coach saying “ I went out 56 times last year over the school year so that’s if I went out 56 times and there’s 16, 32, that’s almost twice a week for the entire season.” In other instances assistant coaches took the lead on recruitment efforts leaving the head coach free for other duties as well as to seal the deal if and when needed. The leadership styles of the coaches interviewed were such that their coaching style and leadership style were one in the same. Coaches interviewed expressed transparency as a high priority. Therefore, they maintained their identity on and off of the court as well as from player to player.

The universities selected were all four-year public institutions with enrollment ranging from thirty to fifty thousand students. All have a majority of students enrolled as undergraduates who are primarily residential. Programmatically, the selected participants all maintain winning percentages above .500 and in recent years have made post season appearances in tournament play. All three schools compete at the Division I level athletically, are located in urban/city environments and are research intensive. Two of the three schools have student faculty ratios of 16:1 while a third has 20:1 ratio. Each school is in excess of 1300 acres with representation in the Big Ten, SEC, and MAC conference respectively.

Research Design: Narrative Research

Grbich (2007) states that “narrative analysis focuses on stories told by participants” with “the story aspect seen as a complete entity in itself with a beginning, a middle and an end.” With this, there is an assumption that a great deal of communication is transferred through stories, revealing personal “experiences,

interpretations and priorities” (p. 124). The elicitation of personal narratives is perceived as a more natural means of communication with two main versions of analysis with socio-linguistic and socio-cultural focusing on plots and how they convey meaning and a broader interpretive framework looking at how people make sense of incidents in their lives respectively. (p. 124)

Historically, narrative analysis covers a wide range of contextual mediums with the key defining features of a story or narration of events that have developed sequentially over time. (p. 125) Specific definitions have shifted over time with a structuralist approach dominating the middle of the twentieth century and evolving through the work of Russian formalists and French structuralists who introduced different terminology but with similar meaning to their Russian counterparts. (p. 125) Labov’s plot work and groups like the Personal Narratives Group who focus on “content and contextual interpretation derived from the stories” round out the background of this analysis with a dichotomy of plot and story dominating this form of analysis. (p. 125) Grbich (2007) points out that other researchers such as Reismann (2003) and Beech (2000) have identified varying styles such as hypothetical and topic centered narratives as well as heroic director and romantic ward manager style, specific to managers and workers of different organizations. Many different scholars and researchers advocate that personal narratives are an individuals’ identity, in part because “people are storytellers by nature (Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, & Zilber, 1998).” These stories “provide coherence and continuity to one’s experience and have a central role in our communication with others” while providing “one of the clearest channels of learning about the inner world” of individuals through their verbal accounts and stories (p. 7).

The research design for this study is narrative because of the desire to delve into and explore the leadership styles of intercollegiate athletic coaches and their effectiveness in acquiring the highest caliber student-athletes available to their program from the coaches' perspective as the senior administrator of the program. The research form used in this study is narrative interview for its flexibility in allowing the participant to share freely any information they feel worthwhile while also making sure to address the intended questions posed in the interview in order to address the research questions of the study. This research design was implemented to explore a phenomenon in higher education that showed a gap in the knowledge base, creating a problem with the available literature. The coaches in this study were purposefully selected by their position as a Division I coach representing a mid major or power conference as well as a willingness to take time away from their duties to address this educational phenomenon. Once participation was agreed upon, their stories about their thoughts, beliefs, and values were collected and questions pertaining to this educational phenomenon were dealt with. The information was then reviewed and recounted to create the most accurate interpretation of the material. Then, once this was put together the participant collaborated with the researcher as a means of checking for accuracy and intent of the interviews and expressed statements. After the research participant was comfortable with the data the material was put together and ultimately validated by participant one last time before completion of the study.

Interviews provided insights into the participants ways of making meaning in their lives and have the potential to create different outcomes, of which Hatch (2002) points out Lincoln and Guba's five outcomes of interviewing which are: "here and now

constructions-participant explanations of events, activities, feelings, motivations, concerns; reconstructions-explanations of past events and experiences; projections-explanations of anticipated experiences; triangulation- verification of extension of information from other sources; member checking- verification or extension of information developed by the researcher.” Whether used individually or in conjunction with other data collection methods a “central strength” of interviewing it allows the researcher to try and figure out what the participant is thinking (p. 92).

The interviews were conducted in the individual offices of each coach which is where they felt most comfortable and promoting a level of convenience in maintaining their day to day operations as well as upholding their other responsibilities for the program. Each interview ranged from a half hour to an hour depending on down time or interruptions that arose from stakeholders needing the attention of the coach.

Conversations throughout the visits were commonplace within the scope of the study and beyond the scope of the study facilitating the ease in communication throughout the interviews. Notes were taken at practices, in meetings, and around the program to supplement the study as well as for review of interviews and preparation of future discussions. This study used a similar sample size to that of Singer’s, (2005) study on understanding racism through the eyes of African-American male student-athletes.

Subjectivity Statement

The researcher has a background in athletics from early childhood through intercollegiate competition as a member of men’s Division I basketball program. I have been interconnected throughout this community of basketball professionals and hope at some point to be involved with intercollegiate athletics directly as a coach or in an

indirect capacity as an athletic advisor or compliance officer. Specifically, there have been a great number of experiences as a player with coaching leadership ranging from poor to excellent attributes of a coach guiding my view and interpretations as well as existing research. These experiences have shaped and molded my perspective on leadership and the attributes that help make productive successful leaders. Examples that stand out and have made a great impression with respect to poor leadership in coaching are those coaches who do not lead by example, those who divide the team as opposed to uniting them under one cause, and those who express little communication, delegating their thoughts indirectly through assistant coaches. Inversely, Examples of great leadership in coaching has been exhibited through those who clearly articulate the expectations and goals of the team and promote those goals through the development of the team through execution of training and development. Directly related to the recruitment of student-athletes, there has been experience in this process from the perspective of a potential recruit. This experience came from recruitment as a prospective football player out of high school as well as some interest from local schools for basketball. The process proved to be very educational and informative because there are many avenues that must be traveled throughout the process on the part of the student-athlete as well as the recruiter and had it not been for this experience I might not have as great an insight into the recruitment of potential student-athletes or leadership attributes of intercollegiate coaches. Likewise, interaction with intercollegiate teammates who were much more heavily recruited for their services provided what might have been the greatest insights into the process as their experiences ran through

the whole gambit of the recruitment process down to a few schools vying for their services and one ultimately winning out over the others.

Data Collection: Narrative Interviews

The study was conducted at three different Division I institutions across the country. The research participants chose the location for the interviews selecting their place of work where they spend the majority of their time when available on campus. This location is their main office, selected because it is both of greatest convenience and comfort to their participation in this study. The criteria for selection of the participant was coaching at the Division I level and representing a state institution. The participant was selected based on this purposeful sampling. Specifically, theory or concept sampling was employed because the participant is helping to discover specific concepts that lead to a greater understanding of leadership styles that allow head coaches' to recruit top student-athletes. Once the role was accepted as a research participant they were advised on the process that ensued and given instructions. The narrative interview differed from a standardized formal interview in that the participant will have the flexibility of co-construction of knowledge. Participants were informed that they should speak freely and were able to discuss anything they wanted pertaining to their progression as a coach and the development of their recruitment process. Their office allowed them to be relaxed and in their natural environment, enhancing the interview process as recommended by Hatch (2002). Also, this setting allowed the research participant to be mobile and reactive to their professional obligations to the program. In this sense, mobility, reactivity, convenience and comfort all aim at achieving what Hatch, 2002 calls "very difficult or impossible to do...finding out what is in and on someone else's mind" (p. 92). The selection of this site was left to the research

participant. This action also helped the research participant take power and ownership of their participation in the study in an effort to facilitate their cooperation. As Hatch says responsibility for questions and answers is shared with the research participants (p.95). It also lent itself to a seamless transition between the interview process and the daily functions that the head coach needs to perform. Within the participants office there is a desk which they use as their primary station for their work activities. There is also a table off to the side where they can hold additional meetings or interactions as well as other seating for more casual interactions. Narrative interviews were conducted face-to-face and recorded with an audio recording device in an open-ended format. The duration of each interview session varied with the coaches' availability and schedule for the given day due to the high demands for their time and efforts. Each interview was at least thirty minutes in length and never exceeded two hours. There was a total of three interview sessions, the last of which was used for member-checking. Throughout the interviews, open-ended questions were asked to allow the research participant to voice their experiences in the best context and format for their individual comfort and style. Probes were implemented into the interviews to elicit additional information on topics that are especially valuable to the study. The personal and professional background of the participant was evaluated to determine if there were any items that would be stimulating to the interview process and provide for elaboration throughout the story telling process (See Coaching Profile on Page 53). Also, any available artifacts that were present were called on to facilitate the interviews.

Specifically, each interview went according to plan with each participant constructing their individual meaning of each question and how it pertained to their

experiences. There were instances in each interview where the participant was momentarily distracted or called away from the interview. However, this allowed the researcher to review, think about answers, and plan ahead for upcoming questions as well as allowing the participant to better wrap their thoughts around a question in order to better understand its intention. After questioning was concluded and parting thoughts shared each session was wrapped up with an explanation of what would take place next in terms of the next interview or the analysis as well as scheduling and availability in order to give the participant greater ownership of the process, elevating their confidence in participation.

The collection process followed Hatch (2002) and his recommendations to use open-ended questions; to have questions that use familiar language to the coach; to have questions that are clear, concise, and neutral; to have questions that respect the coach and the value of their knowledge; and questions that generate answers related to the research questions. As for the actual interview process there are a number of attributes that it embodied. Maintaining a polite conversation; interviewing in a comfortable place such as their office; careful planning before the interview starts such as prepared questions; being an attentive listener to the participant; delving into the participants understandings of the questions and feedback; invitation extended to the participant to improve researchers skills in interviewing; and finally transcription of interviews as soon as possible created additional strength in the research project.

Data Analysis: Narrative

Labov and Waletzky (2003) suggest that “fundamental structures are to be found in oral versions of personal experiences: not the products of expert storytellers that have been retold many times, but the original production of a representative sample of

the population.” They also note that the narrative analysis be based on recurrent patterns and this study therefore focuses on the narrative itself (Paulston & Tucker, 2003). Reissman, (1994) concurs with this saying “narrative analysis takes as its objective of investigation the story itself.” Likewise, narrative is considered as a verbal technique for recapitulating experience, specifically, constructing narrative units that match the sequence of the given experience while also servicing personal interest that has been determined by a stimulus in the context of that narrative (p. 75). For the purposes of this study, narrative analysis will provide access to the coaches’ identity and personality (p. 7). In line with Lieblich et al. 1998, this study will not “advocate total relativism that treats narratives as complete and accurate representations of reality” but rather a construction that has a core of facts and/or life events allowing for “freedom of individuality and creativity in selection, addition to, emphasis on, and interpretation of these ‘remembered facts.’”

Grbich (2007) provides the analytical process for this study whereby the researcher: identified the boundaries of the narrative segments in the interview transcripts specific to the coach’s experiences, explored the content and context of the story while considering how the coaches were making sense of experiences they were discussing. Also, what emotions and feelings are displayed by the coaches and the impact it has on their interpretation of their experiences, comparison of the different stories and experiences between coaches, linkage between the told stories to the relevant structures and locations for this study, and then interpreted the stories remaining conscious of my own positions and reactions and how these shape the final

text. These processes along with the socio-cultural approach guided the analysis for this study.

Data was analyzed by multiple researchers in order to promote reliability. These researchers are members of the supervisory committee. These researchers have extensive experience through coursework, individual projects and their experiences working with departmental professors and the academic community. Also, the process for generating and interpreting the data has been documented utilizing an inquiry audit. Throughout the analysis the research participants were consulted as a means for respondent validation and member-checking of the materials. Also, peer de-briefing took place to enhance dependability. Through narrative analysis the researcher gathered the individual context of the participants and shared the basic actions that have enabled the research participant to elevate to their current level of success.

Hatch (2002) presents steps to the interpretive analysis process that were followed throughout the study and distinguishing as such which are: reading the data for a sense of the whole; reviewing impressions previously recorded in research; reading the data and recording the identified impressions; study of notes for important points; review of data and coding accordingly; creating a draft summary; reviewing understandings with the research participants; and creating a revised summary identifying portions that support the created understandings.

Analysis of this study employed interpretive analysis because there are constant interpretive judgments that allowed the researcher to “transform data in different ways emphasizing description, analysis or interpretation” as necessary. This model also allows meaning to be assigned to the data in order to make sense of the social

situations that were presented by the research participant. (p. 180) Furthermore, the interpretive model allows for “making inferences, developing insights, attaching significance, refining understandings, drawing conclusions, and extrapolating lessons, situating the researcher as an active player in the research process.” (p. 180)

Validity: Trustworthiness

Hatch (2002) who, in general terms, provides guiding questions that help determine validity and promote greater trustworthiness. He points out that studies should have a qualified interview described and justified; procedural description and justification; predetermined guiding questions that are open-ended, clear, and neutral, reflecting the research questions (p. 145). Also, this study utilized peer de-briefing to enhance the dependability further adding to the trustworthiness of the study, measures that are corroborated by Hatch.

Specifically, this study provided adequate trustworthiness through the process for generating and interpreting the data because it has been documented utilizing an inquiry audit. Each day notes were taken regarding the happenings of the day, interactions between coaches and players, between researcher and participant, in reference to the interviews, and in reflection of the interviews in order to promote greater dependability and confirmability. This study provided a point of triangulation through interactions with assistant coaches within the program. While not directly interviewed, this interaction included courtside and locker room discussions during practices and meetings. Also, there were many instances where these coaches made themselves available beyond the parameters of the individual interviews sharing their time over a meal or during a practice session. Likewise, triangulation occurred with the integration of artifacts into the interview process. Coach’s offices, locker rooms, and

facilities provided a number of different artifacts to speak on and helped to further develop the understandings of the experiences. These artifacts ranged from banners, to posters, pictures, rings and trophies, and/or adjectives painted on the walls of the offices and/or locker rooms that each program holds close and values highly. The study was analyzed by multiple researchers on the supervisory committee in order to promote reliability. These researchers have extensive experience through coursework, individual projects and their experiences working with departmental professors and the academic community. Throughout the analysis the research participants were consulted as a means for respondent validation and member-checking of the materials. Before and after each direct interview, the participant was consulted about what had or was about to take place and the nature of the questioning. Also, previous studies have utilized small sample groups such as Singer, (2005) who used four research participants for his qualitative study on intercollegiate football players, looking at their individual perceptions to determine their take on racism as African-American males.

CHAPTER 4 RESULTS

This study explored intercollegiate coaches' individual leadership style and their implications on their recruitment efforts of top student-athletes to their individual program. In defining top student-athletes for the purposes of this study, it was established that student-athletes determined by the program to be worthy of an athletic scholarship were to be considered top student-athletes. Baring this definition in mind, the objective of this study was to examine how intercollegiate coaches describe their experiences in selecting potential recruits for the program as well as how they describe leadership strategies and/or practices that enable them to acquire the best available talent to the specific athletic program with respect to the values and beliefs of the coach? In order to maintain anonymity for the participants, identifying characteristics of the individuals and their specific institutions were removed opting for reference as Coach 1, Coach 2, and Coach 3 in transcription and any particulars regarding the participants will not be presented. The findings will be presented in a narrative format drawing on the individual participant responses where they directly lend themselves. This chapter is composed of four sections: (a) participants, (b) perceptions of leadership experiences, (c) implications on recruitment, and (d) Results.

Participants

Three NCAA Division I basketball programs selected from around the country participated in this study representing Midwestern, Northeast, and Southeastern regions. Selected programs represented mid major conferences as well as major conferences. All participants were male and presided over a men's program. The individual coaching experience of participants ranged from 14 to 35 years of coaching

service with an average of over 20 years head coaching experience, showing a proven track record of leadership and recruitment abilities. Throughout the chapter, quotes are used from the participants in no specific order or assignment but rather by richness of content supporting each area discussed in the chapter.

Perceptions of Recruitment Experiences

The initial research question addressed in this study was how a coach describes his experiences in selecting potential recruits for his program. Different themes emerged including: family, work ethic, long term oriented goals, case by case evaluation of student-athletes, and recruitment being the life blood of the program. Each of these themes is discussed in the following section.

Family

Participating coaches indicated and/or alluded to the nature of their program being much like a family. For the coaches, staff, and players there is a close network of individuals who work and live with each other throughout the year. These individuals spend the greatest number of hours in such a close proximity to one another that over the course of their tenure they can develop relationships that go unmatched outside of their team family.

Bringing players into the family as new recruits is a critical component of both the recruitment process and success of the team. Players come from a wide array of backgrounds with varying skill sets and degrees of aptitude for both the athletic and academic endeavors they are about to embark on. Coaches expressed their thoughts on this by saying:

“I like working with youngsters and seeing if you can make a difference, not just in basketball but in the whole picture and try to have a positive effect on people in general, in this case basketball players. They are the most

diverse group of individuals in locker rooms across the country with an unbelievable difference in makeup and that's a challenge. . . . Who you're going to bring into your family and who you are going to pass on and just say well we'll coach against them, well that's a delicate issue if you are going to worry a lot about character than you are going to play against a lot of awfully talented people and that's a decision you are going to have to make."

Another coach adds that:

"I try to bring in guys with some character, guys who are stable. Many come in from a background as The Man in high school, at least that's what they think, and I always tell them that you can't be The Man without being a man, so the first thing is the whole growth, maturing, development, that part of it. Being dependable. There are a lot of guys with ability, but not as many with dependability and so can we/they depend on themselves and that's not just basketball but everything. Most of them are from a background where they are usually only called on to do things they like doing, so they're not sure if they can depend on themselves to do the things that they don't like doing and that's part of the whole process to get them to say I'm going to embrace this challenge."

As such, deciding to bring players into the family then makes it a necessity to create buy in to the ideals of the program, the objectives of the coaching staff, and to develop a level of cohesion with the existing members of the team. These concepts, if not expressed up front can create disconnect between the new recruit and the existing program. Also, if a divide does develop then clarity of the initial message as well as character flaws in the recruits can be exposed. In order to prevent potential issues from arising extensive measures are taken to identify and address potential areas for concern. One coach noted that:

"We want to know if there are some really bad red flags, in between the different phases of the recruitment we do a lot of calling, background checking, we'll check with anybody at his high school it could be an assistant principal, another student there, just to try to get a feel for who he is and what we should know."

Creating acceptance and adherence to the family values of a program can take different forms throughout different programs. Each program puts emphasis on different areas that they feel is of greatest importance. One coach noted that he emphasizes:

“Empowerment of assistants and the young men they are coaching looking for and developing young men that want to achieve and don’t mind being pushed. “We value family, and within our family we value character so we look for that, we value stability but obviously we’re all looking for talent and if they are not of a certain talent level we shouldn’t be looking at them.” Furthermore, “It’s critical to get everyone to see the values that you are looking for so that they can see and appreciate value in education, helping each other, being cared about, coming back and lending to the program”

Another coach said:

“Every student-athlete is someone’s child and if this were my kid would I want them to be dealt with this way, I treat players as I want to be treated, asking nothing of them that I wouldn’t ask of myself and for our program everything stems from those values.”

Through those values, and others, coaches provide open, direct, and productive atmospheres in their different programs. It is critical to the success of the program that the conveyance and execution of their expectations resonate throughout the team and are exemplified through their leadership. One of the coaches supports this by saying:

“Leadership is a tone at the top that you have to have but I don’t think that’s enough. You have to have leadership within your assistant coaches and leadership within your team, and that’s how you make progress. You can have a tremendous level of leader on the team but if your next rounds of seniors or juniors are not lovers of leadership, it’s ok to be followers but it’s that we all have ownership in this thing, leads to leadership concept that is great and creates unity and purpose.” He adds that “When you’re looking for particular recruits that fit the culture that you want to create and that’s behind the scenes, the leadership is trying to create this culture and when you create this culture the team has an identity that they not only use now, they use forever such as integrity, diligence and passion and if we use these things every day that becomes our identity and embodies who we are.”

Another coach puts it in different terms saying:

“Through the different values and expectations that we have, our players are going to be successful on the court but they are going to be successful period and that’s a big part of it, accountability is key. If you don’t go to class and we catch you, you’re going to run sprints at 6 a.m. with the rest of the team and you are held accountable to yourself, your teammates, and the program. We understand that the meal of choice for a college student is sleep. I got an 8 a.m. class I’ll roll out of bed 20 minutes of 8 brush my teeth and go to class, I’ll eat later, I’ll sleep in as long as I can, you end up skipping breakfast and with lifting all these weights, and practice it would come to an individual detriment as well as the program so we hold the guys accountable to one another and themselves. After a lil’ while they realize it’s easier to just go to breakfast at 7:30 than to have to run at 6:00 a.m. where the entire team will be subjected to an individual’s decisions.”

Building on the established values and creating buy in to the ideals of the program is supported with the mentorship by the coaches for the student-athletes. One coach likens it to what the players’ time will be like and what their legacy will be saying:

“Initially we present a vision of what this can be like, what is your legacy going to be like as a college student athlete, not as a high school student, a lot of times the biggest things kids do is select a school and you never hear from them again, so we look at what is your time here going to be like and what do you want to get out of the experience and how can we promote these things and develop you as a player and a person.”

Another coach relates their mentorship to both on and off the court successes stating:

“Anyone who has stayed the four years and a great many have benefited from our coaching staffs leadership teaching them they can be champions on the court, as a husband, as a father and in the workforce and having heard from previous players I am very confident that they have been successful and that those who are currently with us will also be.”

These findings support previous research by Lormier 2009 that showed that relationship quality was a significant predictor for coaching satisfaction, lending itself to the notion of family and as an indicator of not only effort but success and effectiveness in strengthening the relationships in the program as a family unit.

Many different establishments use the family analogy to describe the environment for which they operate. However, few other institutions match that of intercollegiate sport and the impact that it can have on a young man's life. Men's basketball shows to be one of the most closely knit because of the limited number of members, adding evidence to the extensive interaction and impact coaches have on their players.

Work Ethic

One of the most highly regarded aspects of the recruitment process for the coaches interviewed is work ethic. Coaches noted that it can be an exhausting process consuming anywhere from 70 to 90 percent of their time and effort by their own estimations. Recruitment is a year-long process that involves countless hours of travel, communication, preparation, and evaluation of the program as well as the potential student-athletes that are under consideration to be brought in and offered athletic scholarships. Different parts of this process lend themselves to the work ethic of the program with recruiting on a clear conscious while gaining trust from stakeholders and being true to oneself as a key component of the coaches' experiences. One of the coaches interviewed said:

"We are very organized, we run a very tight ship, we try to operate with precision so we can maximize everything we're doing, we believe if we work hard enough to get good players, and in practice, and all the rest to out-work other teams, we just outwork people, as a staff, as a team, there is a belief that if you work hard enough in recruiting players we will out-recruit other teams. If you work hard enough good things have a chance to happen. . . Everything I do, I do with a very clear conscious, we treat everyone as we would treat our treat our children, that doesn't mean you treat everyone the same, obviously you earn but we are always looking to do what's in the best interest of our athletes even if it's to the detriment of our program short-term, because when you make decisions for their best interest, even if it hurts short-term, that particular student-athlete and their family and their coaches will appreciate what you are doing for them and they will sell your program as much as you will because they know they were treated the right way. . . When you are true to who you are, because

you can't try to be something you are not, when you try to be something you're not players see through that. . . .It's all about caring and fairness, they have to know you care about them and are interested. It's not just about ME but it's about US and I really believe that if they are achieving their personal goals than we will achieve our team goals."

Another Coach shares these sentiments saying:

"I try to do whatever I can to use my work ethic to be versatile enough to do whatever is asked of me. I try to be a role model to the players and provide a mentorship to help the guys be the best they can be as often as I can."

These remarks are at the core of what intercollegiate coaches are as mentors and as leaders. It is through their dedication to their program and the advancement of their student-athletes that they work exhaustively and diligently to find the best student-athletes and then present themselves to these athletes as clearly and effectively as possible, maintaining their individual characteristics as well as their core values that comprise who each individual coach is as a person and as a leader. The role of recruitment goes beyond on the court with x's and o's and carries out to the team dynamic, school profile, and cultural standards that have been established by each program that is recruiting a given player.

Finding the students who meet all of these criteria lends itself to the consumption of time and effort that goes into recruitment. In many cases, athletic programs are recruiting with a model player in mind, one that fits a wide range of criteria that cannot be evaluated by simply reviewing statistical game data of potential recruits. One coach interviewed stated that:

"I try to make sure each kid has potential for success. You're looking to see if they have a chance to be successful. You would like to have a majority of your students who are low maintenance, not from the stand point of being trouble makers but if a kid is studying 6-8 hours every day just to be here at this institution, boy it's hard to be an athlete at the same time. You either have no life or it just wears on you. I do think though that if you have a couple of men that need more attention you should go after them. You can't

give that extra attention to 12 guys. If they all don't fit university profile you just can't do it. If you did, you'd spend so much time trying to keep them eligible that you can't get better at basketball and you can't coach your team. So we have always tried to get as many people that are similar to the normal admit and then give the opportunity to some young men that may not be the normal admit but they have the potential but they are going to be a typical graduate by the time they are done through a lot of hard work."

Sometimes, institutional characteristics create barriers to the recruitment process of some student-athletes because they are not a match for the profile of the school and in other instances the higher academic standards of an institution are actually a draw with one coach noting:

"For us, academically the standards are pretty high here, much more than you might think, so sometimes we might go see a kid and we like him and he may be NCAA qualified and we can't get him in. That's good and bad. The bad is you want that kid and you can't get him. The good is that you can go to a kid who is pretty good academically and we can present to him here are our academic peers and sometimes those academic peers are really good academically and also good athletically and he might not be on their radar to recruit he might be a B list player for them so we can tell him this is where you are academically so you should be here athletically."

Previous research supports these notions through the motives of coaches and the perceptions of the players, pointing out that intrinsic motives are related to all facets of coaching proving to be the dominant force with extrinsic motives only relating to coaching satisfaction with the relationships between them and the players. Furthermore, work ethic and motivation are important characteristics because it establishes the different attributes of the coaching behavior such as the duration of their behaviors. Those coaches directed intrinsically have shown to foster greater performance, thus enhancing their work ethic (Jowett, 2008; Amorose, Horn, 2000).

Whatever the prerogative of the coaching staff, whether it be to bring in students they are going to have to keep a watchful eye on over the course of their tenure or to find students who best match the characteristics of a normal admit to the institution the

objective has shown to remain the same, focusing on long-term oriented goals over short-term gains.

Long-Term Oriented Goals

Coaches' interviewed consistently indicated a need and desire to prioritize their objectives by what is in the best interest of the basketball program from a long-term perspective as opposed to short-term gains that might be yielded for the team. Some of the short-term gains passed on in favor of long-term objectives were instant impact in games by players both early in a season and in their career as well as passing on recruits who may be highly talented but not a good fit for the program. Some of the long-term objectives included building a complete unit from a group of individuals and maximizing the potential of recruits both on and off the court throughout their time on campus. One coach said:

“Any long-term gains outweigh short term gains. . .It's not about what's best for us now or next year, it's about what's in our best interest long term as a program and as mentors of these student-athletes over the course of their careers, with emphasis on maximizing their potential and out-put over their time here”

Another coach echoed these sentiments sharing the importance of long-term objectives and the impact they have had in his experience when looking at taking short cuts to achieve those objectives saying:

“In my world, absolutely important and I have been lucky as heck even though I have stumbled and have been fired because I didn't get enough good players, and didn't win enough games, but the choice at that time and the choice now I wouldn't make a big change because it's so distinctive between what's right and what's wrong and now you have to decided do you want to join them? And NO I wouldn't make that choice. But you have to decide because if you don't join ranks with some of the outside entities you are not going to have as good of talent; it's pretty much a fact.”

A great deal of what is garnered through these leadership experiences involves learning from your mistakes as a coach as well as taking educated chances based on

past experiences, both good and bad, as well as the most accurate information that can be gathered.

One coach likened the experience to the number of scholarships available each year and the number of recruits whose potential comes to fruition saying:

“When you have 12-13 guys on scholarship, if you can be right on two a year, that’s 8 really good players, that’s all you need.”

Part of the process of acquiring recruits who will reach their potential is first based in recruiting players who have potential for growth. These players may possess physical or mental attributes that are not fully polished. This may also include players who have not had a background of highly competitive sports and simply do not realize how or what to do in order to further develop their skills. In assessing players potential for growth and whether or not that player could be a fit for their program, one coach stated:

“Trying to find the right fit, trying to find a young man who fits what were looking for on and off the court and looking for their potential for change and growth. If they are not the textbook great student, great passer, great shooter, pretty darn good athlete. If that’s not it, maybe they are an exceptional athlete but have not been in the academic environment but you see potential there. Or maybe they can shoot or they don’t shoot. You looking for those three areas are they going to fit the teammate and academic profile I have, are they going to fit the skill set that we have and are they going to be great teammates and sometimes they won’t have them all but is there room for growth? That’s what I do and what I look for.”

Providing an atmosphere of how to be successful and building relationships is essential to the recruitment of student-athletes as well as the maintenance of their progression and development. One coach spoke to the need for building relationships with different coaches when discussing where they acquire the majority of their players saying:

“High school is where we manufacture all of our student-athletes. And nationally or internationally there is no boundaries, we are trying to get the best players in the world for the longest period of time we can have them.”

Another coach, when speaking to the success and development of his recruits and trying to mentor and develop these young men said:

“It’s not just you didn’t get your man on the court and so we lost, we’re all tied to each other, and that’s your identity. When you come in you are a basketball player. If you rob a bank they will say a university basketball player robbed the bank and then they will say your name. You have lost your identity and your whole identity is what we’re all doing. That is a big part of our development and growth as a team. They have to completely buy into that at all times.”

These sentiments are consistent with work done by Schroeder (2010), who points out that coaches can achieve their goals by extending offers to players who fit their vision for the future and can have a positive role on the team. Also showing that players who embodied the team values and fit a very specific profile were able to provide what coaches were looking for. Providing a clear understanding of these principles and beliefs lends to the long-term goals of the program that player’s interest and program interest trump immediate gratification of taking advantage of something or someone.

Case by Case Evaluation of Student-Athletes

Consistently, across the coaches interviewed there was an understanding that there were no generalizations about players and nothing taken for granted when it came to the assessment of potential recruits’. One coach made the effort to focus on a few specific details that interested recruits saying:

“You try to find out the two or three things in each individual case that is motivating that kid rather than saying we have this location or that climate. That may not be their buzz. You’re trying to find out what is the most important thing to them or their AAU coach or their street agent or in some cases their parent but what is it they are looking for? Is it immediate playing time, the fastest road to the NBA, is it geography, but exactly what is it that this particular kid wants and what is it that he wants now? . . .It’s reading your candidate, I would liken it to a life insurance salesman where you’ve got about an hour to figure out where can I find that one thing that they want.”

Another added that even with all the time, effort and resources that go into the recruitment endeavors:

“It is not a science. You’ve got to be persistent and stick with it. Never take anything for granted and once they graduate you know whether they were a good recruit. You’re looking at 7 years of recruiting and evaluation, three in high school and four while they are on campus to recruit him to be a really good player and student. I can’t emphasize this enough, were dealing with 15, 16, and 17 year old kids who all of a sudden they get to be 18 and we think they’re grown up. No they are not. You have to try to be a good father, a good big brother, a leader to them.”

Since these programs invest so much of their time and effort into recruitment they want to have the best idea about who they are bringing into the program. Staying within NCAA guidelines and their own individual budgets and availability, coaches try to evaluate players as much as possible as often as possible. One coach interviewed said:

“We try to get to as many games as the NCAA allows, we try to get to know them and get them to know us through unofficial visits. We try not to pressure through the whole thing because we want the young men to run through the doors to come here rather than because we were the better recruiters. That sometimes doesn’t work.”

Another coach interviewed referenced the NCAA guidelines stating:

“We have a limit when we can speak to these candidates, when we can see them so you are constantly trying to put that together, get the game plan together and when you have a chance to sell them, you sell them.”

The third coach spoke to the changes in communication from how it used to be in years past. They feel that in addition to the challenges of acquiring recruits technology has made things even more difficult because there is:

“Very little communication now, in the sense that there isn’t eye to eye mouth to mouth communication. Its typing and texting. I don’t touch you, you don’t touch me, I don’t directly speak to you, you don’t speak to me, it’s a completely different mechanism than it once was. Less personal. You try to be but you don’t get a feel for an individual through text. I don’t get the humor or personality and I don’t get a chance to read you and I think it has come to a detriment of the recruiting process because there is nothing more important than a person and reading them.”

This coach went on to say that recruitment was not just about the athlete and the school but the man who will be leading these players and how the coach is perceived explaining:

“You have to continue to rethink your leadership all the time because you have to be mindful of what the consumer is thinking and how can you relate and be attractive to the consumer without compromising your values. Continue to tell the truth. It will hurt you sometimes but it doesn’t hurt you as much as the alternative of over promising. If you lose a kid in recruiting it’s not nearly as detrimental as when a kid transfers. It’s harder to replace him. You don’t trade players once they are not good, now your two years away from replacing them. You don’t worry about the ones you don’t get it’s about the ones you get.”

As part of the case by case evaluation of the individual recruits, coaches’ have to identify not only what the athletes want but also if they are comfortable with the program, the institution, and the overall experience that they will be a part of during their tenure. What makes one athlete comfortable with the coaching staff; program and institution may not be held in such high regard by another. Additionally, what might draw one recruit could inhibit another in terms of academics and/or athletic opportunities such as playing time. One of the coaches refers to this, saying:

“We may not be attractive to some if they have agendas whether to just stop over for one or two years experience the university and they are just here to be basketball players probably not the right choice, guys that even might graduate from here but it’s just a waypoint. Their destination is the NBA and it’s such a hard destination to get to. So while they are here they don’t really embrace the experience because it’s not a destination. Now it can be an exceptional springboard to the NBA or professional basketball if you treat it more as a destination. You can get everything out of it. You get your degree, you work your tail off and then you can reap the benefits.”

Another adds:

“Are we making them feel comfortable, what are we doing to make them feel comfortable. Are they engaged? If the recruits not engaged, I’m enraged and that’s to say I want them to feel like were engaging them and have them interested and there should be some of that where they feel

comfortable and after a few days if they leave and they miss it than that tells them and us they want to be here”

A third coach points out that:

“As 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th graders they have been taken to different venues and offered opportunities to travel so they have been spoiled and you’re dealing with a kid to who is no longer just looking at a school and a coach and dormitory. Those are meaningless criteria, and the criteria many times are who can get me to the next stop the fastest, who can get me to the NBA the fastest? Whoever that is, that is where I need to stop for a year or two.”

A large part of what the research participants spoke to is reflected in previous research that shows Division I head basketball coaches rely predominately on psychological attributes when assessing athletes (Becker, Solomon, 2005). Likewise, Johnson, Jubenville and Goss, 2009 showed that these athletes take in this vast amount of information about programs, distill that information down and then make a selection based on how well the student feels that fit, resources available, and positive feedback about their decision. They also reaffirmed the research participants in this study showing again that different students are going to respond to different messages in different ways, so tailoring that message is critical.

While different schools attract different types of players with different prerogatives as to what school might be best for them, all of the schools are trying to identify what it is that each athletes is looking for and what they as a program can do to make them feel the most comfortable with their individual culture at their specific institution.

Recruitment Being the Life Blood of the Program

Invariably, all coaches interviewed indicated that recruitment is the most quintessential component of their program as well as the foundation of their leadership and successes derived from efforts. They were all in agreement that without adequate recruitment there is little for coaches to hang their hat on and given the nature of

intercollegiate sports, without on court successes public and institutional expectations could render those unemployed, adding the emphasis on recruitment. There are clearly understood roles for the coaches and in most cases they are rated on their winning percentages, and to some degrees at the highest levels how many championships they are winning. One coach put it in terms of academic performance of student-athletes vs. athletic performance of a team saying:

“I haven’t heard of anybody that was kept because his kids were doing so well academically, on the other hand I haven’t heard too many that were fired that won a lot. There is one striking criteria that stands out, winning. Even winning the wrong way in a lot of peoples’ eyes that would be thought of better than losing the right way. That’s just what we do. . . .If you win and you win big, those guys are going to keep their jobs, and if you don’t, our not going to keep your job.”

They went on to say that:

“There is a real defined difference between what were told is important we can’t be foolish, if were at the highest levels, we are here and were here to win, were paid handsomely, and if we win and win big there are a lot of dollars for the whole program so now that’s a different message from 25 years ago when there wasn’t TV, there wasn’t all this type of money to be made and it was doing the best with what you have and competing was important. Now, it’s a different message.”

Another coach added to this emphasis on recruitment saying:

“It’s the most significant part of what we do because some of the best coaches in the country with some of the least amounts of talent are not going to win and some of the weakest coaches with the most amount of talent many times may win, so it’s the most significant.”

The third of the coaches who referenced the time and effort that goes into recruitment explained:

“It’s probably 75 percent work time in terms of recruiting, once a week I drop e-mails to recruits, I’ll go out and watch a recruits play, probably twice a week I’ll go out, so we try to get out as much as possible. We get out all over the country but also within the footprint of the conference. We’re at every place they can be and it helps when you have a budget that can support that.”

As evident by the above beliefs coaches, and their programs, often live and die by their wins and losses. Institutions, especially those in the national spot-light, ones with historical high athletic performance, and/or those who simply have high performance standards for their programs, hold coaches to the fire when it comes to job security, revenue generated, public perception, and expectations to be athletically successful and thereby represent the institution as winners, judging successes by post-season victories on the court.

One of the coaches spoke to this focus and the pressures of achieving these goals by saying:

“If you look around the country, the people who are winning consistently and winning with quality people in my estimation deserve the highest level of credit but that’s not the case, the people who are credited the most are the people who win the most and sometimes they don’t have the individuals that you or I’d be real proud of. So it’s a person issue. It’s not a one sided thing, but as a father, a son, a leader, a mentor, they are in bed with the people that have corrupted the profession.”

They went on to later say:

“You are being judged specifically in basketball by your wins/loss record, but that’s what your boss is going to judge you by; the people who care the most about you are never going to judge you on that, they are going to judge you they type of person, the type of value system you have. Is it worth being fired over? Is it worth losing your job? Is it worth losing your value system? That’s what every young and old coach has to decide now-a-days because that’s where the profession is at the highest levels. It’s about money and dollars. That’s it. We would love to have a nice young man and good value system but we have to have wins to make money.”

A different coach interviewed focused on getting the right players and enhancements in facilities that can be garnered through winning as well as positive outcomes that are reaped from winning basketball games saying:

“You have to target the right young men and if you two out of three or 66 percent right in your recruiting the two or three years they are here and they can be a starter, that’s what your trying to get to and that’s where we go

from here, each year trying to elevate our level or recruiting a little hire each year and then eventually hope that it will take off. Winning solves a lot of things. We have to win more to meet our goals. The institution understands that it's paramount to us to keep up with our conference foes and for facilities it's not outrageous to be judged by your facilities. Look at teams that are in the conference championships or final-four every year, that's where it is."

Sander's 2008 work bolsters the research participants thoughts pointing out that at all hours and mindful of salaries and budgets coaches go to battle with their colleagues in order to woo these young men to their campus. While recruitment is a constant process that covers a great deal of ground in terms assessment and evaluation of players, it is critical to evaluate as effectively as possible to promote on court success. Due to the nature of the profession, intercollegiate coaches must identify and evaluate to the best of their abilities potential recruits for their program if they are going to meet their individual needs and desires as well as those set forth by their institutions. Unfortunately, not all top student-athletes go on to play professional athletics with an even greater number of those athletes who may not even finish their degree program. One of the coaches spoke to this stating that:

"Ya know what, it's a crap shoot sometimes, what you don't know is how a young person is going to react once they get into your culture, are you going to be able to get the most out of them. Some progress and grow and get to a point where they are tremendous players and we reaped the harvest, inversely, there are a lot of kids that you misread and you saw the talent and you were hoping you would be able to provide the discipline and leadership and when you got 'em they have a problem. Could be emotional, substance abuse, plagiarism problem, which happens more often than the success stories."

Summary

Overall, how a coach describes his experiences in selecting potential recruits for his program has remained consistent with individualized variations explained by each coaches leadership and expectations both they and their stakeholders place on the

program. Different themes emerged including: family, work ethic, long-term oriented goals, case by case evaluation of student-athletes, and recruitment being the life blood of the program. Though the individual experiences vary from coach to coach the common threads of creating and maintaining a family environment, working towards excellence in acquisition of recruits and in the advancement of the program, focusing on objectives that will create a strong foundation and consistent successes over a period of many years as opposed to instant rewards and gratification are among the common themes garnered through the coaching experiences. Additionally, insights were gained in the individualized evaluation of each player under consideration for membership in the program as well as the emphasis that is placed on the wins vs. the losses for the teams and the implications that it has programmatically.

Perceptions on Student-Athlete Acquisition

The second research question addressed in this study was how a coach describes his leadership strategies and/or practices that enable him to acquire the best available talent to the specific athletic program with respect to the values and beliefs of the coach? Different themes emerged including: Always be truthful about oneself and the program while adhering to one's own moral and ethical code, try to find the right fit for the program, try to acquire the most highly talented athletes with a balance of character and stability, operate on a case by case basis when recruiting, and to maintain perseverance.

Part of what a coach is selling in their program is their leaderships and how they are going to conduct themselves while a recruit is under their tutelage. Therefore, it is critical that they always be truthful about themselves and the program. False advertisement and/or inaccuracies will lead to disconnect between recruits and the

program and can cause attrition from the program. The balance between transparency and adherence to one's own moral and ethical code is an important component of a coaches leadership because when the two are out of balance it can be cause for self-destruction internally as a coach and leader as well as externally as a program and institution. One Coach interviewed explained:

“Your athletes like all individuals are going to observe more than anything. They are going to listen and observe. You can't pretend. You can't be a different person in front of them and a chameleon. And expect them to develop those skills. Whoever you are the way you treat other people, the way you speak to them, the way you work and your work ethic is being evaluated all the time. Our athletes are impressionable. They know. They hear the words they see what you're doing and they see the style of work. The biggest input is 4, 8, 12 years later have they inherited any of the traits that are more important than just winning basketball games.”

Going on to say that:

“You probably learn as much about what you wouldn't want to do or what you know in your heart is right or wrong and you follow that lead, everybody's tempted, every young person is tempted because we're told that winning championships is the only thing that counts, so everybody is tempted to do whatever it takes, just like in any other profession to get ahead, and then you've got to make those choices.”

Adding:

“Other coaches are able to turn the other way with their value system and coaching to win and coaching for money and I don't find anything wrong with that if it fits them but I think you have to please yourself and the people that love you the most and that's not an interest of mine but I respect anybody young or old having that type of mentality because that's what our sport at the college level and the highest levels has become.”

A second coach shares that in his program how he tries to approach his recruits:

“We're very forthright and honest about what we do. We're not going to lie to them. We're going to under promise and over deliver. And that is a turn off to some people. They want you to tell them everything they want to hear.”

While attempting to maintain balance within oneself and their program, coaches indicated that they always try to find the right fit for the program. This is to say that they have taken into consideration their leadership and personality as well as those players currently on the roster. They then attempt to gel the existing unit with incoming recruits with one coach explaining:

“You identify those that are in tune with your message and culture and this is not something that is foreign to them. Allowing them to understand this university, this coaching staff, the way we play. You try to look for similarities there and eliminate any culture shock when they come here or visit here and that way you in the ball game. That still doesn’t mean that’s all you need to do though because the biggest issue you deal with in recruiting is recruiting hard and finishing second. You would rather be out early and finish tenth and move on. We finish second on a lot of young men and it doesn’t really help future recruiting.”

Once recruits have been identified as possible matches for the program and culture therein, coaches try to build on that compatibility by thinning the pool. What remains are those recruits who are in tune to the cultural norms of the program and possess the greatest level of athletic talent while maintaining a balance of character and stability that translates on and off of the court into the academic and local community. In trying to acquire the most highly talented athletes with a balance of character and stability coaches said:

“facilities, the avenues, any players we have in the NBA that we developed and the money that they are making, they style of play and program we have that will be conducive for you to develop and move on to the next level very soon because we’re great at that. Not a great message but along the way we show them were good people and we are going to build character but that’s not as meaningful as it once was to the recruits.”

Another coach referencing how they react to bad impressions said:

“You cut your losses and move in. If we get any bad vibes it very rarely changes and we try to end that on a very positive note and we say if you change your mind let us know because we would still love to have you if

you can come with both feet in but you have to focus your energies on other recruits.”

While some recruits may flock to a program others may require more coaxing and coddling. Part of the strategies for coaches is to identify the characteristics of these recruits and speak to those attributes to garner the services of the student-athletes. Individualized attention is given to each prospective recruit and coaches operate on a case by case basis when recruiting in order to offer each player what they may need and/or want out of the experience. One way coaches try to approach and appeal to recruits is:

“You have to be outside the box and motivate individually and get in the minds of these guys.”

They added:

“I don’t think our young culture is motivated by fear. There may be an exception or two but very few people can tear a person down and simply motivate them through fear. You have to find different ways to motivate, even when you know what worked for you as a child is not the world we live in now. It’s all about getting an edge and finding out how your 18,19, and 20 year olds can get that edge so you constantly try to change and that exciting. You learn what their buzz words are, what motivates them, what stimulates them, and trying to find that common denominator so you can make them the best they can be.”

Whatever the individual strategies employed, coaches consistently indicated that in order to be successful in their efforts they had to maintain perseverance in their recruitment. For an endeavor that their livelihood, and coaching success hinges upon, it is critical that they be as sure as possible about potential recruits and make the most educated decision they can about these student-athletes. One coach explains:

“We like to continue the evaluation as long as we can and they tell us no before we tell them no because you never know. They may have grown four inches you may have an injury you can have anything happen, you just try to keep your eyes open and blend those two.”

They feel this way because:

“You just really never know what will happen, sometimes you will get a young man who you have put in very little on and he just falls in your lap and then there are some that I have recruited for four years and didn’t get. That is really difficult. You spend a lot of time on them and don’t get them. It’s not a science. There’s now 7 years of recruiting a kid”

Another coach added to this by sharing the lengths and depth they he has to go to in order to maintain contact with and hopefully acquire a future recruit saying:

“You’re going to find out by 9th or 10th grade who their top five schools are because it has become that sophisticated and your trying to be one of those five and if you can be one of those five you know who the other four and you know who the enemy is, these days a commitment only means who we or they have to go after and degrade because if he committed to school X maybe we can all change his mind and he will come here. It used to be a joke we had about football but now it’s like this in basketball.”

Adding that:

“Some people, once they find out who you are looking at, they are going to start degrading you. That’s how they recruit.”

Intercollegiate coaches described their leadership strategies and/or practices in different ways through their own individual experiences. What may have enabled one coach to acquire a recruit at their school could have shown to be ineffective for another coach at a different school. What enables a coach to acquire the best available talent to their specific athletic program with respect to their values and beliefs hinges on the different themes that emerged. These themes included; always being truthful about oneself and the program while adhering to one’s own moral and ethical code, trying to find the right fit for their program, trying to acquire the most highly talented athletes with a balance of character and stability, operating on a case by case basis when recruiting, and maintaining perseverance in recruitment efforts.

Implications on Recruitment

Implications on recruitment are manifold. From the experiences of the coaches interviewed there are clear components of the recruitment efforts. Competition level and programmatic exposure are two areas that coaches work within in order to achieve their recruitment goals. Student-athletes want to play at the highest level possible. It is a part of their competitive nature to want to be the best and play against the best. Increased exposure through media coverage of games and team functions via TV, internet, radio, and all other outlets are important functions of player exposure and something that many recruits are looking for in a program. These attributes are supported through the quality of players teams are recruiting. Over the past ten seasons, 41 recruits representing the top 150 recruits in their class have been garnered by two of the three coaches, while the third, a mid major, has secured none based on Rivals.com top 150 rankings. This supports the notion that players are looking for the above attributes and outlets in a program and those programs that cannot offer these things are much less likely to attract top recruits.

Institutional factors that provide for competitive level and exposure also have significant implications on recruitment efforts. Student-athletes seldom, if ever, turn down a major conference school in order to go to a mid major school. Likewise, recruits are more inclined to attend an institution where they will have the majority or even all of their games covered by national and/or local broadcasts. Other institutional factors are the facilities that a school and program can offer recruits to enhance their abilities athletically and academically. Players with potential to play professionally will be looking for state of the art facilities and athletic resources while others less likely to make a sudden jump to the NBA may take into greater consideration the degree program and

academic resources to supplement what resources they will have athletically. Two of the three research locations currently or soon will have fully dedicated athletic and academic facilities for their players. Those same two programs have subsequently sent numerous players into the NBA, exceeding ten players over the same ten year period.

Financial resources for coaches to go out and achieve recruiting excellence has critical implications because a recruitment budget could range from fifty thousand dollars per year to well over one million for a given school. This vast discrepancy lends itself to other resources that are available to coaches' and their programs creating an expansive divide between the top ten percent of I-A basketball programs and the other ninety percent. All of which are hypothetically trying to attain the same prize at the end of the year which is a national championship. Additionally, financial resources can simply equate to recruitment success through the facilitation of athletic and academic resources i.e. facilities, travel, accommodations, equipment and team gear, as well as individual tutors who may travel with teams.

For these coaches, one of the primary means for appropriation of funding and resources is based on the success of on the court wins and losses. Therefore, coaches have to work with what they have in order to build and develop a successful program through the development of a culture in the program. This culture or family has to promote work ethic in order to see as many players as possible, to study as much film, to develop as strong a relationship as possible in order to make the team stronger. Also, long-term oriented goals promoting the growth and development of student-athletes across four years academically and athletically, using a case by case evaluation of student-athletes to determine if they will be a good fit for the team and school.

Additionally, whether or not they may reach the envisioned potential or if the program should pass on the athlete. Additionally, recruitment being the life blood of the program because those who are unable to successfully recruit solid student-athletes may lose their jobs through their inability to accrue adequate win percentages.

Performance appraisals and additional means of accountability like that discussed by Cunningham and Dixon, 2003 as well as Gurney and Weber, 2008 may prove to be the benefit of the coaching profession. The recommended measures would assign value to team outcomes, athletic and academic, ethical behavior and quality in recruitment as well as assigning greater responsibility of these characteristics to the head coach.

Additional implications derived from the first research question entail having to decide between working towards excellence in acquisition of recruits and in the advancement of the program this focused on objectives that will create a strong foundation and consistent successes over a period of many years as opposed to instant rewards and gratification. This means that while coaches may have the opportunity to cut corners and gain potential short-term successes that they will need to decide internally if that violates their moral and ethical value system as well as whether they are willing to pay the consequences of their actions.

Previous research by Jackson, Knapp and Beauchamp, 2009 stated that coaches' efficacy beliefs originated from one-self where the constructs were interrelated and independently associated with positive consequences for both relationship-orientated and task-related consequences. In essence the more confident coaches feel about their efficacy the more elevated their performance and interactions are going to be, supporting the moral and ethical decisions coaches are faced with daily.

Outcomes Pertaining to Coaches Leadership

The outcomes that are derived from coaching leadership are addressed through the second research question through the leadership strategies and/or practices. What may have enabled one coach to acquire a recruit at their school could have shown to be ineffective for another coach at a different school. What allows a coach to acquire the best available talent to their specific athletic program with respect to their values and beliefs hinges on the different themes that emerged. These themes included: Always being truthful about oneself and the program while adhering to one's own moral and ethical code, trying to find the right fit for their program, trying to acquire the most highly talented athletes with a balance of character and stability, operating on a case by case basis when recruiting, and maintaining perseverance in recruitment efforts.

Specifically, coaches use their individual characteristics to attract and acquire young men who they believe will be a valued addition to their program. Optimally, when coaches are clear about who they are as a leader and their expectations of recruits as well as providing a transparent view of what the student-athletes experience could be like they have the opportunity to sign these student-athletes and develop them. Often times, there is a fine line between what prompts a recruit to go to one school over another and part of the coaching leadership is making that recruit feel comfortable with the coaches and what the program has to offer as well as what the institution has to offer. Coaches cannot directly change their institutions with regard to geographic location, climate, degrees offered, or admission standards. However, through professional diligence they can attempt to build or redefine a program and enhance what an institution has to offer by way of new facilities and resources available to their athletes. This however, takes great time and effort and leans heavily on their ability to

manufacture wins with what they initially have using their leadership abilities to draw the greatest level of talent and performance that they can from their players. If these outcomes are realized, it can set into motion a positive chain of events that can lead to acquisition of greater talent, more wins, more championships, better resources, and greater job security directly and indirectly for those within the program, and development of consistent success within the program. Also, association of the institution with the success of the program brings benefits. Inversely, if coaches are unable to harness their leadership abilities or simply lack adequate abilities and/or institutional support the challenges are much greater and success is much less likely for those individuals.

Previous research speaks to this though individual efficacy and the sources such as coaching experience, prior success, and support from those around them. Also, relevant were outcomes such as game strategy, motivation, technique and performance with the highest efficacy coaches having significantly higher winning percentages (Sullivan, Kent, 2003). The research participants for this study all have extensive coaching experience and prior success as well as the support of those around them creating a high level of success in their endeavors.

Results

Through the intercollegiate coaching experiences in recruitment of top student-athletes, coaches interviewed showed that through a combination of individual factors, namely their leadership, and institutional factors, they are able to acquire the most highly talented student-athletes available to their program. This is important because an athlete for one reason or another may not be available to a given program. However, all things considered the experiences of the coaches showed that there are commonalities

between schools of varying conference, competition level, institutional profile, and available resources that include: creating a family dynamic among a dynamic group of individuals, harboring a relentless work ethic, establishing and working towards long-term oriented goals, looking at each potential candidate on a case by case basis while evaluating student-athletes individually, and recruitment being the life blood of the program indiscriminately across all coaches and programs interviewed. Additionally, transparency about oneself and the program while adhering to one's own moral and ethical code, attempting to find the right fit for the program, attempting to acquire the most highly talented athletes with a balance of character and stability, operating on an individual basis when recruiting treating each recruit as a unique case, and maintain perseverance in the recruitment and leadership efforts.

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This qualitative study was beneficial to the conceptualization of intercollegiate basketball coaches' experiences in their recruitment efforts. Specifically, the study explores how a coach described his experiences in selecting potential recruits for his program. Also, how a coach describes his leadership strategies and/or practices that enable him to acquire the best available talent to the specific athletic program with respect to the values and beliefs of the coach were investigated. This study also established a foundational framework for success in recruitment.

Significant concepts regarding intercollegiate recruitment resulted from this study. These concepts are discussed in this chapter and include (a) excellent leadership without winning, does not necessarily yield what is widely considered coaching success, (b) acquisition and retention of top student-athletes being paramount to the success of an intercollegiate Division I basketball program (c) institutional factors can and will dictate a coaches' successes as well as the rate at which they are able to achieve those successes and/or fail to meet expectations. Additionally, implications for higher education administration, recommendations and areas for additional research, as well as conclusions are included in this chapter.

Leadership Without Wins Might Not Yield Success

The responses to the interview questions align with previous research in a number of ways. For example this study produced similar findings to previous studies in the coaching profession (Amorose, Horn, 2000; Martin, Rocca, Cayanus, and Weber, 2009; Ryska, 2009). It also differed from previous studies in that it showed to differentiate

what is widely held to be important in wins and losses, and what the individual coaches consider to be successes in their leadership style.

Excellent leadership without statistical substance, wins vs. losses, does not necessarily yield what is widely considered coaching success. Coaches are mentors, leaders, father figures, and big brothers, to the young men who play for them. These coaches mold and develop these student-athletes for as long as they are in the program and sometimes for many years afterwards. In some cases, student-athletes maintain the bond with their coach for countless years after graduation because the coach was so impactful in their mentorship. Due to the quantity of time coaches spend with their student-athletes, players can often look to them as a father figure, in part because they may have never had one, or simply because of the dynamic between the older more mature coach and the younger player. These findings are supported directly by the research participants where they say:

“Anyone who has stayed the four years, and a great many have, has benefited from our coaching staffs leadership teaching them they can be champions on the court, as a husband, as a father and in the workforce and having heard from previous players I am very confident that they have been successful and that those who are currently with us will also be.”

As a researcher, this quote indicated that the participant was fully dedicated to the themes established by my framework. Family dynamic, relentless work ethic, long-term goals, and case by case evaluation all showed through in these comments. It became clear that there was a level of nurturing and guidance as well as determination to make the student-athletes the best people they could be not just the best players possible.

Those coaches closer in age to the players may share more of a big brother dynamic with their student-athletes and/or those coaches assisting the head coach may hold this role. Given the quantity of time spent between coach and player, especially on

peripheral activities it is easy to see how these relationships can be fostered. However, it is worth mentioning that not all coaches and players share these experiences.

Coaches' interviewed did not intrinsically need to be rated by wins and losses but it is a function of the job and how their performance is rated. However, they are in a business dominated by performance on the court and deemed successful or unsuccessful by how their peers are doing inside and out of their competitive conference as well as nationally. In many cases coaches are compensated great sums of money not commensurate with national averages for income. As such, they are expected to perform to a level that brings positive attention to the team, athletic program and institution. Most of all, they are expected to win in order to generate revenue for the team, athletic program, and institution. In some cases poor leadership with exceptional talent can achieve success while undermining coaching principles and values. This is reflected in participant's responses when asked;

Do you believe success and leadership can be taught to existing or future coaches and if so, what techniques would you recommend to accomplish these goals as they pertain to a program and its recruitment of student-athletes?

"There is a real defined difference between what we're told is important we can't be foolish, if we're at the highest levels, we are here and we're here to win, we're paid handsomely, and if we win and win big there are a lot of dollars for the whole program so now that's a different message from 25 years ago when there wasn't TV, there wasn't all this type of money to be made and it was doing the best with what you have and competing was important. Now, it's a different message."

These comments indicate that there is disconnect with what is expected of the coaches and where they place their values. Conventional assessments such as wins and losses dominate coaches and how they operate. Maintaining revenue streams through booster and donor relations as well as through media contracts, sponsorships,

and post-season appearances are an unwanted but no less critical component of how coaches operate.

Inversely, incredibly high principles and values with excellent successes in grade point average, graduation, job placement, or other non-competitive criteria may not translate into coaching leadership retention. When asked what characteristics of your institution contributes to the success of your recruitment and inversely what characteristics create challenges to your recruitment of potential student-athletes? How do you overcome/accentuate these characteristics? One coach stated:

“I haven’t heard of anybody that was kept because his kids were doing so well academically, on the other hand I haven’t heard too many that were fired that won a lot. There is one striking criteria that stands out, winning. Even winning the wrong way in a lot of peoples’ eyes that would be thought of better than losing the right way. That’s just what we do.”... “If you win and you win big, those guys are going to keep their jobs, and if you don’t, our not going to keep your job.”

As a researcher, these comments are very interesting and could warrant future research. The perception of this coach was such that he was in a win at all costs situation. This can lend itself to NCAA infractions and ultimate sanctions for schools because their coaches feel as though they are backed into a corner where they need to recruit the players at all costs in order to maintain their competitiveness and appease their stakeholders.

Coaches have to answer to themselves, their families, their employer, and their other stakeholders with regard to how they conduct themselves in order to achieve their successes. Of the coaches interviewed it was critical that they make their family and themselves proud before ever compromising their moral and ethical values which is supported by previous research in coaching efficacy (Jackson, Knapp, Beauchamp, 2009; Sullivan, Kent, 2003). Although, there was acknowledgement that if they were in

different shoes and had to trade places with an up and coming coach, they might think differently because when asked How do you define leadership and success as they pertain to your recruitment efforts and/or in general terms? One coach said:

“If you look around the country, the people who are winning consistently and winning with quality people in my estimation deserve the highest level of credit but that’s not the case, the people who are credited the most are the people who win the most and sometimes they don’t have the individuals that you or I’d be real proud of. So it’s a person issue. It’s not a one sided thing, but as a father, a son, a leader, a mentor, they are in bed with the people that have corrupted the profession.”

Adding:

“You are being judged specifically in basketball by your wins/loss record, but that’s what your boss is going to judge you by; the people who care the most about you are never going to judge you on that, they are going to judge you they type of person, the type of value system you have. Is it worth being fired over? Is it worth losing your job? Is it worth losing your value system? That’s what every young and old coach has to decide now-a-days because that’s where the profession is at the highest levels. It’s about money and dollars. That’s it. We would love to have a nice young man and good value system but we have to have wins to make money.”

While many of the responses align with previous research there was differentiation found in this study regarding how the individual coaches viewed their leadership style and what it meant to their success professionally and programmatically.

Acquisition and Retention Paramount to Success

The responses to the interview questions align with previous research in a number of ways. For example this study produced similar findings to research done regarding leadership style as well as selection and recruitment (Schroeder, 2010; Drury, 2009, Letwawsky, Schneider, Pedersen, Palmer, 2003, Becker, Solomon, 2005; Johnson, Jubenville, Goss, 2009). Where this study differs is in the individual perspectives on the sophistication, circumstance, and extent to which coaches go in the promotion of these programmatic goals.

Acquisition and retention of top student-athletes is paramount to the success of an intercollegiate Division I basketball program, specifically the coaches. As such, you must obtain the best talent with the greatest potential for success. Coaches must utilize their experiences and leadership abilities to identify players who are going to be a benefit to the program and not a detriment. This is directly supported by respondent answers to how they overcome or accentuate the institutional characteristics they work within? One research participant stated:

“You identify those that are in tune with your message and culture and this is not something that is foreign to them. Allowing them to understand this university, this coaching staff, the way we play. You try to look for similarities there and eliminate any culture shock when they come here or visit here and that way you in the ball game. That still doesn’t mean that’s all you need to do though because the biggest issue you deal with in recruiting is recruiting hard and finishing second. You would rather be out early and finish tenth and move on. We finish second on a lot of young men and it doesn’t really help future recruiting.”

They also pointed out that:

“I try to make sure each kid has potential for success. You’re looking to see if they have a chance to be successful. You would like to have a majority of your students who are low maintenance, not from the stand point of being trouble makers but if a kid is studying 6-8 hours every day just to be here at this institution, boy it’s hard to be an athlete at the same time. You either have no life or it just wears on you. I do think though that if you have a couple of men that need more attention you should go after them. You can’t give that extra attention to 12 guys. If they all don’t fit university profile you just can’t do it. If you did, you’d spend so much time trying to keep them eligible that you can’t get better at basketball and you can’t coach your team. So we have always tried to get as many people that are similar to the normal admit and then give the opportunity to some young men that may not be the normal admit but they have the potential but they are going to be a typical graduate by the time they are done through a lot of hard work.”

It is of no value to a coach to recruit and sign players who will come in and flunk out in their first year, or to get players who are subject to poor decisions and negatively impact their own standing on the team as well as the image and reputation of the

program and/or school. While it is savvy to take on one or two players who may need more academic and social attention, to be successful those instances must be kept to a minimum, sticking to players who adhere more to the standard admits of the institution to promote both the athletic and academic success of the student-athlete. In answering the research question, which programmatic and institutional factors are essential to ensure the future success of your program and the recruitment of top student-athletes in your experience and as you move forward? One coach stated:

“You have to target the right young men and if you two out of three or 66 percent right in your recruiting the two or three years they are here and they can be a starter, that’s what your trying to get to and that’s where we go from here, each year trying to elevate our level or recruiting a little hire each year and then eventually hope that it will take off. Winning solves a lot of things. We have to win more to meet our goals. The institution understands that it’s paramount to us to keep up with our conference foes and for facilities it’s not outrageous to be judged by your facilities. Look at teams that are in the conference championships or final-four every year, that’s where it is.”

Adding:

“Ya know what, it’s a crap shoot sometimes, what you don’t know is how a young person is going to react once they get into your culture, are you going to be able to get the most out of them. Some progress and grow and get to a point where they are tremendous players and we reaped the harvest, inversely, there are a lot of kids that you misread and you saw the talent and you were hoping you would be able to provide the discipline and leadership and when you got ‘em they have a problem. Could be emotional, substance abuse, plagiarism problem, which happens more often than the success stories.”

Part of the coaching leadership is working within the parameters of the institution, utilizing the resources that are available as well as working against deficits that arise along the way. A coach has to maximize his product and attempt to draw recruits to a place they may be unfamiliar with, know little about, or are just uninterested in attending. Addressing any deficits is necessary and correcting them would be optimal

but often times, coaches are left with simply emphasizing what they can offer and putting off what they cannot because for the time there is little they can do. In the cases of the two coaches whose programs are in major conferences and maintain all the bells and whistles that players are looking for, it is much less difficult to attract the greatest talent. Whereas a coach with none of the same resources or outlets is going to have to emphasize what he can directly do for the players for their development and progression as student-athletes.

Determining where student-athletes are going to fit and how they are going to contribute within the program and in the classroom is a necessary function of coaching leadership. Coaches have to predetermine all of these characteristics to properly plan and implement each recruit into the program while catering their needs and wants. Additionally, coaches must constantly evaluate the players coming into the program even after they have arrived to maintain pulse of what is going on their development and comfort in the new environment. Answering how significant is the role of recruiting in order for your program to be successful? One coach said:

“It’s the most significant part of what we do because some of the best coaches in the country with some of the least amounts of talent are not going to win and some of the weakest coaches with the most amount of talent many times may win, so it’s the most significant.”

Where this study has shown to differ from previous studies is where it has shed light on the sophistication, circumstances, and extent to which coaches go in the promotion of these programmatic goals. Two different coaches spoke to this saying:

“You just really never know what will happen, sometimes you will get a young man who you have put in very little on and he just falls in your lap and then there are some that I have recruited for four years and didn’t get. That is really difficult. You spend a lot of time on them and don’t get them. It’s not a science. There’s now 7 years of recruiting a kid”

Another coach added to this by sharing the lengths and depth he has to go to in order to maintain contact with and hopefully acquire a future recruit saying:

“You’re going to find out by 9th or 10th grade who their top five schools are because it has become that sophisticated and your trying to be one of those five and if you can be one of those five you know who the other four and you know who the enemy is, these days a commitment only means who we or they have to go after and degrade because if he committed to school X maybe we can all change his mind and he will come here. It used to be a joke we had about football but now it’s like this in basketball.”

Adding that:

“Some people, once they find out who you are looking at, they are going to start degrading you. That’s how they recruit.”

With the level of resources and occupational implications placed on coaches’ shoulders, their ability to implement their leadership style to recruit players proves to be paramount in their efforts as a leader.

Institutional Factors Dictate Successes

The responses to the interview questions align with previous research in a number of ways. For example this study produced similar findings from selection and recruitment studies (Delisio, Fleming, 2005; Letwawsky et al., 2003; Johnson, Jubenville, Orejan, 2006; Johnson et al., 2009; Sander, 2008).

Institutional factors can and will dictate coaches’ successes as well as the rate at which they are able to achieve those successes and/or fail to meet expectations. Academic support and buy in towards the athletic program is not something that is achieved across all institutions. At some schools there is a culture of sport that many if not all parts of the institution embrace. One coach spoke to this when answering what characteristics of your institution contribute to the success of your recruitment and

inversely what characteristics create challenges to your recruitment of potential student-athletes? He said:

“For us, academically the standards are pretty high here, much more than you might think, so sometimes we might go see a kid and we like him and he may be NCAA qualified and we can’t get him in. That’s good and bad. The bad is you want that kid and you can’t get him. The good is that you can go to a kid who is pretty good academically and we can present to him here are out academic peers and sometimes those academic peers are really good academically and also good athletically and he might not be on their radar to recruit he might be a B list player for them so we can tell him this is where you are academically so you should be here athletically.”

At other institutions this is not the case and coaches struggle to develop rapport with academic officials and faculty leading to disconnect between the two primary venues for the student-athletes while in attendance at a school. Without academic support, programs must work much harder to meet the academic standards for their players, taking time and effort away from their other endeavors such as recruitment, practices, and game preparation. One coach speaks to this referring to attractiveness of the institution for the recruits saying:

“We may not be attractive to some if they have agendas whether to just stop over for one or two years experience the university and they are just here to be basketball players probably not the right choice, guys that even might graduate from here but it’s just a waypoint. Their destination is the NBA and it’s such a hard destination to get to. So while they are here they don’t really embrace the experience because it’s not a destination. Now it can be an exceptional springboard to the NBA or professional basketball if you treat it more as a destination. You can get everything out of it. You get your degree, you work your tail off and then you can reap the benefits.”

This support and buy in is layered on institutional support, namely through the funding from institutional boards or athletic departments depending on how the institution is structured. If the institution is one where it is part of the institutional mission and/or objective of the athletic department to become or stay as one of the best, a coach can rely more heavily on his leadership attributes in recruitment and mentorship

of his players, thereby developing and enhancing his end of the arrangement. Facilities and equipment are another essential institutional factor that dictates success of coaches as indicated by once research participant saying that:

“facilities, the avenues, any players we have in the NBA that we developed and the money that they are making, they style of play and program we have that will be conducive for you to develop and move on to the next level very soon because we’re great at that. Not a great message but along the way we show them were good people and we are going to build character but that’s not as meaningful as it once was to the recruits.”

The nature of the sport and recruitment of athletes has clearly changed. These comments speak to the landscape of recruitment as well as the divide between those who have and have not. Schools with expansive budgets that can fund dedicated facilities and the resources to attract top players are going to continually come out on top of those who do not have the means to support their recruitment. At the beginning of the competitive season, all Division I schools are competing for the same prize, a national championship. However, it is not realistic to think that a school without equal means can consistently compete with a program that has a wide array of resources at their disposal.

If a coach didn’t have to share a venue with three other sports as opposed to having an exclusive dedicated facility that accommodates not only athletic activities but academic as well, they could maximize their time and effort as a leader and use those resources to better enhance their program as a recruitment tool and for day to day operations.

Financial resources are the most direct and efficient means for success in coaching leadership. They facilitate academic and athletic resources. They provide for all accommodations that a program does or does not have. They are often dictated by

the institutional prerogative and its focus on athletic advancement. They are as close to a fix all as once can come without factoring in the leadership abilities and skills of the coach that is guiding his team. Often times, monetary support comes with expectations such as a time-line for success in terms of a .500 winning percentage or a conference championship or perhaps a national championship. It can come in the form of institutional support or boosters who feel a strong enough connection to the school and/or program that they are willing to donate large sums of money to see that the program becomes or remains successful. The greater the success on the court the greater the potential for TV deals, licensing agreements, sponsorship, etc... Inversely, misconduct by the coaches or the players academically, socially or professionally, can bring shame to a program and tarnish its good name. This misbehavior can generate negative impressions of the program internally and externally and thereby expedite a coaches' opportunity to prove his leadership successful which goes back to his initial decisions to bring in particular players and/or make a given coaching decision.

Implications and Recommendations

A gap exists in the vast literature on leadership style and recruitment regarding the individual experiences of coaches in those areas. The findings of this study indicate an alignment with previous research. Also, this study has proven to differentiate itself from previous research where it sheds light onto what is widely held to be important in wins and losses, and what the individual coaches consider to be successes in their leadership style. Likewise, individual perspectives on the sophistication, circumstance, and extent to which coaches go in the promotion of their programmatic goals are areas that have not adequately been delved into. Greater understanding of coaching leadership in recruitment could be beneficial to future, and current practitioners, as well

as the academic community because it is an area of higher education that is dominated by practitioners who are not regularly publishing content on the field. This study implies that additional research in this field would benefit both the academic community and the athletic community, broadening the body of work done in one of the most highly visible and easily recognizable units of an institution and thereby creating potential to better understand the profession. Therefore, more research on coaching leadership and its impact on recruitment of top student-athletes is needed in order to further develop the understanding of the role these men play in bringing young men into an institution and developing them as student-athletes and preparing them for life after school.

Implications for higher education administration are numerous. Administrators need to first determine the emphasis they place on intercollegiate athletics and subsequently determine any desire to advance their athletics or allow them to remain as they are currently. In order to fill the gap presented through this research, administrators can work with their coaches to discuss pathways to filling the existing gaps in research. Coaches offered a wide variety of experiences that support existing research while providing new insights. With the individual coaches experiences out of line with standard conventions of successes in leadership as well as their thoughts on the sophistication, circumstance, and extent to which they go in the promotion of their programmatic goals, higher education administrators need to provide an opportunity for coaches to operate on a consistent level of understanding.

Additional areas for research based on the findings from this study could include the following studies:

1. Investigation of family, work ethic, long term oriented goals, case by case evaluation of student-athletes, and recruitment being the life blood of the program as the foundation of the study.
2. Further exploration into the sophistication, circumstance, and extent to which coaches go in the promotion of their programmatic goals utilizing qualitative methodologies.
3. In an effort to utilize the findings of this study, a divisional shift from Division I to Division II or Division III could be implemented and then cross referenced for comparison purposes.
4. Isolation of stakeholders such as assistant coaches or student-athletes looking at their perceptions of the recruitment process and/or their perceptions of family, work ethic, long term oriented goals, case by case evaluation of student-athletes, and recruitment being the life blood of the program.
5. Coaching retention based on wins and losses vs. graduation rates

Conclusion

Intercollegiate coaches' are put in a position where they have the opportunity to positively affect the lives of the young men that commit to their programs. They are able to enhance their lives providing athletic and academic opportunities that even many other college students will not have access. However, the state of college athletics, especially at the highest levels, Division I, and within that, major conferences and BCS schools, is such that coaches have to identify, establish, and rethink their leadership on a constant basis trying to balance what is in the best long-term interest of their players, their program, and their position as a coach. They may be commended for their

graduation rates or team grade point average but they are compensated handsomely to win basketball games. Winning brings prestige to a school, it helps brand and trademark an institution and its mascot. Winning has been shown to increase enrollment and thereby elevating revenue for the institution. While coaching leadership encompasses so much more than winning, it is their leadership on the court and abilities to acquire the best recruits, accrue more wins than losses more championships than runner-up trophies, that keeps them employed and dictates how they are able to lead, often putting into question the means and lengths by which a coach will go or feels are required of him to obtain those competitive successes. While some coaches are in win-at-all-costs environments others are not but despite that, all are expected to lead their teams to victory.

APPENDIX A
IRB APPROVAL FORM

UFIRB 02 – Social & Behavioral Research Protocol Submission Form

This form must be typed. Send this form and the supporting documents to IRB02, PO Box 112250, Gainesville, FL 32611. Should you have questions about completing this form, call 352-392-0433.

Title of Protocol:	Leadership Attributes of Intercollegiate Coaches Drawing Top Student-Athletes		
Principal Investigator:	Zachary Niland	UFID #: 8999-8024	
Degree / Title:	Ph.D.		Email: zackniland@ufl.edu
Department:	Higher Education Administration & Policy		Telephone #:
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Supervisor (If PI is student):	Dr. Dale Campbell	UFID#:	
Degree / Title:		Mailing Address: (If on campus include PO Box address):	Email : dfc@coe.ufl.edu
Department:	Educational Administration and Policy		Telephone #: (352) 273-4300
Date of Proposed Research:	October 8, 2010 - October 8, 2011		
Source of Funding (A copy of the grant proposal must be submitted with this protocol if funding is involved):	N/A		

Scientific Purpose of the Study: The purpose of this study is to explore the leadership attributes of intercollegiate athletic coaches and their effectiveness in acquiring the highest caliber student-athletes available to their program. The method of inquiry will be a case study of a specific program, using individual interviews in order to discover data and better the role that leadership attributes plays in recruiting student-athletes. The unit of analysis will be the head coach of the program and this study will be entirely qualitative in nature. The intended research design is narrative. Findings from the interviews will be used for the purpose of

focusing on the macro analytical picture of an individual head coach as opposed to a broader lens of cultural norms in the field.

Describe the Research Methodology in Non-Technical Language: The study will be facilitated by three sessions of data collection. Research participant will be interviewed in a face-to-face style at a location of their choosing at their respective institution. They will be interviewed at their earliest convenience some time after they have decided to participate in the study and have become available. In the first session, the research participant will be interviewed for a duration of 30 minutes to an hour. The second session will follow the same format. Based on the previous two sessions the third session will provide for member checking on the part of the participant and to clarify any points of interest or conflict. The interview protocols will include questions pertaining to the research participant's experiences, thoughts and beliefs surrounding their leadership in their intercollegiate athletic program. Research participants will be recruited via e-mail, telephone, and/or by letter directly by the researcher. All interviews will be audio recorded and all digital files will be kept confidential through storage on the primary investigator's secure drive. The interviews will be transcribed and analyzed using the qualitative methodologies of open and axial coding. The results of the research will be presented in a dissertation research format after which the data files will be destroyed.

Describe Potential Benefits: This study will advance the knowledge base in leadership throughout intercollegiate athletics. Shines light onto an area of higher education that is dominated by practitioners. Potential use as a foundation to develop an instrument that might be used to predict what leadership qualities lead to the acquisition of the greatest student talent. Coaching will greatly benefit from insights garnered about recruiting athletes who were previously uninterested in their programs. Given the benefits of revenue-generating sports like basketball and football, the institutional community can be advanced. Identification of these qualities will allow head coaches to bring in the highly talented student-athletes as well as respond to their educational and sports related training needs.

Describe Potential Risks: There are no more than minimal risks involved with this study.

Describe How Participant(s) Will Be Recruited: Participants will be recruited through personal communications via face-to face, telephone, e-mail, and/or written communication.

Maximum Number of Participants (to be approached with consent)	3	Age Range of Participants:	22-80	Amount of Compensation/ course credit:	None
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Describe the Informed Consent Process. (Attach a Copy of the Informed Consent Document. See <http://irb.ufl.edu/irb02/samples.html> for examples of consent.)

(SIGNATURE SECTION)		
Principal Investigator(s) Signature:		Date:
Co-Investigator(s) Signature(s):		Date:
Supervisor's Signature (if PI is a student):		Date:
Department Chair Signature:		Date:

APPENDIX B INFORMED CONSENT

Protocol Title: Leadership Attributes of Intercollegiate Coaches Drawing Top Student-Athletes

Please read this consent document carefully before you decide to participate in this study.

Purpose of the research study:

The purpose of this study is to explore the leadership attributes of intercollegiate athletic coaches and their effectiveness in acquiring the highest caliber student-athletes available to their program. The method of inquiry will be a narrative approach of a specific program, using individual interviews in order to discover data and better the role that leadership attributes plays in recruiting student-athletes. The unit of analysis will be the head coach of the program and this study will be entirely qualitative in nature. The intended research design is narrative. Findings from the interviews will be used for the purpose of focusing on the general picture of an individual head coach as opposed to the larger landscape of the profession.

What you will be asked to do in the study:

Time required:

Time required will vary with research participant availability. An interview can be as short as 15-20 minutes in instances of limited availability. Typically, interviews last 45 minutes to 1 hour for a session. It is not expected that more than 3 sessions of this duration will be needed. However, the more time that can be given to this study, the greater the potential for rich data.

Risks and Benefits:

There are no more than minimal risks associated with this study that may include personal identification as a member of this study. This can be addressed through anonymity and/or omission of identifiable characteristics of participant(s) should they wish to remain anonymous. Benefits of the study include advancing the knowledge base in leadership throughout intercollegiate athletics by shining light onto an area of higher education that is dominated by practitioners as opposed to researchers. Also, the results of this study will directly benefit the research participants program allowing them to potentially garner highly talented student-athletes as well as respond to their educational and sports related training needs.

Compensation:

There is no monetary compensation for this study. However, intellectual components will be provided to research participants in the form of an executive summary of research findings.

Confidentiality:

Your identity will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law. Your information will be assigned a code number. The list connecting your name to this number will be kept in a locked file in my faculty supervisor's office. No later than six weeks after the interviews have taken place the recordings will be transcribed and erased at that point. When the study is completed and the data have been analyzed, the list will be destroyed. Your name will not be used in any report unless you have otherwise indicated an interest in being named.

Voluntary participation:

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. There is no penalty for not participating.

Right to withdraw from the study:

You have the right to withdraw from the study at anytime without consequence.

Whom to contact if you have questions about the study:

Zack Niland, Graduate Student, Department of Higher Education Administration & Policy, 1163 Paradise Drive, Lady Lake, FL 32159, phone (860) 857-6709, E-mail zackniland@ufl.edu.

Whom to contact about your rights as a research participant in the study:

IRB02 Office, Box 112250, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611-2250; phone 392-0433.

Agreement:

I have read the procedure described above. I voluntarily agree to participate in the procedure and I have received a copy of this description.

Participant: _____ Date: _____

Principal Investigator: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX C
INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

This interview protocol is designed to address the foundations and development of involvement with intercollegiate athletics, leadership style, and individual impact of coaching efforts.

1. How did you become involved with intercollegiate coaching?
2. What motivated you to become an intercollegiate coach?
3. Will you share some insights into your experiences as an intercollegiate coach such as how you progressed professionally?
4. What and/or who has influenced you in your progression as a leader and a coach?
5. How would you describe your leadership style and its development over the years?
6. Do you believe there is a relationship between leadership and success in recruitment and/or programmatic advancement?
7. How do you define leadership and success as they pertain to your recruitment efforts and/or in general terms?
8. What impact do you believe your leadership has on your student-athletes and can you share any life events or stories that support this?
9. Do you believe success and leadership can be taught to existing or future coaches and if so, what techniques would you recommend to accomplish these goals as they pertain to a program and its recruitment of student-athletes?
10. How significant is the role of recruiting in order for your program to be successful and do you have any examples?

APPENDIX D
SECONDARY INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

This interview protocol is designed to build on the previous interview protocol by exploring the practices and advancement of leadership attributes through communication, individual characteristics, institutional characteristics, as well as programmatic factors essential in the mind of the coach to their leadership.

1. Please provide some of the most essential communication tactics and strategies that you employ in order to persuade potential student-athletes to choose your program over others' and how has this worked for you in the past as well as currently?
2. How important is message repetition to the overall persuasive efforts in your recruiting process?
3. Please share a description of your recruiting strategy and if it has evolved through your progression or remained consistent?
4. What would you say are the top reasons student-athletes choose your program?
5. What do you believe are the top recruiting methods employed to influence prospective student athletes to join your program?
6. Which characteristics of your leadership contribute to the success of your program and its recruitment efforts and can you share some examples from your experiences?
7. What characteristics of your institution contribute to the success of your recruitment and inversely what characteristics create challenges to your

recruitment of potential student-athletes? How do you overcome/accentuate these characteristics?

8. Do you believe your leadership attributes to be successful in your recruitment processes and what makes you feel that way?
9. Do you have a sense of others (general public, coaches, players, institutional administrators) view of your leadership attributes and its success in the recruitment process and advancement of your program and what are your thoughts on that?
10. Which programmatic and institutional factors are essential to ensure the future success of your program and the recruitment of top student-athletes in your experience and as you move forward?

APPENDIX E
SUPPLEMENTAL INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

This session will be used to facilitate corroboration of the research participant's data and the researchers understanding and interpretation of that data. Also, this session will be used to discuss the previous meetings and the participant's thoughts about those sessions.

1. Can you tell me more about X?
2. You previously mentioned X, can you tell me more about this?
3. On one hand you discussed X but in another instance you spoke about X, can you clarify?

APPENDIX F
PROTOCOL RESPONSES FROM RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

Researcher: How did you become involved in intercollegiate coaching?

Coach: I started off at the junior college level. I started off coaching [REDACTED] and prior to that, I coached high school and I coached at [REDACTED] for a little over two years and those great experience. It was an experience that was different from this because there were several other jobs that combined with full time position but I was the head coach of the junior college and from there I got a call to try to finish up the year here at the University of [REDACTED].

Researcher: How did you find the transition from high school to college?

Coach: The transition was good for me. I mean I think my experience as a student athlete helped that so you know the transition from coaching High School to college I didn't find it to be a major one for me.

Researcher: As far as intercollegiate coaches you mentioned your experience at the high school level, what motivated you to become an intercollegiate coach?

Coach: I think again my experience is being around college athletics student athletes, having play for coach [REDACTED] and Coach [REDACTED] I think was a good experience for me. I had three different college coaches seeing the different way so they could express their leadership and the leadership style I think that helped me out a lot.

Researcher: Can you share some of your insights into how you progressed professionally and how those leadership queues have kind of guided along the way?

Coach: I think you know some of that leadership style some of it is what you are born in a way of personality. For me my mother is a very aggressive personality and my father is a very laid back personality and I think also is affected by you know the people that you play for and how their leadership styles were you know may have perfected you.

Researcher: And so in the grand scheme how would you rate the influence of your coaches as compared to your parents and their influence as you were coming up in terms of where do you draw the greatest sense of your leadership from?

Coach: I think it's a pretty good mix. I think you know I think initially it's exploring them because that's something it just happened before you may have played for anybody else, you had parents.

Researcher: Right.

Coach: So that's the initial influence and then I think after that I think then it becomes you know the people that you play for.

Coach: And I think they had tremendous influence on me and I think having a mixture, a mixture of three college coaches and so I got a chance to see a blend of different styles of leadership and they totally impacted me.

Researcher: Now were they all at the same institution had they gone through or were these at varying schools had they all?

Coach: No they were different school actually played at [REDACTED] where I coached and I play there for [REDACTED] for two years.

Coach: And then I went to what was in [REDACTED] and it is now known as [REDACTED] and I had different coaches there. Ones in college it was there just for year and then the second coach I had there was [REDACTED] who is now the head coach of the [REDACTED].

Researcher: With regard to you know the influence of your progression as a leader and as a coach drawing on the coaches that you have played for but also drawing on your experiences from your parents do you find that some of the things you do come in conflict with player preference?

Coach: In other words come in conflict with what I preferred as a player or what the players preferred that I am coaching now?

Researcher: Right yes in both regards.

Coach: Well I think there's always some conflict. I mean there's always sometimes as a kid you may not realize I know for me you know I think you know I didn't realize what was important when I was going to but Mark Twain said it best when I was 14 my dad was dumb I could hardly stand to be around and then when I turned 21 I couldn't believe how much he had grown in seven short years and I think you go through that that's part of the process so you can, if you put yourself in a position where you are trying to figure out what it is that they prefer then you are not helping.

Researcher: Right.

Coach: And that's not really leadership. There are going to be some things that they do prefer along the way but there's going to be some things that they just don't.

Researcher: And so it's just really your job to kind of determine those things and move forward what's in the best interest of them but also the program.

Coach: That's right.

Researcher: Define you know your leadership style or preference and how its developed over the years throughout your experiences.

Coach: I tell people all the time you know again my mom was a more aggressive personality and my dad is more laid back, I tell them I try to give them my dad first and if that doesn't work they get more of my mom and I think that goes with the Chinese

proverb if you don't hear the whispers you will have to listen to the screams so I mean I think that that's helpful you know screaming all the time doesn't work because it's like the person who lives next door to the airport after a while they don't hear. I think for my leadership style is what I am trying to certainly power both the assistants and the young men that we are coaching.

Researcher: So in other words so they will be able to take queues from you and how you are kind of directing them throughout their activities.

Coach: Absolutely.

Researcher: Do you believe that there's a relationship between you know your leadership and your success in recruitment or any other programmatic advancement with [REDACTED]?

Coach: I do believe that there's a relationship because we are going to try to look for young man who want to achieve if he don't mind being pushed.

Researcher: Believe that there's a relationship between your leadership and the succeeding in your recruitment and/or you know your programmatic advancement.

Coach: I do. I think the message is that you and the terminology that you use is going to kind of render itself to your attraction to certain young men then for us we value family, we value characteristic that we look for that. We value stability. Obviously we are all looking for talent and if they are not of a certain talent level we shouldn't be looking at them but we certainly value that.

Researcher: Moving forward you know the advancement of your program how are you not necessarily assigning a value or a statistic but how are you rating these characteristics and kind of categorizing in terms of who you are pursuing in your recruitment? I guess you mentioned you know achievement and willingness to be pushed obviously along with family values and good character are those the dominating factors that you are looking at in your potential student athletes?

Coach: Absolutely, you know again everyone is looking for talent and we want them to be as talented as possible but we are going to check their background.

Coach: We want people to be able to certain stability level so that we could push them.

Researcher: Right. So in other words you know you aren't going to take the blue chip perhaps one in done over somebody who can sustain academic integrity over the course of four years and their experience with you.

Coach: Well I think if it works itself out that we have a kid who you know is one in done or two in done it does and you can have kids with high character and you could have great students and they just are so good that they are in a profession to earn a lot of money playing basketball and that can happen. We are not typically in a position to attract those kinds of kids but what we do want and we want people to aspire to that

level of achievement athletically but what we do want is someone who feels comfortable in a family type environment where we are going to care about them on and off the court.

Coach: And not every kid feels comfortable with that.

Researcher: Right. So it sounds like you are expressing that as a program you provide both on and off the court support and resources.

Coach: Absolutely.

Coach: And we are going to check to see if they are in class you know if they are in study hall they kept their appointment with their tutor, you know these are things that are going to be important in life.

Researcher: Absolutely and so in other words the recruitment of these student athletes is in fact both for their academic and athletic abilities.

Coach: Absolutely.

Researcher: Okay. So if you could, can you define in your words leadership and success and as they pertain to your recruitment efforts or in general terms?

Coach: I think a big part of that is leadership as it pertains to recruiting is getting everybody who understands the value that you are looking for so that they see it, they recognize it and they appreciate it.

Researcher: And perhaps success as you would define it towards those efforts.

Coach: Success is when you have a continuation of that and you have some of your former players coming back in to be a part of your current players and your current players valuing that and embracing that leadership from former players and so then you have a program opposed to a team and when you have a continuation of that and you have to show and tell in your success I think that's leadership and that's recruiting.

Researcher: Can you call on any personal experiences of that for me I mean is there anything that stands out in your head is a past player or past member of the program that has exemplified what you are talking about?

Coach: Absolutely you know for instance when I asked you to hold on I was holding a son of one our player, some of our former player who is recently married or recently have a family so he is in my office at this hour and with his son and his wife is downstairs working out and neither one of them are native of [REDACTED]. They moved here and they have a family here. We have former players that are playing professionally in other countries. I think those are things that are very meaningful.

Coach: Because they exemplify family.

Researcher: Yeah so it sounds like it's an extension of those values that you are instilling from get go.

Coach: Absolutely.

Researcher: It carries past. What type of values are you referring to when you say values?

Coach: Just family values, you know value and education.

Researcher: Right.

Coach: Just valuing helping each other. Value being cared about, value coming back and lending to the program.

Researcher: These family values you know you have had in instilling these values you had serious impact on these student athletes. What impact do you believe that your leadership has had on them and beyond you know just may be this one or two instances and any additional life events or stories that would kind of further corroborate that?

Coach: Well I think when you have again when you have guys that come back or call back or email back from other countries, I think they are the best storyteller really of that impact.

Researcher: Right.

Coach: And often times it doesn't happen for couple of years. When you get a call back from someone and you say he is off the phone at their hour someone will tell me wow he is really matured and the types of things that he discusses and talks about and you begin to see his value take shape and his maturity develop and we had that on a number of occasions and those were the best people to be able to mentor and lead the current athlete and that's when you can develop a program that stability some long lasting stability.

Researcher: So this success these family values and your individual leadership do you believe that that's something that can be taught to coaches and if so what would you recommend as it means to these goals as far as an athletic program and its recruitment of student athletes?

Coach: I do think it can be taught be it has be embraced first before it's learned so yes it definitely can be taught. You could teach it all day but until someone embraces it they won't learn it.

Researcher: And so let's say once someone has embraced the teachings and what type of techniques do you employ to accomplish your goals in recruitment of these student athletes?

Coach: I think finding out what kind of family they came from. I think is big finding out you know if they come from a situation where there hasn't been much family, sometimes they are yearning for but sometimes they don't want it so I think that's one of the big one is just finding out what have been their background, is it something that they and sometimes it doesn't mean that if a kid doesn't come from a family background that he won't be successful in a family environment. Sometimes that's the opposite of kid that has may be not come from a broken home, he may appreciate it more than a kid whose had everything and has all but it's something that you looked at and you try to find out what you can learn about someone that you are recruiting you try to find that out first.

Researcher: Its as much a personal and a psychological kind of evaluation at some level as much as it is kind of an athletic competency, an athletic ability.

Coach: Well I think you have to assess that initially. That have to be your initial assessment would be to find someone who will function very well in the family atmosphere if he is a great hockey player and you are recruiting for basketball.

Researcher: Yeah.

Coach: So your initial assessment of his athletic ability is paramount but then beyond that I think you have to go other areas and it may help you in terms of recruiting the young man just because you have familiarized yourself with his family situation and he becomes more comfortable but it also goes beyond that and you can see how he may fit in with your program and why he will be successful.

Researcher: Do you find that you have to or is there a willingness to cater to the you know the multitude of different people, personalities and ability levels of people that you are recruiting and courting for your program?

Coach: I think you need to find out as much as you can.

Researcher: Right.

Coach: You know when you are recruiting someone. I think you just have to. You don't really have much of a choice. You have to find out as much as you can about that person and I think that helps you.

Researcher: Now what types of avenues do you travel in order to kind of acquire the holistic picture of the student athletes?

Coach: I think you find out how he is functioning in his high school. I think you find out or junior college whatever it may be that you find out how is functioning in his home. I think you find out how is functioning in his community because even if we are getting someone on the edge, you want to know that.

Researcher: Right. How significant is the role of recruiting for your program to be successful?

Coach: Oh it's a life blood of it.

Researcher: Right. Can you offer any examples of instances where you have been successful but also where you may have had difficulties in recruiting.

Coach: Yeah when we first came here, a lot of our recruitment efforts were late. We didn't get chance to really get to know the kids we recruited and when they got here it was difficult for them to function in an environment where there was always someone you know looking to help every aspect of their life. They just want to play basketball. There was difficulty when they got here and when we first came here we checked the study hall and checked the class time and checking times when they had meetings with tutors.

Researcher: So initially then it sounds like you had to be just a little more proactive and I guess policing their activities and what they are being involved with.

Coach: Yeah they may not have liked that you know the kid who understands that he wants you to push him that he wants you to be there in turn for him academically. I think he doesn't always like but he understands why you are doing it.

Researcher: Now have you had instances where a recruiting effort has fallen through you know an instance where you are very actively pursuing and recruit and for some reason may be you can elaborate it just didn't pan out to where they didn't end up signing with your program.

Coach: Yeah I don't think we had a kid we recruited for a long time then he came on campus and he really loved it but his dad wasn't on board you know we got deeply into it and he did everything but come and I think after was over it, he wished he came but once again his dad wasn't on board.

Researcher: And so for you from a leadership perspective it's little more that you could have done in that instance then or was there that you felt?

Coach: No I think we had done what we could with him. We just reached a wall in terms of our impact with him because his parents are always going to be his parents.

Researcher: Right.

Coach: I think you just got to love them before you can lead them and that's been our style we try to do.

Researcher: Going back to your upbringing with your parents is that something was instilled in you coming through?

Coach: Yes it was, we didn't always like it but yeah.

Researcher: Yeah so I guess that kind of speaks to your foundation development as a leader.

Coach: Absolutely.

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Coach: When we came it was a mess. It was confusion, no unity, we walked right into the eye of a storm and we had couple of days and then we had this game here and it was really, it was a mess all the way around. It was players not talking to each with other half of the team was about you know it would divide half of them felt one way and the other half felt the other way but assistant coach that were from previous staff, he had his feelings and we walk in saying okay we got to try to stabilize this. The biggest thing lacking was totally unstable, completely and first thing we wanted to do is you know stabilize it but we also had to play ██████████ and ██████████ our first two games so the thing I think you know they said to me listen these guys they don't talk to each other, they don't like each other and they don't agree on anything. The guys would literally switch their lockers around so they didn't have to sit next to some guys. The guys felt one way on one half, the guys felt the other way on the other half and I said well we will get them to agree on something so all of sudden there's no hope, let's just get through the season, we can get through the season and that will be success and I said well we can get through this season they can't agree on one thing, they can't get through season and I said they are going to agree on one thing and that's not going to take long so well I don't think that's going to happen, how you are going to do that? They are all going to agree that they hate me. That's the only way that we can, you know they got to agree on something and that's where we are going to start.

Coach: And so they did and I think for a while and they started talking to each other little bit and if we play well in a row, we have chance to lose about 20 or 25 points no matter who the opponent was. At home we had a chance, giving us a better opponents in our conference even against you know I mean we had a chance so at the end of that I think there was a lot of them that just felt like well we are riding this thing out until next year when we get a coach which was good because if they showed us what they were really all about and they didn't think we were going to be there much longer at the end of the season and when they found out we were but a good portion of them just sitting them out, they were absent, you never heard from them again. Some in which we had for a longer, could have coached for a longer periods of time, a few of them came back and we started that whole process of trying to establish a program, stabilize a program and it took a lot but then we had a probation you know so it was really difficult, difficult process to build it from nothing and you know we go in places and play games in our conference and they were like you guys shouldn't even be in a league and it was bad.

Researcher: Right.

Coach: You know it was a tough thing to deal with.

Researcher: So you only had one way to go.

Coach: Only one way to go is up and it was harder getting up but we just had to persevere. Try and bring some guys who had some character that was stable, guys from stable backgrounds that we can start developing and we were able to do that.

Researcher: That's a pretty unique situation for what you are doing with your leadership and what you are trying to the impact that you are trying to have but moving forward with more recent programs and even the program you have now what's the impact that you try to have strategically I mean like I have seen in the film session there was this strategic impact that you are trying to impart but also beyond that, beyond the X's and O's what's the impact that you are trying to have on your student?

Coach: You know I always tell our guys you know they come in from a background being the man in high school, that's what they think but I tell them you can't be the man without being a man so the first thing is this whole growth maturity development just you know that part of it being dependable. I always say other guys with ability but not as many with dependability and so can they depend on themselves and that's not true in basketball but everything because that's a big part of it, can you really guys are I am not sure I can really get up and get that 8 o'clock class or these things you know most of them are from a background where they are usually only called on to do things that they like so they are not sure if they can really depend on themselves to do the things that they don't really like and that's part of that whole process when they can do that when they can count on themselves, I don't like doing it but I got to do it and I am going to get it done. Now we got ourselves somewhere because there's going to be some parts of the game that they don't like to and that's a whole process, that's a whole method that we trying to teach them to get them to say okay I am going to embrace this challenge and it's a whole mental process that if we can get them through those little channels, they are going to be successful, of course they are going to be successful period.

Researcher: Right.

Coach: That's really a big part of it.

Researcher: And does that feed into you know you are really speaking to individual attributes, that's speaking to the team unity and being accountable and responsible to their teammates.

Coach: Absolutely.

Researcher: To their staff to their community.

Coach: Absolutely and even if you don't really want to do it at that particular time, you know it's easy to do when you feel like doing it you know so if you can depend on yourself then other people can depend on you. If you cannot depend on yourself then no one else can and it's really the challenge.

Researcher: It can be something as simple as breakfast club.

Coach: Absolutely who wants to get up you know the meal of choice for a college student is sleep for breakfast.

Researcher: That's right.

Coach: trying to sleep in I got 8 o'clock class, I will lie in bed about 20 minutes to 8 hopefully I have time to brush my teeth and wake myself up on my way to class you know oh I forgot my book you know so it's I will eat later, I am going to sleep as long as I can and you skipping breakfast and you lift down these weights and doing all this and doing all that but you are skipping breakfast so that's a big part of it. We'll try this thing of with are you going to be accountable to your teammates but if you are not, I always tell them, you don't really have to go to breakfast if you don't want and you don't have to go to class either, you don't when you get a job, you won't have to go to work but they are not going to pay you if you don't go if you don't go to class and we catch you, you don't go to breakfast club if we catch you then the whole team is going to run sprints 6 o'clock in the morning. After a while you begin to realize it's a little easier for me to just go to breakfast club.

Coach: At 7:15 you know than it is to run sprints at 6.

Researcher: They are sleeping in for 20 minutes doesn't pay off.

Coach: No so you know they start to realize that even going to class you know I think it's easier just go to that you know 4 o'clock class I really don't like but it's easier to do that than run sprints that I hate at 6 in morning.

Researcher: Right and then he comes back with accountability for the rest of the teammates if there's any implications through them.

Coach: And they come in here and someone says you know coach you know it's 4 o'clock, they have been, how are you doing, good, everything is going good, yeah, yeah because he is not going to tell me he skipped class is good and he is hoping I don't know but he is kind of wondering why he is in and I am and that's good, your family okay, everything is going good at home, yeah oh good, good, good, and he will say listen psychology class, how is it going, it's going good coach. I am glad it must be going really good because you weren't there. Ah wasn't wait when, oh well yesterday, somebody checked, when did you come by, what class at 4 so I think I might have been in the bathroom you know I had to go to bathroom, I got up and that's probably when you guys you know, oh yeah but you know the rules are if we don't see you, you are not there so even if you come to class and you just decided to do one of these because you didn't get any sleep last night, we don't see you. We don't see you, you are not there, you are not there sprints at six for the whole team so we didn't see you. Coach I think I was there though. If you want to go along thinking that, it is fine.

Researcher: picked a story and stuck to it.

Coach: Yeah they try to stick to it and this is how it usually goes and I say well we didn't see you there so you know then they try to I might have been I think I got there

late, oh what time is your class, four it does start at 4:15 no, it does start at 5 no then you weren't there and then the next phase, coach I want to run double by myself, no, no, no they understand, listen they understand, they knew before you skip this class that if you skip this class, they were going to have to run sprints at six so don't feel bad. Now coach you know no, just listen why don't you go down to the locker room, they are all down there, they got music on, TV on, they are waiting there for me, go down there, take the light switch couple of times get their attention, say guys I got an announcement, we are going to run sprints at six, go ahead hey tell them and then they go coach can I just run double now, no you can't run double, they knew how it was before he goes to class and you know what so did you.

Researcher: Yeah.

Coach: So just go ahead you know go for it man, go for it, no, no, don't worry about it just go for it and they don't want that to go down there to tell the team, they said bring some accountability, some unity and they understand so the next time what it also brings is peer pressure.

Coach: Which could be bad peer pressure and good peer pressure.

Researcher: Right.

Coach: The good peer pressure is I know that you have a 4 o'clock class and I know I don't want to run, it's like man it's 5 to 4, get that class, were you at the class, come on man, I am not running, you got to let's go, I am not running for you again and this kind of starts to evolve so that's been a big part of it too that it's not just you know you didn't get your man on court so we lost, we are all tied to each other.

Researcher: That's right.

Coach: And that's your identity, we talked about that and my brother is a chaplain and he talked about that losing your identity when you come in, your identity is you be a basketball player because if something goes wrong out there, you rob a bank or something, a basketball player rob the bank then they will say who he is.

Researcher: Right.

Coach: So you lost your identity and your whole identity is what we are all doing.

Researcher: Right or wrong place the wrong time, who is going to get picked out.

Coach: That's right, are you be basketball player so we talked about that and that's a big part of it and its part of our development and our growth as a team how will these guys complete, they have to completely binding that up.

Researcher: Well I mean honestly communication is a huge part from what you are doing as a staff as a head coach with your players, I saw on your film sessions and you are communicating important points but you are also making enjoyable for the players. For you what are some of your most essential communication tactics and strategies that

you are employing beginning of their exposure and their recruiting? So at the onset of their experience here at [REDACTED] how are you communicating, what are your strategies, what are you trying to present to them, how are you doing it?

Coach: When they come in, first thing is communicate them on the phone and present a vision for their career as a college student athlete you know what this can be like, what is your legacy going to be like as a college student athlete not as and lot of times kids get wrapped up in you know sometimes if they are not careful the biggest thing they do in college is choose the school they are going to and after that you don't hear from them you know so I try to present this vision on what's your four years in college going to be like because it's hard for a kid to get past his high school, I am going to pick this school, people are asking me I will attend, that's where you are today but what are you going to do for the four years because it goes quick.

Researcher: Sure does.

Coach: So present that vision, that image, that possibility, that legacy, to get them on campus. Now they are on campus. Now when a kid makes a usually he either feels comfortable or he doesn't so are we making him feel comfortable, what are we doing to make him feel comfortable, I would say are they engaged, are we engaging them you know I got this thing, not engaged, I am enraged. I want him to feel like they are so we will talk about what some of the things that interest him, if he is a quiet kid we got to get him talking some kind of way. There should be some of that where they feel comfortable, when they leave after a few days they kind of miss it what they just left even though they have only been here for 48 hours and then when that happens they are comfortable and if they are comfortable and see what we have here and they still determine they don't want to come there's nothing we can really do but most times people want to be where they are comfortable.

Researcher: Right.

Coach: So that's kind of the hole we dig.

Researcher: And so in communicating that to your potential recruits I mean it's probably fair to say if they are looking at [REDACTED], they are looking at other [REDACTED] schools as well and so how do you as a head coach how do you communicate what [REDACTED] has to offer over another [REDACTED] school or over no school period? And perhaps it might be even easier to express it in some of the success you had in the past or that you currently had with them.

Coach: I think what makes us different in a lot of universities is that we first of all where we are located, we are in a major metropolitan area as opposed to just a college town but we are not in the heart of the city, we are removed from it a little bit, we are in suburb, we are in a nice campus enclosed so we have got a little bit of everything. Academically I think we are at a level that's pretty high.

Researcher: Yeah.

Coach: And so we begin to appeal to that kid who's pretty good student and then we need to do that because it's hard whether the kid is not a good student anyway so we begin to go in that direction as well and then I think that we are still a new program. We are not you know there's two ways of looking at that as that we are not with the kid and high school kid a lot of time he wants to be in a program that's he can split the name on and all of his friends accepted and they become impressed with it and you got that no matter what but the other side of it is you know if he comes here and he does well everybody on the campus going to know who he is, everybody in community is going to know who he is.

Researcher: Right.

Coach: He is going to be able to come back in 20 years bring his kids and people will know who he is, he will have left a legacy. It won't be there has been so many great seasons that they can't remember which season you were on that campus because we haven't been in the division that long so we are still building it so that people that come here and do well and they come back everybody knows and that's how is true.

Researcher: So that's worked out for has worked out for them to where they can think and kind of get what they are looking for by coming here and be successful athletically, academically.

Coach: Absolutely yeah that's great.

Researcher: So then you know I see there are rules regulating I guess contact and so forth how important to your mission to your leadership is message repetition in terms of communicating to these student athletes?

Coach: The ones that we have now or the perspective student athletes?

Researcher: Perspective and perhaps the current as well.

Coach: It's absolutely crucial because for us to really go forward and be able to communicate with each other, we need to know terminology and I think once everybody has certain terminology then they will repeat it. It isn't so much that the terminology it's being on the same page so one person speaks they understand the language. Now as you saw in the film sessions sometimes I will use different terminologies that will be striking to them so that they understand and they talk about it when they leave. At most times if something that makes them smile or laugh but I know when they go out in the locker room, they are going to say he said this and laugh but they are going to remember why you said it you know when the opportunity comes up like I use the terminology today they had not used to them they all laughed.

Researcher: Then they are still talking about that after that.

Coach: Yeah and so you know it's designed to just kind of be striking to them in a way that says you know that's what I want to do and you know it takes a while a to do that unless we keep saying same thing and just goes in one ear and out the other which

generates every seems like every other goes by there's more and more that with kids you know where it just goes in one ear and out the other.

Researcher: So with that message and with the repetition there obviously has to be substance behind it.

Coach: Right.

Researcher: So having been able to spend time with the other coaches [REDACTED] off to Oklahoma I think Coach [REDACTED] he is looking to go to Georgia what is your strategy for recruiting? I mean your current roster you got a kid from [REDACTED], you are hitting all the spots you know you are going all over the place so for you what is your strategy and how is it evolved through progression of your program?

Coach: You know we had to go all over the place you know all over the world really. I got these flags up here from these different countries, we got a player and we have gone all over the place and one thing that we hope we don't go all over the place on is character. We want a kid who is going to be able to stay and persevere to some difficulty so I would say like if we are looking at a kid and he is not talent then we really shouldn't be looking at him but what is he going other than that talent so we can't limit ourselves to an area because the area that we are in would restrict us heavily if we just said we are going to get kids in this area even regionally because we are in our conference we are the only school in [REDACTED] so [REDACTED] of the schools are in [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] are [REDACTED] when we go in those areas to recruit we have done successfully in advance but we have to also exist recruiting lives outside of the footprint and we have had some success doing that you know and I just think once we get them on campus we have done pretty well.

Researcher: And I think Coach [REDACTED] said it well he doesn't have or has a program you don't have the you know if the money pots you go back to each time and that's his words has worked out to benefit because that's forcing you to go outside of the footprint to go all these places and you are obviously been able to acquire the student athletes you know they mentioned earlier that [REDACTED] is from and the [REDACTED] player of the year.

Coach: Yeah.

Researcher: That's pretty incredible, that is a hop in instead of pull out player of the year got to be something behind him.

Coach: Right.

Researcher: He is going to be substance.

Coach: Absolutely and I think it's also important because now the kid has an image of himself and he has had some success that will help him form that image so that when he comes in and he is challenged he persevere for no other reason he believes that he can be pretty good, he has had some successes at prior level. I mean now and then you get a kid who hasn't had as much success because he is a late

bloomer or something but there's going to be so many challenges and you don't want the kid to start the question himself too deeply and believe that he can't have success because he has not had it, he gets in and he looks around and everybody has been player of the year except him and he starts to question himself so having some success at high school level is obviously very important both individually and from a team standpoint.

Researcher: Now there's another player [REDACTED] and he is pretty raw pretty athletic I mean and during his sprint he gets up and down as fast as anybody.

Coach: Yeah.

Researcher: And it was mentioned that had he gone to prep school perhaps he might have slipped out of the hands of [REDACTED].

Coach: Yeah.

Researcher: Now what influence or what impact you try to have on saying why don't you go off to [REDACTED] we will develop you, or stay out of that all together.

Coach: Will he go down the road and possibly going to prep school you just present an opportunity to him and what this opportunity allows for and in the way of his legacy and he had a lot of success in high school player of the year, he just has not and this has been the case where it will allow him, he hasn't had to exert himself at the level that he has to exert himself at now. He just hasn't had to do that and so now it's a process for him and as soon as he can become accustomed to having to exert himself at that level then sky is a limit.

Researcher: I have seen actually kind of a trend and the research that I have done, I have met a number of players who are essentially a car under a cover and when they take off the cover and themselves in a mirror, they don't realize they are Ferrari.

Coach: Right.

Researcher: They don't realize the potential they have so for you and your leadership is to uncover this potential.

Coach: Absolutely.

Researcher: Has there been a progression as you elevated in your strategy of recruitment or has it kind of remained consistent from the program?

Researcher: There's has been a progression with the level of consistency so when we first came in we called the kids on the phone they will be answering questions like we will be answering questions like are you division one you know what conference are you in because they never heard of us and we are still in that fight a little bit because we are now a network television where we can look but I think it's better than it used to be we can get in with few more kids than we used to.

Researcher: And so from even direct feedback where you are just your own personal profession and perspective what do you feel like or what do you find out of the top reasons that they are ultimately committing to the program?

Coach: I think they get here and there's a comfort level that they have with their players, you got bad kids, they are going to track bad kids and if you got good kids, I don't know if he told you this if you got good kids they can help you get good kids so I think a kid comes in he spends some time with the current student athlete either there's a connection there is and so I think that has helped us out a lot and I think you know a lot of people say they are on a program like a family so everybody kind of says that but we really do genuinely do it you know our families are around, we are family people and that's the way we want to run it. From the players are around they come back so there is a lot to get comfortable with.

Researcher: So for a player aspect hypnotically scenario of a player what do you believe that are the top recruiting methods that you try to employ to kind of influence them to select the University of ██████ to join your program? You know from start to finish, from discovery from even selecting where to go look or the resources you are using to seek a player out kind of walk me through the methodology of start of finish.

Coach: Well the first thing is we go to few events you know there some events that to be certified in July and we go to those events and you know some of them are the same you know Vegas some events out there Orlando is AAU nationals, Nike super nationals but there's some other ones that pop up during the course of the summer and we go in and we evaluate a lot of kids you know we can see kids played against each other that are on our radar screen and sometimes they get on our radar screen because we subscribe to scouting services and so we go see them play and we evaluate them but everybody is evaluating them. The kids kind of selling where is he, where is he, what level can he play to be successful and so we sit there and watch them amongst the number of other coaches and sometimes we know that the kid plays too well, he is playing himself at a level where he may not want be at this level and sometimes if he plays too bad, he is playing himself at a level we don't want offer him scholarship so it can be a delicate balance there and typically you know through that July period you know we recall the kid up from a, begin to talk to him about his grades, try to get transcripts, talk to him about a visit, talk to him about whether we are offering a scholarship, try to get him on a visit, try to line up a visit he has 5 visits that he can take, we want to one of his 5, he chose to take 5. We then try to line up a time to get him on our campus to visit and that's where really the intense part of our recruitment effort is and in a way if he has an area that he thinks he wants to study, we talk about that. We talk about what may be his favorite food is or you know just things that are appealing to him and we see it that we have those things that he can see while he is on a campus and we show him our campus, we show him the city, we show him ██████████, we show him what this area has to offer and he meets the guys on the team. Sometimes he plays with the guys on the team. We are not allowed to evaluate the kids when they come in and play with our guys. Our guys will typically his own feedback not only about how he may have played with our guys but also just how he interacts with him. You know we want to know if there's some really bad reflects and then we usually wrap him

in, out by here where you are sitting in here with family we like for it to be with family, we do better when it's that way because that's how we are. You know we go out to eat at restaurants, if his favorite food is you know seafood, we go to seafood restaurant. Usually we are going to have a meal with multiple members of family be it my family these guys family our current players and then when we come in we talk about what he is seeing and we usually try to talk to him on the phone prior to him coming you know if he likes what he sees and he sees what he likes that he you know then we will make that commitment and usually they visit us in September, late August maybe October and you can't sign them till November so there's a timeframe, there's a difference between that he may commit and the time he came so we go through that whole thing and you know in between those phases we are doing a lot of calling, background checking you know we will check with anybody at his high school you know it could be a janitor, it could be an assistant principal could be some other kid who goes to school there just try to get a feel for may be what we should know and that's kind of how we do.

Researcher: It seems like you have been having some pretty success getting them in.

Coach: We have, I think they are probably surprised when they come in that's why I asked you like I will always ask is what surprised you and usually because it's not university, it's on national TV a lot, they usually think it smaller than it is and so we tell them you know, 25,000 kids on campus but until you see it you don't realize it and usually we tell them there's three man made length but until you get here and you will see it, it surprises them, the size of the arena, the facilities you know usually will surprise them a little bit too so I like that. They are usually not visiting in the winter and we usually don't have this much snow but the image in their mind is that even if they come in September or August they think it's going to be really cold.

Coach: A lot of snow and they also think depending on what area they are coming from but if we say [REDACTED] they think [REDACTED] and so those things they find out it's usually not lot of snow, it's usually not that cold, we are [REDACTED] hour drive from [REDACTED] so we are little ways away, there's not that many people you know in this area so but if they believe that and some times they do because that's what they hear, it's sort of our way of under promising and over delivering because they think it's going to be 20 degrees and they get here in September it's 60 degrees or 75 degrees so it is work.

Coach: In talking to Coach [REDACTED] it was nice to hear that [REDACTED] is one of the safest cities in the country and I have in fact read an article where it was rated as the [REDACTED] top city to live [REDACTED] to live in so.

Researcher: That something you tell the guys.

Coach: We do yeah we do that especially with families.

Coach: Yeah families want to hear that.

Coach: They want to hear that, they want to know that it's going to be safe that their kids are going to be going somewhere where it's safe and again if you are in the

middle of Oklahoma when you say [REDACTED] they think [REDACTED] and when they turn off, they see anything you know probably something that went wrong, among the [REDACTED] people who live in [REDACTED], in [REDACTED] and I just saw this in [REDACTED] so we have to give them that information so they can say okay wait a minute and that question come how far are you from [REDACTED] and then we can at least tell them you know that we are significantly closer to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] than we are to [REDACTED].

Researcher: Yeah. There's a lot of missnomers, there's a lot probably clarification that you have to do.

Coach: Absolutely.

Researcher: And so in fact what part how much of your recruitment involves kind of educating the recruits and their family?

Researcher: Oh a lot.

Coach: On the process.

Researcher: A lot because again they don't know, it's not something you know most times they don't know, most of the guys that we have had they never heard the University of [REDACTED] before they got here so we tell them you know this is where we are, this is what goes on and the weather issue, is it really, really cold, you know we have charts 30 or average temperature for each the 12 months and it has certain cities in there, some temperatures they aren't always comparable to [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] or [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] because [REDACTED] then they also see you know when it's winter it's a little colder everywhere in those months and it gets a little hotter in summer so we do have to educate them and say this is where we are, this is how it works because we do have you know guys from [REDACTED], [REDACTED] some warm weather places.

Coach: And I bet that even the actual process of well you know this is when we can talk to, this is when we can.

Researcher: Absolutely.

Researcher: This is what we can or can't do for you.

Coach: Right.

Coach: They don't know and even some of those guys their fathers don't know because they are so far and the legislation has changed so often.

Researcher: Sure.

Coach: That I am certain in some cases they didn't realize it either because if you go back even 10 years the legislation has changed. So if you go back to when they were in college it's completely different.

Researcher: Well Coach [REDACTED] showed me the book from last year and he said well this is last year, here's the book from this year and the sticker there's appendices in there that's you know very fine right down to the ratio.

Coach: Oh yeah.

Researcher: So in our original discussion you kind of touched on how you define leadership as a head coach and the characteristics of your leadership but specifically which characteristics of your leadership are contributing or do you feel contribute to the success of the program and obviously specific to your recruitment efforts?

Coach: You know the thing I like to do is empower guys. Assistant coaches, players like to you know really give them some freedom but also give them some empowerment so they have some push of their own so it's not just let's wait and see what he wants to do. Obviously I have input, final input but I want people to take ownership of the program. Assistant coaches, players and there's different styles to that but that's the style that I have that I want them to take ownership of the program and I want them to you know don't try to figure out when I am going to be here and then decide that's when I want to do some work you know you don't have set hours, you just have to work and I think that helps rather than just keep people grounded and certain restrictive roles so I think that's probably the biggest pieces to get guys who feel like they are empowered and to feel as though they have ownership of the program. A lot of times when they don't feel that way you know they just kind of let things go, we don't want that.

Researcher: So for staff it kind of speaks to coaches, recruits a particular player then they come in and as they progress through it's like that's kind of my recruit, I am going to help them, I am going to guide him through the program.

Coach: Well one thing that we have been able to do here is you know you are assistant coach you are calling the guy and he is your guy but then it comes time for us and we get him on campus, he is everybody's guy and I would say let's build a fence around him and he doesn't feel as though because if he is just connected to one guy, he is not going to feel as comfortable but he is connected to everybody, he is going to feel really comfortable and I think that's been a big part that we do and then that way when the kid comes in he feel like he can turn to anybody and get some help and the other part of that is empowering your young guys so when they are seeing they can be a part of that process too and they feel like they want to be a part of that process, when they see, they want to help the guys that are freshmen or sophomore.

Researcher: if he came in and he had an opportunity to go elsewhere but you know being part of that family environment, being part of that team and that unity, I can stick around and see that class act and I thought that was a really incredible lot of people might think it's junk.

Coach: Right. We had that happen couple of times, we had a couple of guys leave and I know that they would like to come back and they left for a job so they made a lot more money. I heard from that and I know that they felt really good about, their

families felt really good about and they were just be with us, their families felt really good about him and I think that's important, I really do, I think it's important having them on the staff who played here.

Researcher: Yeah.

Coach: And guys can see him and see he is a light at the end of the tunnel for lot of them.

Researcher: And Coach [REDACTED] that's like having an NBA player still that caliber.

Coach: Right.

Researcher: You can do it.

Coach: Yes and they respect that and he has this position where he is not just always telling them how to do when I was here we did this, they don't ask you, he doesn't even go in that direction so it's great to have that.

Researcher: And it has been interesting to see him when interacts with players or even one on one, I would watch him you know we were going through it, he thinks really I mean he was keyed in, he was keyed in offense, defense and he was almost calling things out before they were happening. You know we ever sit down first time watching him and he is telling me watch here, this is going to happen and sure enough boom, boom, boom you know he has got that high, he has got that experience, I asked him where do you draw from, I said is that from playing I mean where you getting that, he said yes, it's all the above, some of the extra experiences that I have had and it's obviously paying dividends here but also for him as well.

Coach: Absolutely.

Researcher: So institutionally though at here at [REDACTED] what are the characteristics that have kind of contributed to the success of your recruitment? I mean you said you know [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] what have been successful for your recruitment efforts institutionally speaking and then second part would be what have been a hindrance to recruitment?

Coach: I think sometimes they are the same, you look a guy, his greatest strength is greatest weakness for us but we academically the standards are pretty high here much higher than what you would think from a state school so sometimes we go on and we see a kid and he on occasion he may be in NCAA qualify, we can't get him in and that's good and bad. The bad is you want that kid, you want him in. The good is sometimes we can go to a kid who is pretty good academically and we can present to him here are our academic peers and sometimes those academic peers are really good academically and they are also good athletically and then he might not be on there without screen for them to recruit. He might be a B list player for them so we can tell him, this is where you are academically and you should be here athletically and we might be the school that's there athletically so I think we try to use you know, it's a two

edge sword but we got to try to use it and you know get the kid and the family as much as we can so understanding academic opportunities that they have. A lot of times kids who stay academically are really important to me and they may not be but we got to try to do what we can.

Researcher: And do you feel like academically, institutionally that you have importance of buy in of that side of the house I mean if you divide the house academically and athletic do you feel is there or?

Coach: It's a challenge all the time on the campus like this because they were academically successful for so many more years than they were athletically and they certainly don't want to compromise.

Researcher: Right.

Coach: And we don't want to present anything to them that will cause them to think that we want them to compromise so it's something that we have to always be on guard with. It is a challenge there's no doubt it and now you can get them in but after they get here, we don't have any majors that we can hide our kids in, might as well things that I might discussed to other people that there has been so many other coaches and they will say well where we begin because that's as a major, we don't have that.

Researcher: Because Coach [REDACTED] shared with me a list of the rated program that are here in the top 25, there's a full page list and I went through that list and I didn't see the standard if you will the "standard" athletic degrees.

Coach: Right no and they are all, all of the areas of study, all of the degree majors, they are all competing with each other to be on that national list.

Researcher: Right.

Coach: To be ranked so there's no place to hide you know we have to try to get it as much of that as an advantage we possibly can.

Researcher: So do you find that location is what it is but do you find your geography is a hindrance or do you find that's it's a benefit to you? I mean clearly you are within proximity of talent that there could be a benefit or hindrance.

Coach: Or I could be at hindrance sometimes scheduling but you know what I mean for us again we try to look at all those areas and say how can we turn this negative into positive, how can we, now travel, that's where it gets to be a real hindrance is when we are going to play a game when we are getting back on Thursday morning at 6 o'clock in the morning, that's when it gets to be a challenge you know when we get into January and February and all our games are going to be really long trips, that's when it gets to be a challenge, we are on that bus three or four times you know down and back and down and back in six days period of time. Last year when we

had five games in ten days, they were played in four different states, that's where we are located becomes big challenge.

Researcher: And so also another aspect is some of the institution is the facilities and I think its incredible asset that you have what need in one house.

Coach: Yeah.

Researcher: And like we were discussing earlier some schools don't have that.

Coach: Right.

Researcher: So pros and cons of that you know how does that play out for you as the head coach in terms of institutional facilities?

Coach: I think again has been a surprise to our perspective student athlete when they get in And they see but for us it has been really good because you have to way in I went down to study hall, easy enough to do that, I can get up go to bathroom, I am on my way to the bathroom which is one area is that close but if I keep going around the corner, I just go down and I can look down from a window, I can look down, stay on this level and see one of the quietest study hall areas.

Researcher: Okay.

Coach: And you know that's yeah its convenient yes but it saves time.

Researcher: Sure efficiency.

Coach: Yes and for the staff as well as for the student athlete, that's been really the and even you know right across from football stadium so on a Saturday if we have a workout in the morning and recruit in you know we can just do what we got to do come upstairs, may be watch or get something to eat or grab a meeting and then go across the street, go see a football game so that part has been good.

Researcher: So speaking about pros and cons how do you for recruits, how do you overcome but also how do you extenuate the attributes of the institution?

Coach: I think one of the things is they think if you don't know, you are recruiting you don't know, you think it's probably worse, you probably don't think it's good as it is now so that's kind of an under promise and then you get here it's kind of an over delivery so the biggest thing we got to get over is to get over whatever stumbling blocks there are to getting them here. We get them here I think then they will come.

Researcher: So in other words, there's no lack of confidence in the product, it is just in fact getting them here and allowing them to see to experience the whole thing.

Coach: Yes, if they see I think they will come.

Researcher: So to what degree do you continue to recruit a student athlete who is tentative, who is hesitant, who says, may be something in your mind that's a non-issue or something that can be easily be overcome to what degree.

Coach: We keep recruiting them, we stay on until he says no I don't want you to recruit me, you are out, we can't really do much but we keep recruiting the kid to the end and if he has an objection that's a minor one and we have a quick answer we obviously give it him on the phone but if we can get him here I think then he starts to see you know he looks at it, it will look better than may be he thought it was even in the winter times it's better than what he thought it was because again first we don't usually have, it's not like this, not anymore, since the 70's we haven't had like this but usually this would be gone in a week but anywhere he looks and he sees the campus and even just how quick it is to get around and then that usually separates him from what he thought prior to coming and that kind of helps itself. The other thing is just meeting people and seeing guys and seeing guys around depending upon when he comes, if the comes in August or September we might have three or four guys who are playing professionally in Europe that are here that are playing with our guys. I think that's always great experience too.

Researcher: So with respect to your leadership as a team do you find it to be most successful in the recruiting process and/or in the actual coaching aspect once they have already arrived?

Coach: Both and even more than those two because I think there's so many, we spend so much time with these kids on buses and the airports but specifically mostly on the buses and talking about academics or a girlfriend, we are just around them all the time you know particularly for the months of the season, we are around them more than we are on our own kids.

Researcher: Right.

Coach: And so we are always talking to them and there's more of that time than there's the actual time on the court.

Researcher: Right.

Coach: There's more of that that kind of interaction with the kid than there is the other things so I think that's the biggest thing you know I think that really is and they begin to see that as they get older. First they don't, they just know they are playing or they are not but I think by the time they are junior, senior there has been something they come in here that has been very important and they talk about that something and its impact on their life and I think they realize that. For us we realize it too you know we realize it too. There's got to be trust, things that build the trust and it may not always be me, may be its [REDACTED], [REDACTED] but it's something in their life.

Researcher: So how would you personally rate your success in your leadership of the student athletes and all the other elements that you are involved with?

Coach: I think that's been very high and the way you judge that I think is are they coming back, are they visiting you, do they stay in contact and they do, most of them do. In one case we have a kid who just called me today actually, he didn't make it through his very first year, he got some problems and wasn't able to get through but he is fighting, I mean he thinks he can still come back but his five year passed but he still considers this to be the best part of his life. It wasn't really good for him but the other ones they call and they come back all the time, send emails and pictures and that have been at weddings and things like that so the outside thing the biggest thing and sometimes that takes five, six, seven years for a kid to go through that whole process and then realize this is where it's home you know he begin to feel like at home even they are not from here.

Researcher: So allowing them to go through cycle and a life cycle where they will gain experience.

Coach: They have gone away and then gotten away they say you know they had some great times there. Fortunately for us it hasn't been a lot of guys that are four, five years that thought about most of them they just left couple of days ago and he is leaving for [REDACTED] on the 10th of January but he just finished playing last year so most of them you know they are pretty well, as soon as the season over there they are back and those are exactly they are back, they are emailing, texting, they are sending photos, they are coming back to visit and I think that's important because that's when they you know if that to happen when they first get here isn't as important because they don't really know that much anyway.

Researcher: Right.

Coach: But after they have gone through some things and they still claim to build relationships that means they have been impactful.

Researcher: You know you talk about like the pros and cons of the institution but as far as and institutionally what factors have been and what factors do you see as essential as far as the advancement and success in program with recruiting and beyond and in general terms as well?

Coach: You know that's usually relationships you know you are building relationship as you do that I think you are building your program. Again a lot of that former players a lot of that comes with the first thing we talked about, we are stabilizing the program because if you are unstable, you are all over the place I mean people have hard time staying in contact. It's hard to build relationship if you are unstable. Now if you can stabilize a program people know here people can depend on you being there and now that helps with everything, recruiting and everything. The only thing that definitely gets to be harder is scheduling because sometimes people don't want to schedule you but there's certain amount of respect with that so I think stabilizing the program, stability and relationship the biggest thing, the stability being first.

Researcher: So and moving for the advancement of the program going forward do you feel that though you just want to maintain what you have or what do you try to do to enhance?

Coach: We are trying enhance everything we have, every single time to look at everything that we have and if there's a way that we can do it better, we are trying to find that every morning who wake up, we are thinking how can we make it better, how can we improve this, how can we get this better from the plays we run to the way we travel to a game, the way we travel and when we are recruiting, the pictures that are on wall everything, you know how can we get better, everything that we do.

Researcher: And so in your mind what needs to take place, let's say from today moving forward what needs to take place to kick off that advancement, to kick off that?

Coach: I think it's not a singular thing, it's everything like you know and usually starts with recruiting you know, the guys that you are bringing in but we want to take our development of our guys place and have it here at a high level and recruiting right underneath against it so that you are not, you know where we are we have to be able to get young men because it's hard to get them now it's hard to get a McDonalds all American unless he is your son you know to come to play at a place where he is on national TV a lot so we have to get the kid and keep developing him so that at some point he can compete against McDonald All American having said that the kids that we are bringing in they need to be at a higher level as possible to challenge that development and both challenging each other, the kid we bring in also gets developed and so if we can kind of keep that as high level as possible then it helps us to build a team so I think that's a big part of it.

Researcher: And something I was wondering may be you can share some, the McDonalds All American, the guys that are one done, the guys that are may be two in done having that in back of their head knowing perfectly well I see people in their ear but personally as well why is it that they wouldn't consider a lower level school knowing that they are going to have the opportunity to go on anyway, why not.

Coach: It's a good question.

Researcher: Why not take advantage of all the school has to offer for that year or for that two years instead of just revolving door?

Coach: I ask that question all the time.

Researcher: Yeah, so what are your thoughts on that?

Coach: I think what happens is there are people in there, McDonalds all American and you are sitting there with McDonalds All Americans and you know what's the brand thing that you are going to go to.

Researcher: Right.

Coach: And so they sit around with each other and they talk about where you going to school and you know as talented as they are, they also want to impress their peers and so they want to say a name that is on national TV all the time that and once you start with that, the thing, what the institution is selling, what the brand name is selling is we just had a McDonalds we just have a guy one in done. We just had ten one in done.

Researcher: Right.

Coach: They are telling to them, we are the reason those guys are one and done, that kid who is one and done and is secure enough in himself that he is saying, listen I don't need to go to this brand names, I know what I bring.

Researcher: Right.

Coach: Curry at Davidson. He has to be really, he has to have a level of self esteem, he has to be really secure in himself that he can sit in a room with a bunch of other kids and say I am going to X when they say what's the matter you, I am going to [REDACTED] and say, you going here, okay fine this is where I am going.

Researcher: Right.

Coach: And he has to be sure enough in himself that when they go, man you going where, you said okay.

Researcher: It is just amazing even within that dialogue, I am going to be one and done to man, we are going to be playing together in the league next year anyway.

Coach: Yeah, usually he only feels it is a security blanket.

Researcher: It's like egotistical thing.

Coach: It is absolutely, it is ego thing, it is a security blanket, I can say I went to fill in the blanks.

Researcher: See to me it just doesn't add up, because you go to that school then just take a number, take a number, you are one of a thousand, you are one of a couple hundred that have done this before you, that will do this after you and just to me it seems like go to a [REDACTED], go to a school where you can actually in that one year and that two years you can have an impact, you will be remembered, you won't be another, you will be remembered and so.

Coach: And the people who are with him to, who are also saying wait a minute I saw that school on TV man, this school is calling you now, and they equate that with him as stock rising when he is really good, he is really good, you know, I have to have a security blanket, if I don't succeed if I am not one of them at least I can say I went to the University of, no one will admit that, but I think that happens.

Researcher: Yeah, I believe more than that happens, because if they were coming to the different school, a lesser known school that will be the media blast right then and there, well as a head coach, you know where are you spending, what endeavors are you spending the greatest amount of your time on, what do you find yourself doing, in season, out of season, you know January 1-December 31st, what are you doing?

Coach: Empowering our assistants, and powering our players, you know the energy that I am feeling is really a family environment around here, some of it is keeping certain energies away you know try to keep the guys locked in with each other and because it is a high profile sport so everybody is paying attention and really the only guy I know on the team, I am only going to talk to you about what you did, how many rebounding points you got and trying to keep that element out of it is sometimes energy consuming, you don't want him worried about what he is doing, because often he is only going to put so much pressure on himself, again, loose your identity, just lock in, and I tell them the more you give to the team, the more of that will come back, but that is a difficult process, the parents, they been the stars of the team in high school and why aren't you doing what you did then and who is keeping you from doing it.

Researcher: They say those things.

Coach: Yes, they begin to apply pressure to the kid because he knows, the kid knows, he is in practice everyday, he is looking at film, you know, he sees our opponents, he knows why he is not doing the same things he did in high school but nowadays with cell phones and texts and all that, he got a lot of stake holders that are in his ear and trying to keep them at a distance is energy consuming.

Researcher: I bet.

Coach: So that couple with recruiting and scheduling you know, just scouting and all that, it is just obvious to people I think.

Researcher: So in that realm, where does recruiting fall, I mean where do you...

Coach: It is life learning what you do, you got to do it everyday, I say yeah, someone told me recruiting is like shaving, you got to do it everyday or you look bad, so you can never say oh we are all set, you just got to keep doing it and you got to keep doing it, and you got to keep doing it, the scheduling getting to a point to but recruiting definitely there.

Coach: Always here about guys, we are always talking about guys.

Researcher: So when we are talking about these guys and we talk about geographically where they come from but where do you draw the greatest number of your players from, I've heard that there has been a focus on getting four year guys, kind of staying away from JUCO guys because you don't have the opportunity to develop them and then kind of a quick turnover, kind of speak to that as...

Coach: Well to me college, we coached community college prior to coming here but the thing about junior college guys is usually there is a year of adjustment and then after that, they only got one year left and you hope it is only a one year adjustment, sometimes it can be more than that and the four year guys also hard academically, he comes in as a junior college kid, he is trying to find a major, he is trying to this, he is trying to find that, you know for us it is good like in our situation right now we have █ freshman, we have only █ seniors but we have a nucleus of guys, we have █ seniors, one of which is a fifth year senior, we have █ juniors, █ of which are in their fourth year, so we have █ guys who have been here either their third year, fourth year, or the fifth year to help nurture and develop those █ freshman who are looking around like timing tourist and need some leadership, not only from coaches but teammates. Yeah academically they really need to, it's hard, and it's hard for a junior college kid, not impossible, but hard.

Researcher: And is that because of your system, is that because what you guys are doing here?

Coach: I think both, academically it takes them a little while to catch up on some things that we want to be instinctive with the way we play offensively, it takes a little while, it takes a little while, he is just about learning, and we learned it too, our first recruiting class with seven junior college kids and high school kid.

Researcher: Out of necessity probably.

Coach: Yeah, we had to, set the job and that was left, we've had some success doing it this way.

Researcher: When starting the recruiting process when going to bigger local, you go to previous spots, I mean let's take this class that you just brought in, are you likely to go back to their high schools and re visit?

Coach: Only yeah if they have a kid that is at our level, absolutely, a lot of times we would get a call from that high school coach who saw his kid come back as a man when he was a boy and you might say there is another kid here.

Researcher: So it is about building relationships as well.

Coach: We kind of lead to the areas where there is a kid that we are really interested in and then we go in there.

Researcher: So what measures are you taking to kind of identify these potential players?

Coach: Oh we start out with the scouting instructions, that everyone else does and then eventually we get to you the crust of it is, is there a kid that is talented enough first of all for us to begin looking at and then we dig behind the scenes, does he have all the other elements characterized at which we continue recruiting then we get him on campus. Where he is from comes kind of secondary.

Researcher: Yeah, geography is not an issue for you, obviously you got players from all over the country; some schools don't have resources or availability to...

Coach: If the kid says there is a hindrance, then we can, we can recruit, if it is not a hindrance to him, it is not a hindrance to us.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Zachary W Niland was born to John and Tonya Niland in 1985, in Montour Falls, New York. Zachary subsequently moved to West Virginia where he spent his fundamental years before moving to Connecticut where he ultimately graduated high school at Norwich Free Academy in 2003. Upon completion of his high school diploma, he attended and participated on the Men's Division I basketball team at Central Connecticut State University in New Britain, Connecticut. After earning his bachelor's of science in education and graduating with honors in December of 2007, Zachary continued his academic studies at Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) pursuing and completing his Master of Sciences in education in May of 2008.

After completion of his MS in education, Zachary began his studies at the University of Florida in the fall of 2008, pursuing his Ph.D. in higher education administration and policy. After studies had begun, he was offered an opportunity to work as an Academic and Career Advisor at a local community college which he accepted and continued to balance his studies with working full-time. In 2010, Zachary returned to his primary focus of achieving his Ph.D.

After achieving candidacy in the spring of 2010, Zachary set forth with his data collection and subsequent analysis of that data. The results of those efforts are the contents of this document. After a summer 2011, graduation Zachary is looking forward to the next challenges he will face, both academic and professional.