Intentional Leadership Development in High School Student Athletes: A Training Program for Facilitators

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INTENTIONAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
IN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT ATHLETES:
A TRAINING PROGRAM FOR FACILITATORS

A Master’s Project
presented to
the Graduate School of Professional Psychology
University of Denver

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in Sport & Performance Psychology

by
JULIA CAWTHRA AND TINA SPRIGGS
Dr. Steve Portenga, Master’s Project Chair
MAY 2015
The undersigned, appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School of Professional Psychology, have examined the Master’s Project entitled

INTENTIONAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
IN HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT ATHLETES:
A TRAINING PROGRAM FOR FACILITATORS

presented by Julia Cawthra and Tina Spriggs

candidates for the degree of Master of Arts

and hereby certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

________________________________________________________________________

Steve Portenga, Ph.D., Chair

________________________________________________________________________

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ABSTRACT

Leadership is an important aspect of life. Without leadership chaos might ensue. From politics to parenting, an essential part of the world at large deals with leaders. To be a great and effective leader is difficult; a bigger challenge comes when trying to teach someone else how to do the same. Leadership’s critical role in our world makes it vitally important to facilitate the development of the multifaceted skills involved. Students are put into leadership positions every day without training or guidance on how to lead effectively. A high school sports captain, for example, is nominated by teammates or coaches, thus placed in a compromising position: choosing whether to be a friend or a leader but not both. Therefore, developing a leadership program for student athletes is of supreme importance. Ultimately, this need for an intentional leadership development program prompted the authors to develop the Student-Athlete Leadership Team (SALT) and a corresponding manual for mentors.

Each athletic season the student athletes in SALT are taught Kouzes and Posner’s (2007) Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership. Kouzes and Posner (2007) suggested that collective abilities and skills encompass characteristics of effective leaders who move followers to work towards a common goal. The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership are (a) Model the Way, (b) Inspire a Shared Vision, (c) Challenge the Process, (d) Enable Others to Act, and (e) Encourage the Heart.
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Intentional Leadership Development in High School Student Athletes: A Training Program for Facilitators

Throughout adolescence, and more specifically high school, there are numerous developmental changes occurring that have a significant impact both immediately and over a lifetime on an individual. Managing the stress that comes with juggling schoolwork, determining vocational and educational paths, and solidifying a sense of self is taxing on an adolescent. During this time of development, adolescents commonly have role models whom they look up to when making difficult decisions. While the adolescent may refer to that individual as a role model, they are in a leadership role for the adolescent.

For high school students who choose to participate in sports, coaches and captains are additional leaders in their lives. Being a captain and in a leadership position is challenging for adolescents because there is difficulty in directing peers at this age. Balancing being a friend, being a teammate, a liaison to the coach, and successfully leading their team presents a daunting task for adolescents. Coaches have little time to help captains with leadership skills, and thus leave the adolescent guessing as to what is useful. To answer the questions the adolescent may have and build effective characteristics, an intentional leadership development program was created. This manual was created to guide the facilitators of that program. The first portion includes a literature review to build a scientific foundation for understanding aspects of the training program and chosen interventions.

This brief review of literature includes essential background information detailing the rationale and purpose of this intentional leadership development program. The importance of leadership is discussed initially, to emphasize the author’s purpose for creating the program. A few different models of leadership are discussed to help understand why the specific
development format was chosen. Additionally, the authors address why the developmental period of adolescence is the ideal time for leadership characteristics to be strengthened. The trouble high school students have in being effective leaders and why they struggle is addressed as well. Furthermore, the unique attributes of an adolescent leader are explored, strengthening the rationale for developing intentional leadership in high schools. Distinct features of an adolescent athletic leader are then examined, which helps build the case for why this program is needed. Once reasoning has been established for the program, the authors will provide a detailed purpose for each session, a visual outline for the program, and specific examples to facilitate an effective program for leadership development in high school student athletes.

**Review of Literature**

**Importance of Leadership**

Leadership is arguably the most important skill set an individual can develop. Nearly every person in society is a leader or working with one: in their family hierarchy, in their organizations, or in their career. Martinek, Schilling, and Hellison (2006) maintain that every person is born with inherent leadership abilities. The researchers suggested that leadership potential begins to manifest between the ages 1 and 3. This was demonstrated through children directing one another in imaginative play, feeling empathy for their peers and sometimes sensing injustice, and protecting one another from isolation. For an individual’s full leadership potential to be achieved these innate leadership abilities should be nurtured as people develop, instead of waiting until an individual enters a leadership position in a professional capacity.

Skills of leadership are essential in many aspects of life and effective leaders are typically the reason behind an organization’s success and growth (Newcomer, Kolberg, & Corey, 2014). The government and military, for example, emphasize the importance of good leadership.
abilities. Therefore, research has been conducted in order to prove that effective leadership development programs can help the U.S. military to protect the American people (Newcomer et al., 2014). Another important part of society is business and a country’s economy can thrive when more small businesses are established (Trump, 2012). Leaders of a company or corporation are needed for such areas as: decision making, monitoring and assessing results, making improvements, and analyzing business feedback. Without effective leaders, a company would not be run efficiently (Bontas, 2012). The advantages of leadership abilities are not restricted to giant conglomerates or military branches, but largely affect individuals within any organization who need to utilize leadership skills on a daily basis.

Parents as leaders have enormous influence on their offspring (Grunwald & McAbee, 1999). Parents are held responsible for their children’s actions because of the notion that success or failure of an individual largely depends on who is in control. Another example of the importance of leadership skills comes from individuals entering the job market. As jobs become increasingly competitive and the bar is naturally raised for employee skill sets, leadership becomes a more desirable attribute (Sogunro, 1997). Like these other domains in life that require strong leadership, sport is no exception. Crozier, Loughhead, and Munroe-Chandler (2014) discovered that many athletes regard leadership as an essential part of their success. Having both formal and informal leaders on a team helps with team cohesion, communication, team outcomes and even individual performance outcomes (Crozier, Loughhead, & Munroe-Chandler, 2014).

The critical importance of leadership has been examined in different capacities. In order to accurately measure or determine an individual’s leadership competency, the most essential characteristics of leadership must first be determined. Chelladurai’s (1978) Multidimensional Model of Leadership (MML) has been used in several different leadership settings. When
measuring leadership in an athletic setting the Leadership Scale for Sports (LSS) (Chelladurai & Saleh, 1980) was developed as a tool to measure leadership ability in coaches. The categories utilized within the test are: Training and Instruction, Democratic Behaviors, Autocratic Behaviors, Social Support, and Positive Feedback Behaviors. Two questionnaires are administered to the athletes. One survey asks the athletes to respond according to how they would prefer their coach to act, and the other asks questions pertaining to how their coach actually behaves. The score of the athlete’s desired coach behavior is reduced by the coach’s current behavioral score, which gives a comprehensive score.

Although Chelladurai’s (1978) MML is the most utilized theory of leadership in sport, the subscales utilized are not valid measures of leadership (Aoyagi et al., 2009). Additionally, required leadership behavior and actual leadership behavior are team constructs. Starkly contrasting that, preferred leader behavior and perceived leader behavior are individual (Chelladurai & Reimer, 1998). Relating either required leadership behavior to an individual or preferred leader behavior to a team would not be useful. The lack of valid and reliable measures of outcome variables of performance and satisfaction make the MML difficult to justify (Chelladurai & Reimer). Models of developing leadership skills should be based on research and facts, as opposed to athlete expectations or opinions of what a good leader does. The MML leaves questions unanswered in terms of concrete characteristics proven to be effective in leadership. Furthermore, the MML does not tell people how to develop leadership skills. The focus of the MML is on outcomes from leaders instead of the actions to take in order to produce desired leadership behaviors. If an individual chooses to follow this model, there are no instructions or guidelines to enhance leadership skills.
In addition, the Leadership Sport Scale (LSS) (Chelladurai & Saleh, 1980) was developed to evaluate leadership abilities in coaches. The LSS omits any measure of leadership development of athlete leaders within a team. Chelladurai and Reimer noticed the LSS items in autocratic behavior do not reflect autocratic behavior in a traditional sense, meaning opposite of democratic behavior. Autocratic leadership is characterized by the leader having control over all decisions and leaving little input for group members. Athletes stated they wanted a democratic leader, but those who rated their coaches as more autocratic were actually happier. There seems to be a lack of congruence in the reports from the LSS with the MML. This raises questions around the theory behind the questionnaire. Because of this lack of structure and effectiveness, a variety of fields have chosen to utilize transformational leadership as a model.

Transformational leadership is an ethical leadership style where a leader moves people to action through inspiration (Choudhary, Akhtar, and Zaheer, 2013). Transformational leadership theory was enhanced by researcher Bernard M. Bass, and consists of four components. They are: (a) Intellectual Stimulation, which pertains to a leader’s ability to promote creativity among followers, (b) Individualized Consideration, which speaks to a leader’s support and encouragement with individuals within the organization, (c) Inspirational Motivation, which demonstrates a leader’s clear vision and ability to move followers to accomplishing goals that work towards that vision, and (d) Idealized Influence, which describes the character of a leader that followers admire due to trust and respect (Zacharatos, Barling & Kelloway, 2000). As a model, transformational leadership pushes leaders to influence, empower, and encourage followers to achieve good performance (Choudhary, Akhtar, & Zaheer, 2013). Out of all of the leadership models that exist, transformational leadership has become the standard of leadership that many institutions expect their leaders to utilize (Gordon, 2007). Sport organizations appear
to not have made this transition into intentionally utilizing this most current form of leadership development.

The authors have chosen to utilize a model that was derived from the principles of transformational leadership and has been adapted to be a developmental model for leadership. The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership (Kouzes & Posner, 2014) promotes a harnessing of the leadership characteristics that Bass’ Transformational Leadership Theory emphasizes by breaking down the specific behaviors associated with each skill.

The 5 Practices of Exemplary Leadership

The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership (Kouzes & Posner, 2014), also known as the “Five Practices,” were created by collecting case studies from over 1,200 managers about their personal best experiences as leaders (Posner, 2004). Kouzes and Posner (2003) did the same study with college students in leadership positions. After many surveys and interviews, the answers given by the college students were comparable to what the high level managers had stated initially; a pattern was revealed of underlying and critical leadership actions and behaviors (Kouzes & Posner, 2003). All leaders exhibit collective leadership practices, and these skills encompass characteristics of effective leaders who move followers to work towards a common goal (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). These behaviors were grouped into five dimensions (practices) that are common to successful leaders. The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership (Kouzes & Posner, 2014) are: (a) Model the Way, (b) Inspire a Shared Vision, (c) Challenge the Process, (d) Enable Others to Act, and (e) Encourage the Heart. The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership is a framework for leaders to define their personal best or exemplary leadership experience (Chang, 2014), which provides a solid foundation to creating effective leadership behaviors. The practices are explained in the following paragraphs.
**Model the Way.** Before a person is taught or given any leadership skills to add to their arsenal, they must first learn to lead by example. Leading by example has been described as one of the most essential steps to success (Messianu, 2014). When an individual role models congruency in their words and actions, this behavior can attract followers. Motivation has been shown to increase in individuals with goal-congruent role models (Lockwood, Jordan, & Kunda, 2002). Through motivation and encouragement, effective leaders strengthen their appeal as a role model for followers (Jogulu & Wood, 2007). The importance of role modeling is highlighted when considering the difference between a boss and a leader. Individuals who pursue favorable outcomes in tasks are most inspired by role models who highlight strategies for achieving success (Lockwood, Jordan, & Kunda, 2002). A boss is giving orders to be completed while a good leader is often alongside the followers, working to discover efficient ways to achieve.

**Inspire a Shared Vision.** Leadership starts with a clear vision (Kinnair, 2013). Even if an individual is charismatic and effective in leading by example, a leader needs to have aspirations with direction. Otherwise, a situation of the blind leading the blind may ensue. Generating awareness around the goals of the team is good leadership practice (Batool, 2013). A good leader knows where their organization, community, or team wants to go. Being able to articulate the vision and create awareness of the direction team members should go is vital to effective leadership (Jogulu & Wood, 2007). Positive leaders are widely expected to inspire others to pursue excellence (Lockwood, Jordan, & Kunda, 2002). Having clear vision is vital to effective leadership because the road to success and team cohesion is rarely smooth.

**Challenge the Process.** A leader looks for ways to improve the organization, community or team. This practice calls for leaders to take risks in their pursuit of creating a better environment and embrace the idea that failure is always an option. If risks are never taken, the
process is never changed and new successes can never be accomplished (Gentry, 2009). The ability to challenge followers’ ideas about the way situations are currently being handled allows novel and creative problem-solving methods to be developed (Jogulu & Wood, 2007). Not being complacent with the current status quo of an organization is a key characteristic of an effective leader. A leader stimulates interest among followers for new endeavors not previously undertaken (Batool, 2013).

Enable Others to Act. A big part of this practice is giving and building trust between the leader and team members. Team leaders who engender trust contribute to team effectiveness (Lee, Gillespie, Mann, & Wearing, 2010). A leader should not only earn trust from their organization but demonstrate trust in the members to get their jobs done (Gentry, 2009). Leaders develop others by empowering and mentoring them to excel beyond standard expectations (Jogulu & Wood, 2007). While building trust is important with each individual, the leader should keep the whole team in mind as well. Motivating others to consider interests of the group over their own is the mark of an effective leader (Batool, 2013).

Encourage the Heart. Giving members of the team praise for the hard work they do is something a leader should always remember. Not only do people deserve to be acknowledged for their work, but also praising others for progress is one of the most successful tools a leader has at their disposal (Blanchard, Lacinak, Tompkins, & Ballard, 2002). Mentoring individual’s development is crucial to leadership (Jogulu & Wood, 2007). When a leader is honest yet eternally optimistic for others’ success, the followers will be empowered. Developing followers’ ability and keeping consideration for each individual’s needs is important to effectively lead as well (Batool, 2013).
Much of the research that has been done to validate The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership (Kouzes & Posner, 2014) has been done with the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI), the instrument that was created to measure an individual’s mastery of the Five Practices. Many professionals in different fields have utilized the LPI. Shortly after the LPI was created, Kouzes and Posner (1987) did several in-depth empirical studies to test the effectiveness of the measure. In one study, data from over 36,000 respondents were used to reexamine the psychometric properties of the instrument (Posner & Kouzes, 1993). In that study, the LPI was found reliable to assess leadership behaviors and skills, and a powerful instrument for understanding and developing leaders (Posner & Kouzes, 1993). Other researchers, besides the creators of the measure, have conducted their own studies on the LPI. Zagorsek, Stough, and Jaklic (2006) determined the LPI is a reliable instrument in terms of leadership development. Through item response theory, the characteristics of the questionnaire items and characteristics of individuals were related to the probability of choosing response categories. The theory does not assume the instrument is equally reliable for all levels of the variable examined. Results indicated the LPI is best used for training and development purposes (Zagorsek, Stough, & Jaklic, 2006). Further testing indicates that the LPI can be used to measure transformational leadership (Field & Herold, 1997). The LPI has even been used in the medical field to analyze the leadership abilities among nursing staff (Tourangeau & McGilton, 2004).

After the LPI was created, the Student Leadership Practices Inventory (S-LPI; Kouzes & Posner, 2003; Posner, 2004) was designed to identify specific leadership behaviors in college students. Posner (2004) demonstrated the validity of the S-LPI when examining different collegiate student populations, i.e., fraternities, residence halls, and academic disciplines. Posner and Brodsky (1994) verified that the S-LPI has demonstrated relative independence from gender,
age, GPA and other demographic factors. Collectively, the studies show that regardless of a college student’s age, gender, intelligence, race, ethnicity, or other demographic variable, the results will accurately reflect their leadership abilities. Finally, a study done by Grandzol, Perlis, and Draina (2010) examined leadership development of athletic team captains at the collegiate level using the S-LPI. The researchers compared the inherent leadership abilities of athletic captains with their teammates, and found higher levels of all five leadership practices in captains. This was consistent with the expectation that team captains provide greater leadership (Grandzol, Perlis, & Draina, 2010). The range of organizations that utilize and have proved the effectiveness of the S-LPI enhanced the authors’ choice to base this leadership program on the material within the measure.

Most leadership development programs are geared towards adults in the workforce, military, or college, but leadership development can begin sooner. The intentional development of leaders does not have to wait for a college course or for the individual to become a CEO. Instead, why not teach the skills necessary to effectively lead others at a young age? Leadership training programs can promote the development of adaptive intrapersonal qualities in adolescents (Hindes, Thorne, Schwean, & McKeough, 2008).

Assisting and empowering high school students to lead effectively has the possibility of impacting them for the rest of their lives, and could give them the essential skills to be successful. The youth of today will be the leaders of tomorrow (Conner & Strobel, 2007). Adolescents are malleable and beginning the process of forming their identity. For high school students, trying on the hat of leadership can encourage further participation as an active, pro-social member of society. There is a great deal of information on leadership in the high school population that should be explored. Working with high school students opens a specific
conversation surrounding intentional leadership development within our secondary schools. After discussing the importance of leadership development in high school students, now the complexities of adolescent development will be examined.

**Adolescent Development**

Adolescence invites many questions, minimal concrete answers, and much confusion for those traversing this period of development. With multiple options to explore, each choice seems to carry significant weight for the individual’s future. An adolescent’s social support, moral development, self-esteem, and outside pressures impact the path they create. Managing the physical and mental changes occurring is a difficult and exhausting daily process. Morals are shaped through social development and a strong support circle. This in turn helps build self-esteem and allows adolescents to deal with outside pressures. These three factors facilitate the adolescents choosing the best available options with their growing potential.

For a high school student there is a large amount of energy spent on creating, maintaining, and enhancing peer relationships. Adolescents are focused on how they are received and perceived by others. The importance of peer relationships should not be understated. Developing peer relationships is not just a side hobby that adolescents entertain; adolescents are preoccupied with views and opinions of others, especially peers (Diel et al., 2011). External factors are quite possibly the biggest influence on the internal processes and commitments of high school students. The question of “Who am I to you?” shapes an adolescent’s response to, “Who am I (to me)?” High school students’ strong desire to understand how others view them comes from trying to figure out how to balance expectations in different social roles as well as expectations of parents and peers (Diel et al., 2011). Emotionally, finding this balance takes a toll on the adolescent. Based on the strength and support of the social circle the adolescents have
formed, emotional growth can be more stable and pro-social behaviors can be elicited. Additionally, with emotional stability, the adolescent is likely to have stronger psychological well-being. A strong sense of morals has a probability of being formed through this emotional development, but can be encouraged by individuals holding influence in the adolescent’s life.

Influential adults will assist in developing the moral compass of the adolescent. When adults support adolescents’ psychological needs, personal well-being is impacted in a positive way, interests are intrinsically developed, and social values are more willingly internalized (La Guardia, 2009). High school students’ motivation to continue and improve themselves will be self-directed if they strongly believe in what they are doing. This can range from always wearing a seatbelt, to what college to attend, or saying no to drugs. Adult support and congruent constructive actions leads to the adolescent’s intrinsic interest in making the same choices in difficult situations. Consequently, important behaviors are then developed to be personally valued instead of just complied with (La Gaurdia, 2009). This allows adolescents to make constructive decisions in difficult scenarios. Adult role models that consistently make decisions in congruence with personal values, along with a strong development of the sense of self in the adolescent, help guide the adolescent in these decision-making situations. When role modeling for others in the adolescent’s peer group, knowing the “right” thing to do in difficult situations is common, but adolescent behavior is rarely in congruence with this due to the desire to have peer acceptance. Developing a strong sense of self involves building a moral foundation, which will also benefit the adolescent in terms of leadership skills and managing the many demands of being a leader.

Adolescents’ drive and desire to be accepted by peers often clouds their judgment and clarity of values when forced to make difficult decisions. Accordingly, leadership is full of
challenging situations where the adolescent will need to make many such decisions. Luyck et al. (2013b) found that self-esteem is a great resource to assist individuals in dealing with the options and questions they will be confronted with in the path to adulthood. Making a decision in congruence with their values, if that was not the popular decision, could damage an adolescent’s self-esteem. Nonconformity is a threat to peer acceptance and thus, self-esteem in a high school student. Self-image of adolescents plays a large part in developing identity. An increase in self-esteem could be assisted by greater recognition that others approve of who the individual has become (Diel et al., 2011). These individuals can range from religious leaders or teachers to siblings and friends but specifically, those who hold significant respect in the adolescent’s life. Experiencing higher self-esteem could facilitate achieving a mature and synthesized sense of identity (Luyck et al., 2013b). Three things could facilitate this development: less discrepancy between ideal self and actual self, more independence and autonomy when making decisions, and an increase in understanding motives and attitudes of others (Diel et al., 2011). These three factors are grown through time and experiences, but once self-discovery is achieved, personal well-being is promoted (Waterman, 2011). Building a healthy self-esteem also protects against the slippery slope of existential questioning of the self and identity (Luyck et al., 2013b) that often occurs in adolescence, when the number of life-altering choices is growing exponentially.

There are many options for adolescents to pursue in their identity and careers. An increase in societal expectations through adolescence allows individuals to arrange balanced self-image and increasingly commit themselves to social roles (Luyck et al., 2013a) to solidify their decisions. While determining who they are, adolescents are attempting to narrow their focus on what they want to do for work. More specifically, high school students are determining which educational or vocational pathway suits them the best (Luyck et al., 2013a). These ideas and
possibilities for career paths come from those with whom adolescents interact with most, as well as influential role models (i.e., parents, siblings, friends, romantic partners, teachers, religious leaders, community leaders) (Waterman, 2011). Adults who support the adolescent’s needs open more opportunities and experiences for the individual to explore and develop specific interests (La Guardia, 2009) and could be considered leaders in the individual’s life. This adult presence creates a space for influence that allows the individual to explore a path that reaches past typical vocations. Pieces of the adolescent’s identity that otherwise would not be developed, including a sense of leading self and others, can be nurtured by these positive role models. However, being encouraged or discouraged to continue the pursuit of any given area depends highly on the feedback and opinions of others (Waterman, 2011).

The external influences on an adolescent can facilitate or inhibit the healthy development of identity in those crucial years of high school. Identity development is complex and includes building a strong sense of self, a foundation of social support for the adolescent, managing pressure from others, and balancing the feedback received. Increased self-awareness is usually included with these factors in identity development, and is also a key characteristic of leadership development (Draper, Lund, & Flischer, 2011). Many analyses of leadership programs have revealed some personal advantages leadership development has on youth, especially in the time of identity development. The process of influencing identity along with the multitude of changes in adolescence has been established as ideal to build leadership skills. Examining the unique characteristics of an adolescent leader is discussed next.

**Adolescent Leaders**

Attempting to manage the trials and tribulations of adolescence is difficult enough, but adding on the label of “leader” adds another layer of complexity. There are implications of extra
responsibility, tasks, and attention. Unique to adolescent leaders is the desire to be confident, fully know oneself, meet one’s potential, and find a setting or activity that is a fit for one’s talents (Martinek, Schilling, & Hellison, 2006). This drive to discover has many benefits for navigating the terrain of high school and identity. Even better, having these unique needs met, even partially, increases motivation for further achievement in many facets of their lives (Martinek et al., 2006). However, without support or development of necessary skills, adolescents’ confidence will possibly dwindle and they may feel like leadership is not one of their talents. The ability for youth leaders to progress from self-serving participants to caring and compassionate leaders is related to their unique personal needs and levels of moral development (Martinek et al., 2006). In the discussion above the research strongly indicates that with the ever-changing atmosphere for adolescents, social support and positive influences help these individuals make decisions about their careers and sense of self. While this journey into compassionate leadership is unique for every individual, adolescence will have ups and downs, and navigating the journey constructively can be a challenge.

All leadership is not created equal. Whitehead (2009) makes a case for two types of leadership behavior: pro-social and anti-social. Pro-social leaders build affiliation and are inclusive while anti-social leaders rely on power and, more loosely termed, bully others. Unsurprisingly, the leader more easily identified was anti-social: typically disruptive, tough, and exhibited moderate to low academic competence (Whitehead, 2009). Although the pro-social leader is the model of good behavior, that does not mean peers will follow. Unconventional leaders have powerful influence in their peer group, magnifying the effect of peer pressure in adolescence (Whitehead, 2009). Self-esteem will grow or deplete with the presence or absence of social connections, illustrating and emphasizing the importance of peer relationships. Pro-social
behavior is not always intuitively linked to “popularity” which is highly important for an adolescent as previously discussed. Instead, anti-social leaders have a higher tendency to intimidate, manipulate, or control the social setting of the school (i.e., be “popular”). Intentionally facilitating the development of pro-social leadership behaviors would invite fewer anti-social leaders and increase transformational leadership behavior, the usefulness of which has been discussed previously.

Many youths believe leadership is associated with being good-looking, athletic, wealthy or smart (Martinek et al., 2006). This belief may stem from holding influential people in their lives in high esteem and thus seeing them as possessing these attributes. Social media, peers, or popular culture could lead this belief as well. However, the adolescent’s need to be accepted and fit into the stereotype of good-looking, wealthy, smart, or athletic, may lead them to misinterpret true leadership. Although high school students are drawn to the “popular kids” as being leaders, their behavior may not always be of the pro-social type. A need to be accepted, coming from peer pressure in adolescence, drives the act of helping others (Martinek et al., 2006). This is where the facilitation of leadership behaviors and characteristics would assist in adolescent identity development and build a strong foundation against anti-social behaviors. At this junction is the crucial space where following the crowd could be detrimental, while creating a strong sense of self would be beneficial in these tumultuous years of adolescence and beyond.

The personal lives of adolescents greatly influence their individual comfort in providing leadership and compassion to those younger than themselves (Martinek et al., 2006). Leadership development is essentially a process of self-development, and through self-development comes the self-confidence to lead (Posner & Kouzes, 1997). Self-confidence and leadership are connected in the way that “self-confidence develops as we build on strengths and overcome
weaknesses” (Posner & Kouzes, 1997, p.9). The more confident an adolescent is about who they are, in turn develops their sense of self, which builds more self-confidence, and the cycle continues. This cycle helps adolescents manage their evolving environments. Part of being an effective leader is changing, innovating, and overcoming difficulties that are occurring on a daily basis (Posner & Kouzes, 1997). Although at times high school students struggle to manage themselves, this is developmentally expected. If they are given the tools and responsibilities to effectively lead others, their sense of self will be strengthened as well as their ability to navigate a difficult period in life.

In addition to building a strong sense of self, having a strong family environment is key to developing effective leadership behaviors. Within a family system youth leadership behaviors are fostered when decisions and rules are made jointly, when problems and feelings are discussed, when low levels of conflict occur, and when intellectual development is stimulated (Oliver et al., 2011). This solid foundation where the adolescent can work through the developmental changes is crucial to facilitating effective leadership characteristics. While anticipating the home life of adolescents may be impossible, a safe environment should be provided where similar behaviors are encouraged (e.g., school, sport teams, other programming).

Even though the extra responsibility, additional tasks, and increased attention of being a leader comes with extra stress, being titled a leader can actually facilitate higher performance in other areas of life (Day, Sin, & Chen, 2004). Sport for example, is one of the many domains in life that can benefit from leadership abilities (Crozier et al., 2014). By some estimates, more than a half million high school students participate each year in some form of youth leadership programming (Conner & Strobel, 2007). However, there is a need for formal leadership programs that are geared specifically towards athletes. After addressing the usefulness of
developing leadership behaviors in the ever-changing time of adolescence, now the unique effect of adolescent sport involvement is discussed.

**Adolescent Athletic Leaders**

Effective leadership in sports can often be directly linked to successful outcomes. Unfortunately, not many teams invest in resources needed to guide their future leaders and captains. Coaches have a responsibility to the entire team, but rarely have the time to teach their captains leadership skills like communication, motivation, and mentorship of younger teammates (Voelker, Gould, & Crawford, 2011). This assumes the coach even has those skills in the first place. Although coaches noted that prior sport experiences help prepare youth leaders, the ability to cope with the pressure of leading suggests a need for youth leaders to develop stress management skills (Gould, Voelker, & Griffes, 2013). Sport can be the vehicle through which youth leaders learn important life skills that will aid in their success past high school, including dealing with elevated stress levels.

When adolescents decide to participate in sports, they have an activity to enjoy on a daily basis and an outcome to strive for. Waterman et al. (2013) stated that recreational activities could develop parts of an emerging adolescent’s identity that may provide a foundation for subsequent well-being. When youth participate in sports at the high school level, they are simply exploring another avenue they may enjoy on top of academics. Time management, physical fitness, staying eligible with grades and attendance, and being in the spotlight can all add significant stress for these individuals.

When teammates or a coach names one of these individuals a captain, consider the level of anxiety possibly provoked by the announcement. Thirteen freshman college students who were high school sport captains the previous year were studied to explore youth leadership and
several positive aspects to being a captain were discovered (Voelker et al., 2011). Additionally, a majority of these captains received little or no training for their leadership demands. “A more proactive approach to the leadership development process” would assist in acquisition of skills needed to effectively perform their role, including stress management (Voelker et al., 2011, p. 63). More attention should be focused on facilitating leadership skills and capabilities in captains. Adolescents may develop the tools to help themselves and others navigate this period of their lives more effectively if leadership skills are intentionally developed. We will next discuss a program for leadership development at the high school level has been utilized with effectiveness.

Gould (2009) developed the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) Captain’s Leadership Development Program for high school captains. This program was designed to help sport captains learn the roles and responsibilities of being a captain (e.g., how to effectively communicate with their coaches and teammates, ways to transform their team into an effective unit, and how to motivate their teammates). The program covers some essential aspects of leadership, specifically with being a leader on a sports team. The program even addresses ways for captains to deal with tensions on their teams and other difficult issues that many captains often face, but are rarely guided on how to overcome.

Although the MHSAA Captain’s Leadership Development Program is very organized, the one-day program/conference/workshop lacks reinforcement over time. The program relies on the high school captain to do a great deal of reading and learning in their own time. Even if reading the information can directly benefit them, one should not assume that the participants of the program at this age would complete the remaining exercises in their own time. In addition, the program is geared towards high school captains, only allowing those who are officially
elected as captains to participate in the program. Developing effective captains for the future is restricted because coaches are limited in their nomination of individuals. Although the MHSAA Captain’s Leadership Development Program is highly beneficial, Gould and colleagues developed a leadership program that allows more than elected captains to participate. Gould also spread out the material over time to allow for saturation. The details of the SALT leadership program are discussed next, including in-depth outlines of the specific sessions.

**Training Program**

**Overview of SALT**

The authors of this manual helped create The Student Athlete Leadership Team (SALT). By developing and implementing this leadership program, we are looking to provide necessary support for these adolescent student athlete leaders and allow them to process their personal needs, competencies, and desires within both athletics and academics. The manual created will aid facilitators of the SALT program. Detailed purpose and outline of each session, obstacles to be aware of, and activities guiding facilitators are included. The aim of the SALT program is to support high school student athletes and facilitate intentional development of leadership skills for use both on and off the playing field for years to come.

The SALT program utilizes The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership (Kouzes & Posner, 2011), as previously discussed. The Five Practices is one of the few structures that places the skills involved in leadership into a measurable construct using the S-LPI. The authors have chosen to teach student athletes the specific skills behind each practice. Using the S-LPI before and after each SALT season in the future will demonstrate the progress that student athletes make in terms of leadership competence, as well as provide feedback for areas of improvement of the program.
At the beginning of a given season, coaches within the high school athletic department should be instructed to nominate athletes on their team that have leadership potential. This includes athletes at all levels of each sport, of all ages. For example, a freshman that is the captain of the C-team could be invited to participate in SALT as well as a sophomore on the Varsity team that is not in a formal leadership position. The idea is that captains of teams are able to participate in the program alongside individuals with leadership potential. A coach may choose a varying number of athletes to be in SALT, depending on the size of the team. Naturally, larger teams like football or track will select more members than some of the smaller teams like gymnastics or golf.

SALT meets bi-monthly for approximately five sessions total each season. Ideally, there would be seven sessions, with an introduction session, each practice from The 5 Practices of Exemplary Leadership devoted a session, and a final closing session. For the purposes of this manual, the authors utilized the inaugural year of SALT, which allowed for five sessions each season. The first session serves as an introduction to the program for exploring and discussing why leadership is important to the student athletes. Exploring the individuals’ understanding of leadership and what they believe is important for them to get out of the sessions is central. The second session is devoted to “Model the Way” in which emphasis is placed on why role modeling is important, and why influencing others positively is difficult at times. The third session from the inaugural year is a combination of “Inspire a Shared Vision” and “Challenge the Process” but ideally the content in this session would be separated to spend more time on “Challenge the Process.” This session focuses on facilitating a successful season by getting teammates on the same page as the coach, and what the coach envisions. Additionally, challenging the athletes to look for innovative ways to improve their own athletic skills and team
progress is covered. “Enable Others to Act” is the focus of the fourth session, which emphasizes building trust, being vulnerable with teammates, and allowing fellow team members to use specific strengths to help elevate the performance of the team. Finally, “Encourage the Heart” closes the SALT program and focuses on praising teammates for successful efforts and publicly recognizing individual’s contributions. Ideally, a closing session would occur to hand out a survey measuring the progress each individual has made throughout SALT, and to solidify learning of the material covered.

The facilitators of SALT should have a background in either counseling (groups and individuals) or sport psychology. Students attending an applied program in Sport and Performance Psychology are preferred, but counseling students may be acceptable if they have applied experience working with an athletic population. During the course of a SALT season, participants are asked to discuss very personal situations. There are profound group consultations that take place on a regular basis where individuals are encouraged to disclose personal and team issues that may be preventing their success. Having facilitators with counseling backgrounds and sport expertise makes for a more comfortable environment for the athletes in these vulnerable positions.

Every season that SALT is run the facilitators should cater the activities, slides and stories to fit with the athletic population that is participating. For example, if SALT is taking place during the fall season, using examples from football or volleyball may be more beneficial than basketball or wrestling. Such adaptation is crucial for credibility and effectiveness. It allows the athletes to better relate to the content and understand the overall message of the session. Considering the level of experience of the athletic population that is attending SALT is also important. The content of the sessions should allow the athletes to reflect on their own
experiences (i.e., asking how material covered can be used on their teams or asking for specific ongoing issues). Facilitator flexibility is important when running SALT during a given season. Changed practice schedule and other circumstances may result in delaying the session and shortening the time allotted. Facilitators need to account for student athletes arriving late as well as announcements that might need to be made by school administrators. Often times in a sport season, competition schedules may not allow some student athletes to stay the entire session, or may even prevent some participants from attending at all. After school tutoring may also interfere with athlete attendance. Facilitators should be patient, flexible and respectful of the participants’ existing schedules and plan accordingly. Word-of-mouth has created intrigue in other athletes who were not initially invited to SALT. These athletes have sometimes requested to join the program in the middle of the season, which has resulted in inconsistent numbers from one session to the next. These inconsistent numbers have an effect on activity planning, and will clearly affect end-of-program assessment results. No matter, some training will be more helpful than none. There should be a contingency plan allowing the chosen activity to take place even if half of the SALT members are in attendance.

Each individual session will now be explained in detail, providing sample slides with purpose, activities, and specific examples from participants in the past. An overview of each session as well as goals and obstacles are included with each session described above. Additionally, each sample slide contains information regarding overall content, what facilitators in the past have used for activities, and specific examples from past participants. With this information, the authors hope to provide a comprehensive manual for future facilitators of SALT, while allowing for unique delivery and adaptations.
Introduction Session

Overview

Goals/Purpose. For this session, there are four different goals: introduce everyone (including athletes and facilitators), set group norms, provide an overview on leadership, and discover the athlete’s individual perceptions of leadership. Understanding the participants’ current views on leadership and how they define the construct is key because each season will have different athletes participating (with a few exceptions of multi-sport athletes). Starting points and future directions for the facilitators will vary based on the leadership discussion in this first session. With a strong engagement of the athletes, the facilitators can gauge the athletes’ previous exposure to leadership development, how strong their leadership characteristics are currently, and, most importantly, what the athletes hope to achieve (with their teams and individually) by participating in SALT.

Obstacles. This session is crucial to build rapport, and give the participants a reason to keep coming back (i.e., “provide a hook”). Getting full attendance in the first session can be difficult due to time conflicts with test prep courses, early buses to games, or tutoring. Setting group norms can also be difficult due to inconsistent arrival and departure times of the athletes. Reinforcement and reminders of the norms set will help athletes in future sessions who are not present for this portion of the session.
Title Slide: Introduction of SALT. Although this appears self-explanatory, the facilitators use this slide to describe the behaviors and relationships expected throughout the program. The facilitators also keep this slide uniform throughout all the sessions to provide consistency for the participants.

Content. For the first session, this slide is instrumental in setting up the program for success. The facilitators and the athletic director of the school are present. The role for the athletic director, as a familiar face for the participants, welcomes them and explains why they were invited. The athletic director, who has been contacting the participants and organizing the day and time for SALT to meet, asks the participants what SALT means. Additionally, the athletic director may have some announcements for activities coming up in the school or sign-up sheets for volunteering. Then, the athletic director introduces the facilitators, which helps give credibility to whomever is leading SALT. The facilitators briefly add relevant personal background information that helps credibility with the participants, including the education received and past sport participation (if applicable).
With assistance from the athletic director, the facilitators address some expectations for participant behaviors in the program and emphasize building relationships in SALT. There are a few guidelines the facilitators mention to aid in creating a safe space: (a) when in SALT, be in SALT and not distracted by phones, homework, or upcoming games/practices, (b) be on time, (c) be involved with discussions and have a presence: this program is centered around your needs and will be enriched by your participation, (d) accept the challenges presented to you throughout the program: being challenged and pushed outside your comfort zone will help you become a better leader, and (e) respect others in SALT. Because this is a safe space to explore, ask questions, and be vulnerable, what happens in SALT, stays in SALT. After briefly addressing these points, the scene will be set for the following sessions to run smoothly and efficiently, even through some difficult subjects.

**Examples.** The athletic director typically mentions that SALT is exclusive and a mark of exceptional leadership abilities. The athletic director also mentions the meeting day and time, and a quick overview of SALT’s content and purpose.

**Activity.** The Human Knot acts as an icebreaker and facilitates the participants getting to know each other. This activity usually allows one person to emerge as a leader amongst leaders, and creates a unique dynamic between participants that creates a lively discussion upon completion. Directions are as follows:

1. Depending on the number of athletes present split them into groups no larger than 8 people.
2. Ask them to stick their left hands in the center of the circle, and grab someone’s hand that is not directly to either side of them.
3. Next, ask them to stick their right hands in the center of the circle and grab a new person’s hand (cannot grab same person’s right hand if you already have their left hand), following the same rules for the left hand.

4. Now, unravel until a full circle is formed. But, they are not allowed to let go of any hands! Readjustment is accepted, but do not let go! Step over, crawl under, and stretch around, whatever needs to happen to become a full circle.

If the groups want to try again, consider modifications to the activity. Some suggestions include: (a) timing to see who can get unraveled the fastest, (b) racing against other groups to win, (c) only allowing one person to talk, and (d) prohibiting the emergent “leader” from talking. These modifications can all add levels of difficulty to the activity, and increase cohesion within the group. There are some discussion questions that will solidify the participants’ understanding of the activity’s purpose: (a) who emerged as a leader? (b) when following instructions, who did you listen to and why? Answers tend to include comments on loud people, people who give clear instruction on where to move and what action to take next, and people in close proximity to one another. This demonstrates the different types of leaders, and also effective types of leadership.
Slide 2: Student Athlete Introductions. This slide is used for displaying the questions facilitators will ask them at random. Athletes, when introducing themselves, will answer a question of the facilitators’ choice. Urge the athletes to provide unique answers.

Content. Ask the athletes to stand in front of the group and state the following information about themselves: (a) name, (b) grade, (c) sport, and (d) answer a question chosen at random. Sometimes the athletes are timid or nervous in volunteering, but with assurance that everyone needs to participate, the athletes will become more comfortable. Additionally, the athletes’ answers to the random question can range from surface level (e.g., “I look up to my mom”) to insightful and thoughtful (e.g., “Leaders are made because of the circumstances and things they see in their lives”) depending on the athlete’s comfort with the scenario.

Examples. Some athletes will be eager to participate while others will be barely audible slouching in their seats. Encouragement to be assertive and remind them of their leadership position or potential helps nudge the athletes toward the edge of their comfort zones.

Activity. The athlete introductions and answers to random questions are the only activity for this slide. The responses provide content for the next slide, and the facilitators should
remember a few strong answers that tie into characteristics and advantages of a great leader. Also choose select responses to enhance the discussion around challenges a leader faces.

![Figure 3. Slide 3, Introduction session](image)

**Slide 3: Discussion.** Building off the athletes’ introductions and answers to their random questions, ask them each of the questions displayed on this slide. While the discussion may be useful to have in partners or small groups, a large group discussion has benefited the group dynamic in this session. Having a whiteboard readily available to write on helps the athletes see their ideas and continue shouting out characteristics, challenges, and advantages of being a leader.

**Content.** The facilitators will display the questions one at a time, and write key words from the athletes’ answers on a whiteboard. This visual allows the athletes to continue brainstorming and creating new ideas about leadership. Having a large group discussion has worked well to engage the athletes. If participation is lacking, ask the athletes to write answers to the questions on paper first, then discuss with a partner or small group. The three questions asked are: (a) What are the characteristics of a great leader? (b) As a leader, what challenges do you face? (c) What are the advantages of being a leader?
**Examples.** Typically, this discussion generates participation from each athlete present, but if the athletes are timid, recall answers from their introductions. Look for answers that are atypical leadership behaviors (e.g., weakness, vulnerability, struggle, bossy, powerful, mean).

**Activity.** The whiteboard discussion is generally easy to facilitate and the athletes get excited when their ideas are written. The whiteboard fills up and the facilitators end up squeezing in keywords, until all three questions are discussed and the whiteboard has transformed into a word cloud of leadership. Another question that prompts further thought is: What differences do you notice between individual and team sports?

Figure 4. *Slide 4, Introduction session*

**Slide 4: Word cloud of “leadership.”** This vibrant illustration mimics the whiteboard the athletes just created with their discussion of leadership characteristics, challenges, and advantages. Often the athletes have creative thoughts that are not represented with this image, but this image has words the athletes do not always consider. The differences seen in this image allows the athletes to continue thinking about effective leadership behavior.

**Content.** Compare this slide with the whiteboard. Ask the following questions to stimulate further discussion in one large group: (a) What is missing from this image? (b) Do any words jump out to you? (c) Are any words surprising?
**Examples.** Mostly, the odd words jump out to the athletes (e.g., campus, children) and they mention them because they are confused as to why these words are associated with leadership. The purpose of the slide is to focus on the similarities between the images and relevant words the athletes may have missed in their whiteboard discussion (e.g., failure, weakness).

**Activity.** The focus of the discussion with this slide will be how leaders exhibit weakness and failure. Highlighting the imperfect nature of leadership allows the athletes to feel more comfortable identifying as a leader because leadership is no longer on a pedestal. The facilitators may also find a boost in the discussion if they mention role models of the athletes, and ask the athletes to talk about some mistakes or weaknesses their mentors exhibit. Pointing out that weakness and failure is not actually a detriment to leadership ability but a benefit, will empower the athletes to feel capable being effective leaders.

![What do you want to get out of SALT?](image)

Figure 5. *Slide 5, Introduction session*

**Slide 5: Goals for SALT.** The facilitators will use the athletes’ answers to this question to formulate the most profound sessions moving forward. While following the outline of the 5 Practices of Exemplary Leadership is crucial, tailoring the content to cover what the athletes need helps them transmit information that is relevant.
**Content.** The facilitators ask the athletes what they would like to learn while participating in SALT. The question can be clarified by asking how they would like to improve themselves or their teams, and what they would like to cover in the sessions.

**Examples.** Some athletes want to learn how to deal with specific scenarios on their teams, or be better communicators with their coaches. Other goals include helping team unity and motivating teammates.

**Activity.** The facilitators pass out slips of paper for the athletes to write down their goals. After a brief discussion with the group, the slips are collected for the facilitators’ notes and use for future sessions.

**Slide 6: Peyton Manning quote.** This slide illustrates the collective mentality of a leader. For these athletes, helping them see the bigger picture of a team and helping others will set the foundation for the rest of SALT. Peyton Manning is widely known and is a role model for many people. Showing this humbling statement paints a picture of effective leadership for the athletes.

**Content.** Peyton Manning is a well-known example of a team leader; his record-breaking performance in 2014 when he threw his 509th touchdown prompted this quote: “I wouldn’t have
a single touchdown without someone to catch it, and someone to block for it, and someone to create the play, and someone to call it, and someone to celebrate it with. The record isn’t mine, it’s ours.” Asking the athletes about their thoughts on this quote continues their brainstorming of effective leadership and how this role model is giving credit where credit is due and demonstrating the 5 Practices of Exemplary Leadership through “Encourage the Heart” and “Model the Way” specifically.

**Examples.** This is typically a clear connection for the athletes. Peyton Manning is indeed someone the athletes can closely relate to because of his exceptionally clean record off the field, which enhance his record-breaking performances on the field. Noting what the athletes think Manning does differently can help the facilitators gage the athletes’ current idea of a good leader. This also gives the facilitators more information around what to emphasize in SALT.

**Activity.** A brief discussion asking the following questions: (a) Why is he a great leader? (b) What does he do differently? (c) What can we learn from him? His humility provides something many of the athletes do not attribute to a leader, and for this reason his image can begin to shift the athletes’ ideas of what great leadership entails.
Slide 7: Missy Franklin quote, closing. Building off the Peyton Manning quote, having another example of positive leadership helps the athletes package the session and have some take-home messages. With this slide, the emphasis is on “Encourage the Heart,” “Inspire a Shared Vision,” and “Model the Way” because Missy Franklin is speaking about her attitude and energy in leadership.

Content. A picture of Missy Franklin with multiple Olympic medals and her quote: “I’m always so excited about what I do that I try to make everyone else feel that way.” The facilitators ask for some comparison between this quote and the previous slide with Peyton Manning’s quote. While Peyton Manning is in a team sport that is highly televised, Missy Franklin is a leader in an individual sport and public glory is not the norm.

Examples. This is also an easy connection for the athletes to make. Even in an individual sport, Missy Franklin is a positive influence on those around her, and sets a great example of positive leadership having a positive impact on teammates.

Activity. The discussion is kept brief because time is usually running out. The key question to ask is, “How is Missy Franklin being a leader in an individual sport?” The athletes
are asked to create a goal to achieve by the next session. The next meeting time and date are mentioned, and the athletes are reminded there will be follow-up on their goals.

**Model the Way**

**Overview**

**Goals/Purpose.** The importance of being a great role model is found in making the best decision even when that decision is not easy. This is where an individual’s values come into play. The student athletes most likely have never closely examined what is most important to them, but they have experienced difficult, compromising situations before. The facilitators want to illustrate everyone makes mistakes (even celebrities). There is usually a right decision but that decision is not always clear or easy to make, so what can we do to fix this discrepancy? The overall purpose of this session is to build off the last session where we defined leadership characteristics, and used real-life situations to facilitate constructive decision-making. Using those real-life situations will help the athletes anticipate their responses and actions in difficult scenarios they may face.

**Obstacles.** Sometimes this session falls right after a long break (winter break or spring break) so the student athletes may need a refresher reminding them why they need to be pushed past their comfort zone. Additionally, a good idea may be to start with an ice-breaker depending on the feel of the room; deep topics can come up with values discussions and we want to ensure the athletes feel comfortable sharing in this safe space. With a long break or addition of a few new faces, the good rapport built in the first session could have disintegrated, and adjusting for this should be in place. Finally, be sure to spend the time necessary on values; this is a strong foundation for the program moving forward, and an integral part of leadership in general.
Title Slide, Model the Way (see Fig. 1). Much like the introduction session, this slide is displayed as the athletes walk in. This slide is used to welcome new members, and ask them to introduce themselves similar to the way athletes introduced themselves in the first session. The athletic director may also have announcements, which will be addressed at this time. Additionally, the facilitators refresh the athletes’ memories of the previous session’s material that covered characteristics, advantages, and challenges to being a leader. The facilitators also follow up with the athletes about goals they made in the previous session.

Content. The facilitators ask new athletes to introduce themselves. Recalling specific keywords from the whiteboard discussion on leadership characteristics helps the athletes remember the previous session’s content. The beginning of each session will be devoted to creating continuity within the program. There are times when several weeks go by before another SALT session takes place, therefore the athletes may need help recalling the previous session’s information. Following up on the athletes’ specific goals from the previous session helps build accountability and credibility for their participation in SALT.

Examples. Often, the athletes do not expect to be asked about their goals from the previous session. Most of the time, the athletes did not follow through on their goals, so the facilitators emphasize the accountability and follow-up piece of the program to encourage engagement outside of specific meetings.

Activity. Introductions for new athletes, including name, grade, and sport. Brief question and answer dialogue about their experiences following through with their goals from the previous session, if applicable.
Slide 2: Boss vs. Leader. Many images and media in society perpetuate the “boss” being productive and getting to the top of the ladder, however effective leadership is the antithesis to being a boss. This image demonstrates that clearly for the athletes, and they understand the difference between what works and what does not work in terms of leadership. This slide also sparks some comments about coaches and teachers possibly in the boss role.

Content. The image demonstrating differences between a boss and a leader clearly illustrates the leader as more effective than the boss. Giving the athletes a visual that is relatable sets the tone for the topic of role modeling. Adding the activity of “do as I say and not as I do” further shows the athletes which style of leadership will be effective in their teams with peers. The facilitators ask the athletes what the image means to them. Use this slide to summarize and prompt the athletes to give self-definitions of “Model the Way.”

Examples. Athletes tend to catch on quickly to role modeling as another way to say, “Model the Way.” The athletes also enjoy the activity and appear to have strong understanding with outcomes of the activity. Their responses to the final question from the facilitator range from silence to, “I was watching you so why did you stop your fingers!” Their frustration helps
illustrate how their actions are important to leadership, and how role models in their lives have made the same mistake.

**Activity.** Anything showing the “do as I say, not as I do” construct will be useful, but the following has been used with success:

1. Instruct athletes to pinch their forefinger and thumb together, and place them on their forehead.
2. As the facilitator is doing the same, the athletes are then instructed to “watch closely, and move your fingers from your forehead to your chin”.
3. The key is, the facilitator, while instructing the athletes to move their fingers to their chin, stops his/her fingers at his/her cheek.
4. Processing, the facilitator asks, “Why did you stop your fingers at your cheek when I asked you to move them to your chin?” This demonstrates an important leadership characteristic that is commonly misunderstood.

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**Figure 9. Slide 3, Model the Way**

**Slide 3: Celebrity mug shots.** While these celebrities can be interchanged with whatever is relevant in society, ensure the chosen celebrities are easily recognizable, and their transgressions or questionable decisions are as well. This slide sets up the athletes for the next
slide, which will highlight the celebrities’ accomplishments and demonstrate how easy an
athletic reputation can be tarnished because of choices made away from the sport.

**Content.** The following images are used: Justin Bieber mug shot, Lance Armstrong stern
face, Michael Phelps mug shot, and Bruce Jenner neutral shot. Another whiteboard discussion is
used to encourage participation in a non-threatening way for the athletes, however at times their
attention wanes. Small group discussion would be effective with this slide as well. Energy is
created for the rest of the session, and attention is immediately grabbed from the athletes. The
facilitators intentionally use neutral or negative headshots of the celebrities to prompt the
responses from the athletes.

**Examples.** The athletes are capable of recalling a transgression from each person. For
Justin Bieber, a range of responses is elicited, including personal opinions as well as Bieber’s
criminal record. Lance Armstrong elicited a lot of “cheater” comments and “fraud” as well as
“drugs.” Significant and appropriate comments should be recorded on the whiteboard as a visual.

**Activity.** The following questions have been used to generate a passionate discussion: (a)
What comes to mind when we say (celebrity name)? (b) Are these people role models to you? (c)
Why or why not?
Slide 4: Celebrity success shots. In stark contrast to the previous slide, the same celebrities are used but this time in their prime.

Content. The following images are used: Justin Bieber on stage, Michael Phelps with 8 gold medals, Lance Armstrong with 7 Tour de France victories, and Bruce Jenner celebrating a decathlon win. Although the athletes make clear connections that these individuals have made choices which overshadow their accomplishments, the facilitators need to make the parallel to role modeling and how one choice can change how others view them, whether intentional or unintentional.

Examples. While this slide may not illicit much discussion, the athletes still make comments that show the importance of role modeling. Some reactions concerning Bruce Jenner include shock and disbelief that he was a decathlete.

Activity. Explain to the athletes how the decisions these celebrities chose to make drowned out their accomplishments. Now they are easily recognized for something other than what brought them to fame. Emphasize how one moment in time can shift views of a person, and how the athletes’ teammates are constantly watching their next move. Urge the athletes that leaders are under a microscope from teammates, coaches, teachers, and others.
Slide 5: Being a Role Model. Now that the importance of making smart choices has been emphasized on a larger scale, the athletes can begin to think about how this affects them. When the athletes have a chance to discuss personal details and scenarios, they engage in discussion and are left with more takeaways from the session. This slide allows the athletes time to think about those personal connections to role modeling.

Content. The slide contains the following bullet points: (a) Acting with Intent (b) Why does role-modeling matter? (c) What’s your WHY? While most of the time spent on this slide involves a values exercise and discussion, having these questions displayed gives the athletes something to look up to while they’re working. Always spurring more thought and discussion around effective leadership is the overall purpose of SALT, and while the questions are briefly addressed at this time, the benefit for the athletes will come with more afterthoughts. Leading into the values exercise, the facilitators ask questions found in the activity section, relating to the personal scenarios of the athletes. Asking the athletes to decide on their top values sets them up to have a solid foundation when making difficult decisions, and this slide facilitates the conversation they rarely have with their identities.
Examples. At this point, some difficult topics surface with the athletes. This is a great slide to pause on these issues and, in breakout smaller groups, spend some time with the individuals who disclose. If the athletes are struggling to come up with some tough decisions they might have faced, the following usually prompts some participation: skipping class, getting into a car with someone who they know has been drinking, being late to practice, or losing their temper with a teammate or friend. Typically, when asked to complete the values exercise, the athletes struggle to narrow their top five and then rank their values.

Activity. Set up the values worksheet with a few questions about the athletes’ personal experiences. A large group discussion, or small group discussion, will be effective. Sometimes, smaller groups allow for more intimate sharing and realistic scenarios that can be useful when talking about personal values. The questions for the discussion are: (a) What kind of tough decisions have you faced in your lives? (b) Who knows what they need to do to be a great role model, and why don’t we act that way all the time? The second question helps them realize that making the right decision is not always the easiest choice, but the facilitators emphasize the importance of values in helping with those scenarios. At that point, a sheet with values is handed out (see Appendix A). The athletes are instructed to do the following:

1. Pick your top values.
2. Narrow that list down to 10 values.
3. Now, narrow that list to 5 values.
4. Rank your top 5 values.

The athletes are then asked to share, if they are comfortable. Some have chosen the same values as a teammate or other leader which helps normalize the activity and build stronger relationships between the athletes in SALT.
Slide 6: Seattle Seahawks Duracell commercial. This video is shown for impact. While the player is successful, he is not without challenges of his own because he is deaf. The underlying theme of the video is the player was bullied and told he could not live his dream, however he stayed true to his values and what his goals were, which was the NFL. After the athletes completed ranking their values, this video provides emphasis on what is most important to them and how those values will impact their decisions in difficult moments.

Content. The athletes will provide brief reactions to the video, and the facilitators will move into the values questions (see Appendix A). Based on time, the athletes will answer at least one question, but ideally all four questions. Giving the athletes ample time to comprehensively answer the questions, they will then find a partner to discuss their answers with. This activity benefits from a safe space for the athletes, and some serious issues can arise. As facilitators, be sure to walk around to the groups and pause with each one to help their discussions stay constructive and respectful.

Examples. While many athletes will share at least some surface comments about their partner discussions, walking around to the groups will give the facilitators a better idea of each athletes’ answers. Some athletes are understandably timid to share the intimate details of their answers to the questions, which can prevent an effective discussion.
**Activity.** The list of values questions is found in Appendix A. The instructions for the activity are as follows:

1. Answer 2 or more questions depending on time, and discuss answers with a partner.
2. Work through a real life situation with your partner and discuss how values can guide decisions when answers are not always clear or easy.
3. How can values help in tough situations?

The facilitators should then ask for a few volunteers to share important parts of their partner discussions. Tie the decisions athletes made in their scenarios back into individual values, and emphasize how having a strong foundation of values assists tough decision-making.

**Figure 13. Slide 7, Model the Way**

**Slide 7: Action Plan.** Closing out this session, the facilitators should remember to give the athletes something to work on and be held accountable for the following session. Since this session focused on role modeling, giving the athletes a task to come up with one thing to role model helps the content stick.

**Content.** How will you role model for your team this week? Asking two or three athletes to share their responses ensures they are actually thinking about the task, instead of just
displaying the slide and letting the athletes leave. At times, requiring the athletes to tell the facilitators their goal for the week before they can leave SALT is helpful.

**Examples.** Some athletes mention being on time every day for practice, or being on time to class and getting their homework done on time. Other responses have included “being more positive.”

**Activity.** Close the session mentioning the values exercises they have completed, and ask them to consider what they are currently role modeling for their teams. Asking them to be conscious and aware of their actions helps the athletes implement their own changes with some nudging from the facilitators. Remind the athletes to bring back the values sheets every session, as their values will be central to the SALT program and becoming effective leaders.

**Inspire a Shared Vision/Challenge the Process**

**Overview**

**Goals/Purpose.** There are many times when a leader’s values are very different from their teammates’ values. Some teammates do not have the same work ethic that the team needs he/she to have. On a high school football team, for example, there are some players that are content with simply “making the team.” These players enjoy the attention and the status that being a part of the team may bring, but do not place significance in contributing to the team’s success. How does a leader motivate a player that does not appear to have personal values that align with the team’s direction? The captains and leaders of a team first need to have a clear understanding of what their team wants to accomplish. What is the coach’s vision? Enlisting the athletes to discover their coach’s values allow for greater understanding of what the team needs to accomplish. This session aims to give the athletes the skills to meet their teammates in the middle and help motivate them to be on the same page as the coach and organization at large.
**Obstacles.** Be sure to explain the activity very clearly; there has been some confusion in the past. Naturally throughout the session some subjects will prompt more conversation than others. Be flexible in allowing the discussions to go wherever the athletes take them, as long as the topics being discussed are relevant to the lesson. Additionally, some coaches struggle to communicate a clear vision with their athletes. Other coaches have never considered their own personal values and how they would translate into a positive vision for their program. Following this session, athletes have caught their coaches off guard by asking about their coaches’ vision for the team. This has resulted in confusion on both the athletes and their coaches. Thus, keeping the coaches well versed about the topics covered in SALT is important, so that the coaching staff can reinforce the lessons from each session and stay open to conversations with team leaders.

**Title Slide** (see Fig. 1). The facilitators display this slide and welcome the athletes as they’re walking in. Usually the athletes will grab snacks and water at this time.

**Content.** The facilitators should make sure to organize the chairs according to the sessions’ activities (horseshoe, in front of desks, behind desks, etc.) The facilitators begin with a brief review of the previous session. Following-up with the athletes about their homework from the previous week is necessary.

**Examples.** The facilitators will ask the students if anyone completed their goals from the previous session. Since the athletes were asked to bring their values worksheet with them every time they attend SALT, the facilitators should hold them accountable. Asking the whole group about who actually role modeled something for their teammates, will remind the athletes that they are held to a high standard as leaders.
Slide 2: Photo/Story Example. The slide should showcase a real life leader that is the same age as the individuals participating in SALT and dealing with an issue on his or her team. Allowing the athletes the ability to think critically and problem solve with issues that are the same or similar to what they encounter during their sport season is important.

Content. The athletes should learn the importance and difficulty of driving and inspiring others to act in accordance with what is best for the team. Facilitating discussion surrounding different scenarios helps the athletes concretely understand. By actively participating in solving a real problem on a team, the SALT members can begin to get into the habit of thinking critically about their own teams’ issues.

Examples. The facilitators should tell a story about a high school team (preferably a sport that is played during that particular season). Give an example of a captain that has a problem with a certain teammate, e.g., an all-star athlete who has received numerous scholarship offers, is not following rules, and the coach does not punish his/her actions. Ask the athletes what they would do if they were the leader on the team who is directly affected by the all-star’s actions. Open the floor for brainstorming and have a brief discussion about the options. Facilitators should shine light on the disparity between the leader’s values that align with the team’s vision,
and the all-star athlete’s values that do not. The athletes should be encouraged to think about what possibly motivates this all-star. What is important to him/her at this time in their lives? Utilizing this information should push the athletes in the room to find ways of trying to reach the all-star.

**Activity.** Role-play (see Appendix B). Split the athletes into groups of 4 or 5. Ensure the groups are mixed with different teams, not athletes who are on the same team. All of the groups are given the same task to accomplish within a time constraint (10 minutes). This activity should include a type of presentation to the group as a whole. Explain to the athletes that each of them will be given a secret role to play (provided by the facilitators). Athletes are asked to step into their roles immediately, while trying to accomplish the task. Roles in each group: leader, cocky, negative, positive, and shy. Facilitators should explain the rules to the athletes (see Appendix B). During the activity facilitators should circle the room and make sure each person is playing their individual role. When the time runs out and the majority of the groups are a little flustered, the facilitators should reveal to the group that they do not actually have to present to the whole group and explain the purpose of the activity. The group processes the activity with the following questions:

a) Did you get the outcome you wanted? Why? What did end up happening (if not the outcome you wanted)?

b) Was there resistance? How did you respond?

c) Did any of you feel uncomfortable in your role?
Slide 3: Inspire a Shared Vision. This activity often provokes people and causes a great deal of frustration. This is the time for the athletes to vent about their frustrations in a productive fashion. Now that the athletes have experienced first-hand dealing with different personalities and different values while trying to accomplish a goal, giving the athletes the ability to speak within their teams about their experience during the role-play exercise and exchange ideas about current issues on their teams is useful.

Content. The athletes should get together into a group with their teammates for a discussion. After experiencing the previous activity, the athletes should come face to face with other members of their team in order to relate the lessons from the activity to real-life scenarios. Reuniting the teams will hopefully trigger the leaders into remembering some of the difficult personalities within their current teams. The groups should brainstorm the best ways to inspire and motivate their teammates.

Examples. If there are enough from each level within a sport (C-team, Junior Varsity and Varsity), then the athletes should meet specifically with their team. At times, there is only one representative from a sport present that day; group these individuals with smaller teams to allow useful discussion and participation.
**Activity.** This discussion centers around some of the different personalities on teams. Ideas of how to align the values of the more difficult personalities with the team’s vision should be discussed. Possibly, some of the difficult personalities are SALT participants. Facilitators should keep this in mind when observing and encourage understanding and feedback within groups.

![ENVISION THE FUTURE](image)

Figure 16. *Slide 4, Inspire a Shared Vision/Challenge the Process*

**Slide 4: Envision the Future.** Since the coach is the main leader on the team, captains and potential leaders cannot decide what the team’s vision is or should be without discussing this with the coach. Some coaches have a clear vision, and others have never even thought about vision. The athletes’ role is to assist in creating structure in order for the entire team to be on the same page.

**Content.** The discussion questions should prompt thoughts about the coaches’ vision. Ideas about how to motivate teammates to align with that vision in order to facilitate team cohesion should be discussed. Since many coaches at the high school level do not have a clear vision, facilitators should help the athletes to figure out what is important to the coach. Ask the athletes to think about the rules on the team, and what actions the coach reacts to the most (e.g., being late to practice, being ineligible, effort).
Examples. Some questions that could be asked in order to help the athletes in understanding their coach’s vision are: (a) What does your coach talk to your team about over and over again? (b) How do they react if someone is late? (c) How does your coach react when you win a game but make a lot of mistakes? (d) What happens when you play as a team and give effort but do not win? (e) What happens if someone is ineligible? (f) Are your coaches angrier when athletes do certain things, as opposed to when they do others?

Activity. Guess the vision. Some teams have clear goals and vision for the season. Initiated by the coach at the beginning of the season, as discussed previously, some teams know what their coach values. Other teams do not have a clue. Based on the coach’s responses and pre- and post-performance speeches, facilitators should help the team figure out what their coach’s vision could be. The final piece is encouraging the teams to think of ways to motivate their teammates in a manner that is in line with their coach’s vision.

Figure 17. Slide 5, Inspire a Shared Vision/Challenge the Process

Slide 5: Challenge the Process. Ideally the facilitators will have a separate day and session to cover this topic. The authors have experienced several scheduling preventions that resulted in having to combine two of The 5 Practices of Exemplary Leadership into one session. This slide is meant for the athletes to remember a very important aspect of leadership – learning
to embrace challenges and failures. Without failure and challenge, there is no growth and improvement.

**Content.** The group discusses unique ways to challenge the process. Failure is discussed as well as fear of failure. The athletes are reminded of the leadership slide from the first session (see Figure 4) where failure is a part of growth. Without challenges and obstacles, growth is impossible.

**Examples.** Pushing yourself outside of your comfort zone is a great example to listen for from the participants. Facilitators should ask the athletes to provide examples from their sports including scenarios where there is a desire and urgency to take risks, but failure is always an option. Since many of the athletes that participate in SALT are the most skilled on their teams, practices can become redundant and boring. Often times in high school, particularly for the smaller programs, head coaches are responsible for not only facilitating the varsity practice, but the lower level teams as well (junior varsity and C-team). This can lead to more advanced athletes being less engaged and not partaking in skills practice in order to improve overall, i.e., deliberate practice. The athletes should be encouraged to think of other innovative ways to challenge themselves within their sport.

**Activity.** Since a portion of the session revolved around the team’s vision, but the coaches were not present, facilitators should direct the athletes to do work outside of the SALT meeting in order to make complete sense of the activities done. Give the athletes the task of talking to their coach about their vision so that the leaders are all on the same page in order to move the rest of the team towards the same goals. Before leaving the session, facilitators should ask the athletes, “What will you do differently in the next 2 weeks to better support your coach’s vision
and your team as a whole?” If there is a separate session for “Challenge the Process” the athletes should be given homework that relates to that topic.

Enable Others to Act

Overview

**Goals/Purpose.** This session aims to give the athletes the skills and tools to move people to action. Athletes on a team admire and respect their captains, but this pedestal that they have placed them on can sometimes cause a barrier and a lack of trust. Trying to teach a leader how to level with those who look up to them is an important skill to master. Something must be done to fix this elevation barrier, and the leader is responsible for taking the first step. This will ultimately help the athletes listen and follow the leaders to make the team a better unit.

**Obstacles.** Generally, many athletes have egos. High school students in general are constantly concerned with what other people think of them. Being liked is very high on the priority list for a high school student, as well as being accepted and seen as “cool” to peers. The high school athlete is no different. Being vulnerable with teammates may put the athlete at risk of being laughed at and appearing to be “less cool” than their peers. The athletes need to see the necessity to: (a) Be vulnerable so teammates can relate to the leaders and (b) Build on that vulnerability to establish trust between themselves and their teammates.

**Title Slide** (See Figure 1). This usually involves a quick review of last week.

**Content.** The athletes are asked if they spoke to their coaches about the team vision. The facilitators should also ask if the athletes learned anything about their teammates and what motivates them as an individual to play.

**Examples.** The athletes share examples of responses they received. If possible, small rewards should be given to the leaders that completed the homework from the last session.
**Activity.** There is usually no activity that takes place at this time. If the facilitators choose to utilize one, there should be a quick activity that assists in relaying the message of the session to be vulnerable in order for trust to be established.

![5 Practices of Exemplary Leadership](image)

Figure 18. *Slide 2, Enable Others to Act*

**Slide 2: 5 Practices.** Since there are times when SALT is unable to meet every week, the athletes need to be reminded of the content that has been covered so far.

**Content.** The facilitators briefly review all of the practices that have been discussed in past sessions.

**Examples.** The facilitator might say something like, “We’ve talked about how to lead by example. We covered how to get the whole team on board with the same vision and goals. We discussed ways you can challenge yourself along the way, now, the next step is to talk about how you get people to actually do the right thing. How do you move your teammates to action? How do you actually motivate someone?”

**Activity.** The facilitators could create an activity to do during this time if that helps the athletes recall past information.
Figure 19. Slide 3, Enable Others to Act

**Slide 3: Linda video.** When a person asks another person to do something over and over again, this becomes redundant and mostly does not work in achieving the goal. The underlying objective is to get the athletes to realize the way they currently communicate with their teammates does not work.

**Content.** The facilitators ask the athletes, “Have you ever been nagged before?” The reason for asking this is to get the athletes to admit how annoying nagging can be. The facilitators show the comedic “Linda” video that displays a three-year-old boy getting nagged by his mother, and he is arguing back. Although this video is entertaining, the point is clear that nagging is ineffective. Even when his mother who is much older than him, tells her small child what to do, nagging is ineffective.

**Examples.** The facilitators ask the group to think about all of the individuals in their lives that nag them. Questions that have elicited the desired responses include: (a) Who do you live with? Now shout out some things they nag you about (homework, cleaning up, etc.) (b) Does nagging work? (c) What do you do when someone nags you? (d) Do you clean your room and your mom never has to tell you again?
**Activity.** The athletes are asked to share their experiences, without using any names, with everyone. Facilitators bring the discussion back to the video. The athletes begin to draw their own conclusions that nagging is ineffective. Finally the group is asked, “Are YOU a nag?” Most athletes defiantly respond that they are not like those other nags in their lives.

Figure 20. *Slide 4, Enable Others to Act*

**Slide 4: Enable Others to Act.** Get the athletes to begin to realize that getting their teammates to act is a challenge for them. If a young boy does not listen to his mother, like in the video, how do they expect teammates, who are similar in age, to listen while using the same nagging method?

**Content.** The facilitators should ask the athletes, “Think of a time that you have tried to give advice to a teammate in order to improve their performance… Did they take your advice?”

**Examples.** The facilitators should try to get the athletes to realize that they, themselves are nags. Ask the athletes, “How many of you have told a teammate to do something more than once? More than once during a season? More than once in a game?” Almost all of the athletes will raise their hands to these questions.
Activity. The facilitators aim to get the athletes to realize that nobody likes to be nagged, nagging is not effective, yet we have all been guilty of nagging our own teammates. By simply taking a poll in the session and asking the athletes to raise their hand for the questions above, the facilitators are able to make their point very clear.

Figure 21. *Slide 5, Enable Others to Act*

Slide 5: Foster Collaboration and Strengthen Others. After helping the leaders realize that their current methods are ineffective, the goal is for the facilitators to get the athletes to think of different ways of giving advice to their teammates.

Content. The facilitators share with the athletes that main reason why nagging does not work. The leaders need to be shown that since their teammates look up to them, there is automatically a trust barrier. Followers may trust their leaders, but they do not necessarily trust that the advice the leader gives them is truly for the follower’s benefit. To sum up, “When someone looks up to you, they may find it difficult to open up to you.”

Examples: Relate the content back to the last session when the teams discussed how their coach would have reacted to a devious teammate. For example, a facilitator might say, “When your teammates do not listen to your coaches, there can be consequences, but if they do not listen to you, you do not have the power to punish, therefore we must find a different way to move
them to action.” The facilitators ask the group, “If nagging does not help, what can we do instead?”

*Activity.* There is an option for the facilitators to get the sports teams together in groups for an additional activity. Keep in mind certain time restraints. The average SALT session has been 45 minutes and all of the content presented in this manual has been geared towards that time period. If the facilitators choose to spend more time on one topic, that usually means there will be less time on other topics. Allocate the time carefully according to the main message the facilitators wish to relay to the athletes.

Figure 22. *Slide 6, Enable Others to Act*

*Slide 6: Video Clip “The Longest Yard.”* Showing vulnerability is a very effective way to gain trust. In order for a leader to get on their teammates level, a captain must demonstrate in some way that they are not perfect, nor do they believe they are perfect. Athletes, and leaders specifically, often feel like they need to demonstrate strength and perfection, but most of the time their performance is enough. This is the softer side of leadership: admitting to making mistakes and giving credit to the team instead of themselves. This vulnerability wins people over and ultimately gains their trust.
**Content.** The video shows Adam Sandler’s character breaking the trust between him and his teammates, and later being vulnerable with his team. This allows his teammates to trust him again. After being disgusted and annoyed with their captain, the team sees a different side of Sandler’s character and they are able to work together.

**Examples.** In the movie, Adam Sandler’s character has broken the trust between him and his teammates. He shares some intimate information with them, puts himself out there, and begs for their help. By showing vulnerability with his team, the protagonist built back the trust that was severed and successfully moved his team to action.

**Activity.** The facilitator should provide some real life examples. “Whenever a celebrity or professional athlete is caught doing something wrong, what do they do every time? Their PR person makes them publicly apologize. Make sure to explain that the movie clip and the public apologies are both scenarios when trust was broken. The movie clip demonstrates the power of vulnerability. The facilitator might ask, “What would happen if we use the power of vulnerability and apply that when a mistake has not even been made!” The students must also realize that grand gestures like crying, or pouring your heart out is not necessary. There are smaller, subtler ways to be vulnerable and build trust between teammates. Ideally, the facilitators should think of an activity that causes the athletes to actually experience vulnerability and the possible positive effect on a relationship.
Slide 7: Misty May and Kerri Walsh picture. This slide demonstrates why having trust in a team is essential. Another option for facilitators is to show and educate the athletes about Patrick Lencioni’s “The Five Dysfunctions of a Team.” Within the pyramid-like structure, “Absence of Trust” is at the base and is therefore the most fundamental issue on a team.

Content. The best teams in the world have great trust between one another. Misty May-Treanor and Kerri Walsh Jennings have won three consecutive gold medals in the summer Olympics in beach volleyball. In beach volleyball, there are only two people on the court. An absence of trust is very apparent. This team of professionals clearly has trust between one another.

Examples. The facilitators share a time when someone “above” them displayed vulnerability, which caused an increase in trust. Sharing this example with the athletes will contribute to their understanding of the power of vulnerability and building trust.

Activity. The group is asked to think of a struggle with a particular teammate either past or present that has affected the team. The facilitators might ask, “Who on your team do you need to get through to? Perhaps this is a person who has been consistently nagged in the past by you
and your coaches.” In pairs, the athletes are asked to give one another advice about how to utilize the information from the session in order to help with the problem.

Figure 24. *Slide 8, Enable Others to Act*

**Slide 8: Peyton Manning Quote.** This quote was utilized in a previous session therefore the athletes are familiar with the content. In this slide, the quote is being utilized in order to show the leaders a smaller portion of vulnerability that can still be effective.

**Content.** There are real life examples of leaders being vulnerable on a smaller scale in order to increase trust with his/her teammates. As leaders, the athletes need to think about different ways they can be vulnerable with their team in an appropriate manner, different from the celebrity and movie examples previously discussed.

**Examples.** Peyton Manning: “I wouldn’t have a single touchdown without someone to catch it, and someone to block for it, and someone to create the play, and someone to call it, and someone to celebrate it with. The record isn’t just mine, it’s ours.” Manning shares the glory with his team instead of taking all of the credit for himself. This is a great example of how simply reminding other people that you are not perfect and have flaws, just like everyone else, can bring an all-star athlete like Peyton Manning down to size in everyone’s mind. This makes
him more respectable and ultimately builds trust between him and his team as well as him and the fans.

**Activity.** The group reconvenes and shares the struggles they have had with teammates, without disclosing any identifying information. The group discusses some ways to “get down to their teammate’s level” in order to remedy the situation.

**Encourage the Heart**

**Overview**

**Goals/Purpose.** Allow the athletes to practice giving constructive feedback. The facilitators should help the athletes to understand what good feedback is so they can encourage their teammates and try to look for the positives in their actions.

**Obstacles.** It is highly likely that this topic will not be touched on extensively due to scheduling issues. Modifying the fourth session to briefly touch on this topic is strongly advised.

**Conclusion and Review**

Facilitators should display the Five Practices Slide (see Figure 17) to remind the athletes about the information that has been covered. Preferably, the facilitators will remind the SALT participants that there is much to learn about leadership and this program in particular is a crash course. The facilitators have a responsibility to ensure that the SALT participants are able to connect the dots and understand why the topics were covered in the particular order that was chosen. Reinforce the leadership journey the athletes have been on. SALT began with discussing how to be a great role model to others by leading by example (Model the Way). Once people follow leaders, having direction is important. Getting teammates on board with the coach’s/team’s vision (Inspire a Shared Vision) was the next skill. Having followers and clear direction is a great start to leading, but questioning the status quo on teams is also crucial. A good leader
finds ways to challenge themselves. Accepting failure as a means of growth and necessity in order to progress individually and as a team is a key skill (Challenge the Process). Effectively moving others to action involves earning trust (Enable Others to Act). Finally, finding ways to build team morale and give credit to individuals for excelling is the last characteristic of leadership (Encourage the Heart). Facilitators should give the athletes an opportunity to remember specific moments or activities that were personally impactful. For example, using the index cards, the athletes can take a few minutes to write down takeaways and then share with the big group.

Be sure to close the session by explaining to the athletes what comes next. For example, distribution of SALT shirts as well as evaluations and data collection are some things that should be left for a separate meeting. The athletic director or administrator might have a guest speaker that appears on the final day of SALT, which can also be a great opportunity to take care of some of the final details.

Improving SALT and ensuring that the program is able to expand is a very important aspect. Giving the student athletes an opportunity to provide feedback and express the aspects of the program that were helpful, as well as the parts that were ineffective to them, the program can make adjustments and improve. Data collection that demonstrates the effectiveness of the SALT program is also essential to building value for similar programs in the future.

The facilitators should end the session with something inspirational. “Be a leader that gives your team a direction, be sure to role model that. Be someone to look to for inspiration, and always be willing to ask questions and challenge in order to get better. Always be the first to give kudos when someone does something well. You do not have to do a whole lot more than that to be a great leader and you can all do it.”
**Program Evaluation**

The purpose of this portion of the manual is to assist facilitators in completing the next steps in research. Now that the Student Athlete Leadership Team has been created, learning more about the program’s effectiveness is necessary. This is why the authors have designed a study to compare four different groups of students at the high school where SALT was created. An ANOVA will compare the results of the *Student Leadership Practices Inventory (S-LPI 360)* that will be completed by 50 athletes, 50 SALT members, 50 student leaders, and 50 student non-leaders. This test will not only determine whether SALT is effective, but will provide data that allows researchers to identify other differences between the groups of students.

In addition, since there is little research on athlete leaders at the high school level, additional data should be collected in order to better understand this population. Identity has been explored in many ways, but relating identity to leadership and self-esteem has not been examined thoroughly in high school students. When a student strongly identifies with being an “honors student,” what impact does a poor performance in the classroom have on their self-esteem? This is one of many questions that need to be answered in order to better understand an adolescent’s experience.

The field of sport psychology can benefit tremendously from the findings of this study. Having the ability to articulate to a student athlete, coach, or parent the intricate details surrounding an athlete’s strong identity to sports can help facilitate understanding between an athlete and the adults in his/hers life. In addition, proving the effectiveness of a formal leadership program for student athletes, like SALT, in order to get funding and resources is important to ensure that athlete leaders are fully supported.
The following section of the manual begins with a narrative explaining the rationale and research behind the need to conduct the studies. This narrative was created as a part of the IRB approval process. An explanation of the methods that will be used follows the narrative. Finally, the specific measures that will be used are described with more detail along with the research design.

IRB Narrative

Adolescence is a very important time in a person’s development. High school is a place where students learn, not only from their classes and individual subjects, but also from their experiences. These life lessons begin to shape the person they will become for the rest of their lives. High school is where a student’s identity is developed. Regardless of who or what they become as an adult, leadership will be an essential part of their lives. People in society either are a leader, in their family hierarchy, organizations, career, or they work with a leader. Intervening at a crucial time in a person’s development by aiding a high school student in formulating his/her identity as well as teaching them about leadership is vital to their well-being as future members of society.

Leadership has been examined in different capacities, but few researchers have managed to effectively measure leadership abilities. Kouzes and Posner (2007) suggested that all leaders exhibit collective leadership practices and these skills encompass characteristics of effective leaders who move followers to work towards a common goal. The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership are: (a) Model the Way, (b) Inspire a Shared Vision, (c) Challenge the Process, (d) Enable Others to Act and (e) Encourage the Heart. The measurement used to determine an individual’s mastery of these skills is the Student Leadership Practices Inventory (S-LPI; Kouzes & Posner, 2003; Posner, 2004). There is an opportunity to examine leadership skills at the high
school level as majority of the previous research has been done on college students or professionals.

In high school, like college, students are put in leadership positions every day without any training that guides them through how to lead effectively. A high school captain for example is usually nominated by his/her team or their coach and is then put in a compromising position. The importance of leaders putting aside friendships and popularity in order to effectively do their job should not be understated. A captain has the formidable task of leading their friends, and popularity and leadership conflict for an athlete put in this leadership position. Furthermore captains are often told to lead, but they are seldom guided. Due to this need for a formal leadership program at the high school level, the researchers developed the Student Athlete Leadership Team (SALT). Every season the athletes in SALT are taught every aspect of Kouzes and Posner’s Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership. A study done by Grandzol, Perlis and Draina (2010) examined leadership development of athletic team captains at the collegiate level using the S-LPI, but little research has been done on different populations of high school students. An evaluation of SALT, a formal leadership program at the high school level, is needed.

In order for a person to become a leader, the individual needs to establish a strong sense of self. Many good leaders have a strong self-concept. Identity has been examined in athletics from many different angles. Some research has focused on the importance of identity while others have looked at the quality, nature and process of identity, or as it relates to sport, mental toughness. One study by Deutscher, Frick and Prinz (2012) examined mental toughness in relation to salaries in the NBA.
Beyond mental toughness, identity relating to self-esteem as well as the ability to perform under pressure is an important part of athletics. Meggs, Ditzfeld, and Golby (2013) utilized a self-organization, self-descriptive attribute card-sorting task with athletes at different levels ages 18-25 to examine mental toughness in sport. High school level athletes have not been thoroughly examined using these measures. Since there is a great amount of pressure for not just athletes to perform in sports, but for students to perform in the classroom, there is also a need to explore the interaction between high school students’ desired outcomes to their self-esteem.

The aim of this project would be to evaluate a leadership development program for high school students and learn more about youth leaders. The first research question would be: How do the leadership skills of high school team captains in athletics compare to non-leader athletes, non-sport leaders, and general students? The second research question would be: How do elements of identity relate to high school student’s leadership skills?

**Methods**

**Sample and Participant Selection**

The participants who would be involved in the study come from a low to middle socioeconomic status community. The participants would have a range of ethnicities because they attend an inner-city high school where around 60 nations are represented in the student body. The population to be studied includes high school students ages 15-18 at Denver South High School, and was chosen due to the lack of research on leaders at this age. Gaining access to high school students can be very difficult, but through previous professional relationships, the Principal Investigator has a working relationship with the Athletic Director at Denver South High School. The researcher would contact the participants through the coaches and teachers. To
explain the study, their rights as participants, and protections that are in place, an informed consent would be presented to participants before starting the study.

**Inclusion/exclusion criteria.** The researchers should include any student at the high school, and place them into one of four categories: student leaders, student non-leaders, student athlete leaders, and student athlete non-leaders. The researchers should exclude participants from taking the survey twice in the event they are apart of two different groups.

**Sampling method.** The researchers would use non-probability convenience sampling. The research will be conducted at one site in Denver Public Schools only, and does not include non-DU collaborators. Internet could possibly be used in future studies for data collection. The students would participate in the study only at the school and in a group setting, most likely in a classroom. The proposed study will compare 50 athletes in the SALT program to 50 non-SALT athletes, 50 non-athlete leaders identified by the principal, and 50 non-athlete, non-leader students. Questionnaires would be given to participants during one of the students’ classes or practice times.

Ideally the researchers will personally administer the surveys to all participants in all 4 categories. If, for any reason, the researchers are unable to do so, the following steps should be taken. The researcher should create a packet containing all relevant research materials. This packet would include: step-by-step instructions and a script for the researcher, coach, or teacher to follow while administering the survey; informed consent forms; the survey itself; and an envelope to use when returning the surveys to the researcher. The researcher, coach, or teacher would distribute materials and administer copies of the informed consent form and questionnaire to each player. The administrator would instruct the participants to read over the informed consent on the first page, and inform them that by continuing the study they are agreeing to
participate. Once completed, the coach or teacher should seal the envelope containing all materials to give back to the researcher.

**Human subjects issues.** All identifying information of the participants would remain confidential. This study would not include any potentially vulnerable populations. The identity of the school participating in this study will be kept confidential by the researchers. The individual participants would be anonymous, as there would be nothing linking them to their responses. The responses would be identified by participant number only (i.e., Participant 1) and would be kept separate from information that could identify them. The data would be stored in a locked desk until coded onto the computer. Once coded onto the computer, the paper documents would be shredded and electronic data would be on a password-protected computer.

Participation in this study may benefit the subjects by giving them the satisfaction of knowing that they are helping future high school leaders. Participants need to reflect on past and current experiences in their sport to complete the study. The probability and magnitude of psychological harm anticipated in the research does not exceed what the participants would ordinarily encounter on a daily basis. Participants who express psychological discomfort will be referred to the appropriate school resources. A potential risk could be a perception of power imbalance. This may occur if the participants think they must complete the study to comply with the wishes of their school. This is addressed in the informed consent presented at the beginning of the survey, stating that there will be no punishment for choosing not to participate. There are no physical, social, legal, or economic risks for participation.

Informed consent would be acquired from students before they fill out the surveys. There is no possibility that the subjects will turn 18 years of age while participating in the study. A waiver of documented informed consent should be requested (including oral consent and implied
consent). Wards of the State, or any other agency, institution or entities other than parents are possible participants due to the nature of the research being conducted at a public high school.

Measures

The specific instruments that will be utilized in the study are listed below along with their explanation.

The Student Leadership Practices Inventory 360 (S-LPI 360).

The Student Leadership Practices Inventory (S-LPI; Kouzes & Posner, 2003; Posner, 2004) was designed to identify specific leadership behaviors in students. The S-LPI is made up of questions surrounding the Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership (Kouzes & Posner, 2011): Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and Encourage the Heart. The inventory is a self-measure of these five leadership categories, on a scale from 1 to 5, 1 being “Rarely or Seldom” and 5 being “Very Frequently.”

Athletic Identity.

The seven-item Athletic Identity Measurement Scale (Brewer & Cornelius, 2001) examines both the strength and the exclusivity of an individual’s identification with their athletic role. Individuals respond on a 7-point scale that ranges from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

Contingencies of Athletic Self-Worth.

A modified version of Lawrence & Crocker’s (2009) six-item measure to assess academic contingencies of self-worth will be used to explore how student athletes connect their self-esteem to athletic outcomes. Individuals will respond to these items on a six-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree).
Structure of Identity.

Identity self-organization will be assessed using an online version of the card sorting task of Meggs, Ditzfeld, & Golby (2014). Participants will be asked to write down up to seven parts of their identity as they think important (e.g. daughter, athlete, dancer, student). The athletes that are given the survey will be prompted to include sport related aspects. They will then be given a set of 40 cards containing 20 positive and 20 negative words. The subject chooses the words that best describes each part of their identity they have written down. They can use any of the 40 words more than once, or not at all. Statistics are calculated for overall compartmentalization, proportion of negative beliefs, and the relative importance of a participant’s positive and negative self-aspects (DI). More details regarding the statistical analyses can be found in Meggs, Ditzfeld, & Golby (2014).

Eudaimonic Well-Being.

The Questionnaire for Eudaimonic Well-Being (QEWB; Waterman et al. 2010) examines the quality of identity commitments. Aspects of eudaimonic well-being assessed by the QEWB include self-discovery, perceived development of one’s best potentials, a sense of purpose and meaning in life, intense involvement in activities, investment of significant effort, and enjoyment of activities as personally expressive. The QEWB consists of 21 items covering the range of aspects above. The item statements are responded to on a 4-point Likert scale, with possible choices ranging from 0 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree).
Psychological Well-Being.

Psychological Well-Being (PWB) will be assessed using the 18-item version of the Scales of Psychological Well-Being (SPWB; Ryff & Keyes, 1995). The SPWB has six 3-item subscales used to assess dimensions of Psychological Well-Being: autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, and self-acceptance. The response scale is a 6-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 6 (Strongly Agree).

The iPerformance Skills Assessment.

The athletes’ ability to manage pressure and stress will be assessed through the iPerformance Skills Assessment (PSA; Portenga, 2012). The PSA is an 82 item questionnaire with 6 subscales: attentional control, energy regulation, commitment, concentration, confidence, composure. The item statements are responded to on a 6-point Likert-type scale, with possible choices ranging from 0 (Never true) to 5 (Always true).

Research design. An ANOVA will be used to compare the results from the Scales of Psychological Well-Being and the Questionnaire for Eudaimonic Well-Being tests to see if there is a fundamental difference between the same four groups in relation to overall psychological health and well-being. The Athletic Identity Measurement Scales, iPerformance Skills Assessment and the Contingencies of Athletic Self-Worth assessments will be administered to only the two athletic groups of participants. This will allow researchers to compare the SALT participants with student athlete non-leaders. The Structure of Identity results will require a different research design in order to compare the associated words chosen for the different identities of all four student groups. The research design for the athletic assessments as well as
the *Structure of Identity* study has not yet been determined. A between-groups ANOVA should be used to determine any differences in the scores on the *S-LPI 360*, the *Scales of Psychological Well-Being* (SPWB), and the *Questionnaire for Eudaimonic Well-Being* (QEWB). The independent variables are the student athlete leaders, student leaders, student athlete non-leaders, and the student non-leaders. The dependent variable is leadership skill as scored by the *S-LPI 360* and likert scale results of the SPWB and QEWB tests. Some confounding variables to consider are: (a) the previous leadership training that the student athletes have received, (b) athletic involvement in sports could increase leadership skills without formal training, and (c) the language of the survey not correlating with high school students and student athletes could have an immeasurable effect on the results. Mediating variables include the adults that are designating the leaders. Either the coaches designated certain individuals as leaders, or the teacher designated the individuals in the leadership club as leaders but there is no specific criteria for selection. The hypothesis is exploratory in nature because there is a need for more information at the high school level to shape future development of leadership skill programs and help facilitate sport psychology services to this population.

The group of student athlete leaders selected will be participating in a five session, ten-week program named SALT (Student Athlete Leadership Team), which has been previously described. Student athlete non-leaders would be contacted through the team consultants working with the Center for Performance Excellence. Student leaders should be contacted with the help of the Athletic Director, while student non-leaders should be contacted with the Athletic Director as well as the Principal’s help. Assistance from teachers will be most helpful.

Similar language to the *Student LPI 360* should be used in SALT to ensure an understanding of the concepts conveyed in the inventory. Prior to beginning the intervention but
after the coaches and teachers have selected their leaders, the researchers should ask the coaches and teachers why they have chosen these specific individuals to participate in SALT and the leadership club. This will allow the researchers to better understand the coaches and teachers’ personal opinions on leadership qualities and expectations of designated leaders.

The study in total should take approximately 30-60 minutes to complete since each survey/test takes 5-10 minutes to complete. The participants would be briefed prior to taking the surveys. August 2015 - May 2016 is the proposed research timeline.

**Statistical analyses.** Analysis of variance should be conducted to investigate group differences in leadership scores between student athlete leaders, student leaders, student athlete non-leaders, and student non-leaders. If the $F$ test is statistically significant ($p<.05$), a Tukey’s HSD post hoc test should be conducted to determine which groups differ on the dependent variable. IBM SPSS Statistics 22.0 software would be used to run the ANOVA. This test would be appropriate for the type of data the researchers should expect to collect because the variables are nominal in nature and the hypothesis is determining whether there is a difference in leadership skills and overall psychological well-being between the groups. A regression analysis would be used to explore the relationship between the various measures of identity and leadership skills. The results of this study would initially be reviewed with the school administration, adjustments to the leadership program SALT would be made, and the discoveries would be published in a scholarly journal.
References


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Appendix A: Values Worksheet

Acceptance: to be open and accepting of myself, others, and life
Adventure: to be adventurous, to actively seek, create or explore novel or stimulating experiences
Assertiveness: to respectfully stand up for my rights and request what I want
Authenticity: to be authentic, to be true to myself
Beauty: to appreciate, create, nurture or cultivate beauty in myself, others, the environment, etc.
Caring: to be caring towards myself, others and environment
Challenge: to keep challenging myself to grow, learn improve
Compassion: to have kindness for those who are suffering
Connection: to engage fully in whatever I am doing, and be fully present with others
Contribution: to contribute help, assist,. Or make a positive difference to myself and others
Conformity: to be respectful of rules and obligations
Cooperation: to cooperate and collaborate with others
Courage: to be courageous or brave; to persist in the face of fear, threat or difficulty
Creativity: to be creative or innovative
Curiosity: to be curious, open-minded and interested; to explore and discover
Encouragement: to encourage and reward behavior that I value in myself or others
Equality: to treat others as equal to myself, and vice-versa
Excitement: to seek, create, and engage in activities that are exciting, stimulating, or thrilling
Fairness: to be fair to myself and others
Fitness: to maintain or improve my fitness; to look after my physical and mental health and wellbeing
Flexibility: to adjust and adapt readily to any circumstance
Freedom: to live freely, to choose how I live and behave, or helps others do likewise
Friendliness: to be companionable towards others
Forgiveness: to be forgiving towards myself or others
Fun: to be fun-loving; to seek, create, and engage in fun-filled activities
Generosity: to be generous and giving, to myself or others
Gratitude: to be grateful for and appreciative of the positive aspects of myself, others and life
Honesty: to be truthful and sincere with myself and others
Humility: to be modest; let my achievements speak for themselves
Humor: to see and appreciate the humorous side of life
Independence: to be self-supportive, and choose my own way of doing things
Integrity: Doing what I say I’m going to do.
Intimacy: to open up, reveal and share myself- emotionally or physically- in my close personal relationships
Justice: to uphold justice and fairness
Kindness: to be kind, compassionate, considerate, nurturing or caring towards myself and others
Love: to act affectionately towards myself and others
Mindfulness: to be conscious of, open to, and curious about my here and now experience
Order: to be orderly and organized
Open-mindedness: to think things through; see things from others’ points of view, and weigh evidence fairly
Patience: to wait calmly for what I want
Persistence: to continue resolutely, despite difficulties
Power: to strongly influence or wield authority over others
Reciprocity: to build relationships in which there is a fair balance of giving and taking
Respect: to be respectful towards myself or others; to be polite, considerate and show positive regard
Responsibility: to be accountable for my actions
Romance: to display and express love or strong affection
Safety: to secure, protect, or ensure safety
Self-awareness: to have insight into my own processes
Self-care: to look after my well-being; get my needs met
Self-development: to keep growing, advancing or improving in knowledge, skills, character, or life experience
Self-control: to act in accordance with my own ideas
Sensuality: to create, explore and enjoy experiences that stimulates the five senses
Spirituality: to connect with things bigger than myself
Supportiveness: to be supportive, helpful, encouraging and available to myself or others
Trust: to be loyal, faithful, sincere, and reliable
Please think CAREFULLY about each question before answering.

1) Who are your role models? What do you admire about them? What does that tell you about your values?

2) Suppose you inherited a fortune…what would you do with the money, for yourself and for your loved ones? What does that tell you about what’s important to you? What does that tell you about your values?

3) At your graduation, what would you like your classmates, teachers, coaches and administration, to say about you in their speeches? What does that tell you about your values?

4) What sort of athlete/son/daughter/family member/leader/ do you really want to be? What does that tell you about your values?

(adapted from: Dr Kingsly Mudd MBSS FRACGP; “The Happiness Trap;” and “The Confidence Gap,” by Russ Harris MD.)
Appendix B: Role Play Exercise

Leader
Your job is to lead the group through the activity. Try your best to involve all team members. It is your responsibility to complete the assignment.

Cocky
Your job is to talk about how talented you are to the other group members. Interrupt other teammates and constantly point out how much better of an athlete you are. During the activity tell the person writing, “I think I should do the writing, since I’m the only one with good ideas!”

Shy/ Quiet
Keep to yourself. Speak in a very quiet tone. Only speak when someone asks you a question.

Positive
You are a cheerleader for your teammates. Always be positive and encouraging with everything you say.

Negative
Your job is to disagree with every suggestion another person makes.
Task: As a group, develop a presentation that demonstrates both a POSITIVE way and a NEGATIVE way to react to a major setback every team may encounter. You will present today in front of the other groups, Mr. Kelsey, Tina and Julia in SALT. **You have 15 minutes to prepare.**

EVERY GROUP MEMBER MUST PARTICIPATE.

Step 1: You are NOW in your role! BE that person.
Step 2: Choose a setback that is universal for every sport.
Step 3: As a group, decide what your negative response will be.
Step 4: Decide what your positive response will be.
Step 5: Present your argument to the group.