

---

# WORK ETHIC

---

*“Be humble. Be hungry. And always be the hardest worker in the room.”*

~ **Dwayne “The Rock” Johnson**

*“You can’t have a million-dollar dream with a minimum wage work ethic.”*

~ **Unknown**

*“Work like there is someone working twenty-four hours a day to take it away from you.”*

~ **Mark Cuban**

*“I find that the harder I work, the more luck I seem to have.”*

~ **Thomas Jefferson**

*“There may be people that have more talent than you, but there’s no excuse for anyone to work harder than you do.”*

~ **Derek Jeter**

Every athlete wants to be successful, but not everyone is willing to put in the work required. There are no shortcuts to success. The best athletes approach their training and preparation like it’s a job. They are professional about it and have a blue-collar mentality. They tend to punch in and punch out on the proverbial time clock.

Roy Halladay was a great Major League pitcher. In fact, he was a rookie sensation as he took a no-hitter into the 9<sup>th</sup> inning in only his second career start with the Toronto Blue Jays in 1998. But, it was not always smooth for the young pitcher. He actually

was demoted to the minor leagues for a little bit just a couple of years into his career. However, he never abandoned his work-ethic and his mentality of professionalism. He just went to work every day. That work paid off in a big way.

Between 2002 and 2011, Halladay was as good as anyone in the history of the sport. He went won nearly 70% of his games (170-75) with a 2.97 ERA. He earned the 2003 and 2010 Cy Young Award. He also finished 2nd twice and 3rd once. In 2010, when he was playing for the Philadelphia Phillies he became only the 5<sup>th</sup> pitcher in history to throw two no-hitters in the same season. He was selected to 8 All-Star teams during this 10-year span.

His work ethic was noticed by his teammates. "As a teammate, you hear that he's a hard worker", said former Phillies teammate, Brad Lidge. "But holy smokes, I would get to the clubhouse early on certain days and feel like I was going to be the first guy there. And sure enough, I would pop into the training room, and he would already be icing from his two-hour workout." <sup>1</sup>

"He was the guy that you aspired to be", said former Blue Jays teammate John McDonald. "The competitor and the dedication to his craft...He seemed to want to be amazing at everything. You knew he was a good player, but you saw why. You saw the mental side of what he wanted to do on the field, the physical side of what he prepared to do on the field and how that came together in a mindset of just wanting to win." <sup>2</sup>

Kyle Kendrick was a pitcher who was influenced by Halladay's work ethic and started

working out with him.

"He was one of the best pitchers in the game", said Kendrick. "I wanted to learn from him and follow his work ethic, the way he came in every day and had a plan. I knew he would work hard, but I didn't know how hard, how much he studied hitters, and watched film." 3

Even his coaches noticed how hard Halladay worked. "He was the consummate professional", said Hall of Fame second baseman Ryne Sandberg, who was a minor league manager with the Phillies organization.

"He did things the right way and put out feelers to players to do the right things as well. In spring training, the coaches would get there well before most of the players, but we would arrive, and he'd be halfway through his workout. He'd get there 4:30, 5 o'clock in the morning. He had a sled in the hallway with I don't know how many 45-pound weights and he was sliding it down the hill. By 6 a.m. his conditioning was done." 4

We are constantly faced with the choice of doing extra or doing what is required. Being mediocre is just as close to the bottom as it is the top. Athletes who come early, stay late, and do a little extra are the individuals that will be in a better position to gain a competitive advantage.