
VALUABLE

“Not adding value is the same as taking away.”

~ **Seth Godin**

“Strive not to be a success but rather to be of value.”

~ **Albert Einstein**

“To add value to others one must first value others.”

~ **John C. Maxwell**

“The most valuable player is the one that makes the most players valuable.”

~ **Peyton Manning**

“I want to keep improving, continue to help my teammates improve, make my teammates look good, continue bringing something new to the game, never getting completely content and always trying to get better.”

~ **Alex Morgan**

Coaches, employers, and supervisors desire to hire and work with people who add value to others and add value to the team. One of the definitions of the word value is “to consider with respect to worth, excellence, usefulness, or importance.”¹

Are we useful to others? Are we important to others? The key to being valuable is becoming an irreplaceable asset. When the company needs someone to step up, who will do it? When the team needs something done, who will do it?

Regardless of the significance of the role, a person can add value wherever they fall in the line-

up. Sometimes the best value we can add is encouraging a player who has to make the big play or taking some of the burdens off of the boss's plate, so that they are freed up to do an even bigger task. It is never a question of when I can add value, it is the question of how can I add value right now, with my skills, with my time, and with the opportunities I have been given.

We often see the word valuable thrown around in the sports world. In fact, we see it debated in terms of the MVP award. The most valuable player is not the same as the most outstanding player. Being valuable is not the same as being talented. Certainly, it is ideal if the two go hand-in-hand but that is not always the case. Being valuable takes everything into consideration. Not only are talent and performance considered but also the ability to motivate, inspire, encourage, or involve our teammates. It is enabling our teammates and the team to excel.

Usually, the most valuable player is thought of as the player that is most important to the team. The person that the team can least afford to do without. This player might not be the best player, but they just might be irreplaceable. Oftentimes, they might be the heart and soul of the team.

One of the most sought-after Major League Baseball free agents in 2013 and then again in 2015 was a guy most people were not familiar with. In his 15 years in the major leagues, David Ross had a batting average of .229 and only hit 106 home runs. But his ability to inspire his teammates and make his teams better was why teams wanted to roster him even though he was near the end of a career that

included less-than-stellar statistics. Yet, with Ross as a backup, the 2013 Boston Red Sox and the 2016 Chicago Cubs both won World Series Championships.

Jon Lester has been an All-Star pitcher and was the Cubs ace in 2016. He also played with Ross both in Boston and Chicago. He understood the importance of the veteran's value when he remarked, "The guy never ceases to amaze me", said Lester. "No knock on him, but we're talking about a backup catcher. The impact he has had on these guys here, had on me – has on me . . . On and off the field, I consider him a brother. I don't have any brothers, I don't have any sisters. There's very few people I let into my family circle, and he's one of them." ²

In fact, the Cubs carried Ross off the field after Game 7 of the 2016 World Series. He had a story book ending when he became the oldest player to ever hit a home run in a World Series game (remember that this was the guy with only 106 home runs in his career). His Game 7 home run off of Andrew Miller was pivotal in winning the team's first World Series in 108 years.

Ross was a valuable team member. He could also be described as the glue to the team. In an article for *The Players' Tribune*, David Ross wrote about current "glue guys" around Major League Baseball and what the definition of a glue guy is when he said, "It's a guy who's unselfish and who's a good teammate – the kind of guy I like to think I developed into. A guy who communicates well and who's honest with his teammates and himself.

Somebody the other guys can count on to offer advice or encouragement. He keeps everybody loose, but at the same time, focused. Basically, it's a guy who — in baseball clubhouses that often have age gaps, varying talent levels and even language barriers — just sort of keeps everything together. You know, like glue.”³

We might not ever win a World Series. We might not ever play professional sports. We may never have a huge trophy collection. But we can leave a legacy. We can be valuable. We can be respected. We can make our team better. David Ross will never go into the Hall of Fame as a player. He was never an All-Star but he is a 2-time World Champion and he helped others become World Champions. He was a Hall of Fame teammate, though, because he was so valuable to his teams.