

Shattering the Myth of College Coaching

with Confidence, Commitment, and
Investment



The Road Ends Here

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SHATTERING THE COLLEGE COACH MYTH

Getting the Right Mind Set

Henry Ford is credited with a great quote that is very applicable to the mindset that aspiring college coaches must have. Ford said, "The man who thinks he can and the man who thinks he can't are both right. Which one are you?"

The journey to become a college basketball coach begins with one step. As in life, relationships, or any other facet of life, just starting is the most critical part. If you have truly decided this is your ultimate goal, you can move forward in confidence toward that end.

In order to make that initial step you must first develop the right mindset. A mindset is defined as; A fixed mental attitude or disposition that predetermines a person's responses to and interpretations of situations; an inclination or a habit.

It's not a mystery that a negative mindset will produce negative results and a positive mindset will result in success. There is an old story that illustrated this point.

"Suppose a farmer has some land, and it's good, fertile land. The land gives the farmer a choice; he may plant in that land whatever he chooses. The land doesn't care. It's up to the farmer to make the decision. We're comparing the human mind with the land because the mind, like the land, doesn't care what you plant in it. It will return what you plant, but it doesn't care what you plant. Now, let's say that the farmer has two seeds in his hand---one is a seed of corn, the other is nightshade, a deadly poison. He digs two little holes in the earth and plants both seeds---one corn, and the other nightshade. He covers up the holes, waters and takes care of the land...and what will happen? Invariable, the land will return what was planted. As it's written in the Bible, "As you sow; so shall you reap."

Remember, the land doesn't care. It will return poison in just as wonderful abundance as it will corn. So up come the two plants---one corn, one poison. The human mind is far more fertile, more incredible and mysterious than the land, but it works the same way. It doesn't care what we plant....success...or failure. A concrete, worthwhile goal....or confusion, misunderstanding, fear, anxiety, and so on. But what we plant it must return to us. You see, the human mind is the last, great, unexplored continent on earth. It contains riches beyond our wildest dreams. It will return anything we want to plant."

In Napoleon Hill's landmark book, *Think and Grow Rich*, he lays down the most important key to success; "You are what you think about." If you think you can do

something you allow yourself to succeed. If you don't think the task at hand is possible, you will fail to reach your goal.

Developing the right mindset is the most important first step you can take as you begin your path to college coaching. Here are some great questions that will challenge your thinking to create the mindset of a champion.

Questions for creating the right mindset

#1 Is college coaching a want or a passion?

Successful thinking Becoming a college coach is my #1 passion.

Limited thinking I think college coaching is something I'd like to try.

#2 Do you honestly think you can achieve this goal?

Successful thinking I honestly think and will achieve my goal.

Limited thinking If things work out perfectly it might happen

#3 I believe that positive thinking moves me toward success.

Successful thinking I am motivated by thinking positively about reaching my goal.

Limited thinking I'm positive about things that go my way.

#4 I think goal setting is a crucial piece of the college coaching journey.

Successful thinking I'm excited to set goals and work toward them everyday.

Limited thinking Goals look impressive but I am not that important

#5 I can overcome the obstacles that will be presented to aspiring college coaches.

Successful thinking I will use obstacles to become stronger and better

Limited thinking Obstacles are unfair and I don't deserve them

#6 I can deal with rejection and failure to make me better and more resilient.

Successful thinking I am committed to learning through failure and will become stronger each time I am defeated or rejected

Limited thinking Failure is hard to take when you deserve something

#7 With a mentor guiding me through this process, I can be successful.

Successful thinking A mentor is someone I can learn from each day

Limited thinking A mentor is ok but I can figure it out myself.

#8 I do not believe in the myths that most people believe to be true about college coaching.

Successful thinking I believe that I can accomplish anything I commit to my mind, energy, and dreams

Limited thinking Some myths are true but not all

#9 There is a specific blueprint to follow in order to become a college coach?

Successful thinking My own path will be unique and unpredictable.

Limited thinking I will follow the path all big time Division I coaches took to get their college jobs.

As in any profession there are common myths that exist. While some are true, most are the result of opinions by the uninformed or those with no experience in the field. I've heard most of the college coaching myths over the years from people who have never been a college coach. Many of them wanted to become college coaches but failed, never tried, or were never going to make it. These people are naysayers who perpetuate the strength behind these myths. When comments are heard over and over we sometimes begin to believe them as truth. Don't fall for this trap and stay true and committed to your goals.

Would you listen to a person who has never changed the oil on a car to fix your transmission? The answer is no, of course. The same is true when it comes to myths that exist regarding the coaching profession. My challenge is to listen to only those who have been college coaches and avoid listening to everyone else. Once you do that, the myths will go away almost entirely.

Shattering College Coaching Myths

My mentoring program was developed because I don't believe in the myths that exist and will shatter them for you now.

Myth #1 You have to be a college basketball star to be a college coach.

Reality—No

It can be an advantage to have been a player in college, but is not mandatory. Many coaches played only high school basketball and were not college stars. By doing research you will find that a great majority of current college coaches did not earn their way into college coaching because of their playing experience.

Myth #2 You have to “know somebody” to be a college coach?

Reality—No

Developing a network is a process that takes years to build. Starting out your network will be very small but will build daily if you work smart to meet coaches and build relationships. As your network gets stronger you will know coaches who can help you get jobs. Once your network evolves over time you will know enough coaches to exponentially increase your coaching tree.

Myth #3 If you don't know where to start you will never get your foot in the door.

Reality—No

Ambitious coaches find a way to begin their path by talking with those who have “been there, done that.” Your progress starts with one small step followed by another. If you have the passion you will easily know how to start on your own path.

Myth #4 If I work a lot of summer camps I'll get a college job.

Reality—No

There are many advantages to working college camps but it does not guarantee a job. Camps are just a small piece of the puzzle but can help meet coaches and build your network.

Myth #5 By working hard I will be able to get my foot in the door in college coaching.

Reality—No

Hard work is a given and a mandatory characteristic of all college coaches. Each coach has to determine what hard work means to them. What some consider hard work pales in comparison to the definition other coaches have. You must learn from others already in the college game what true hard work is.

Myth #6 If you don't get an entry level position by age 25 it's too late.

Reality—No

An entry level position can be earned at any age. Younger coaches are usually single and able to move anywhere to take a job. Being unattached they can get involved in a greater number of jobs. Youth is not the determining factor and coaches of all ages have opportunities in the college game. Family considerations are always an important part of the decision making process and may hinder the chances of older coaches.

Myth #7 College coaches make a ton of money, are famous, and live a glamorous lifestyle.

Reality—No

The odds of making big money in college basketball are slim across the board. Small salaries are typical for entry level positions and require financial sacrifices. As you move up the coaching ladder your salary will increase but huge salaries are not common. A coaches lifestyle is one of hard work, long hours, travel, and time away from family. ESPN makes the life of a college coach very glamorous but that

is not reality. Coaching in college is a rewarding profession with lots of perks but also comes at a high price, as does any successful career. .

Finally, you must become a student of other paths to college coaching. These days it's easy to search for a coaching bio and document that coaches' starting point in the profession. As you do research dig up the answers to these questions: Create a notebook for the result of your finding.

1. What was the entry level position that allowed him to get his foot in the door?
2. What "coaching tree" was he associated with?
3. What were his second and third positions in coaching?
4. What moves did he make to help himself advance in the profession?
5. What levels did he gain the most experience in? Division I, II, III, NAIA, JC?
6. What are the common themes to his accent in the coaching world?

It's important to remember that there is no set blueprint to follow. Each coach has a unique and different path that led them to their coaching career. A thousand coaches will blaze a thousand different paths to success. Your path is yet to be determined but it is uniquely yours and will add immensely to the satisfaction you gain when you get there.

In conclusion, I am fully confident that if you can do these three things and have the perseverance to stay the course, you will accomplish your goal.

- #1 Dream to become a college coach and set your goals accordingly.
- #2 Plan, commit and make sacrifices to ensure your success.
- #3 Be willing to do anything it will take to reach your goal.

Congratulations, you are on your way to becoming a college basketball coach!