
TRUST

“Good teams become great ones when the members trust each other enough to surrender the ME for the WE.”

~ **Phil Jackson**

“A team is not a group of people who work together. A team is a group of people who trust each other.”

~ **Simon Sinek**

“Like a tree that grows for decades, but can be cut down in a day, trust is built slowly but can be lost in an instant.”

~ **Ancient Proverb**

“Whoever is careless with the truth in small matters cannot be trusted with important matters.”

~ **Albert Einstein**

“You build trust with others each time you choose integrity over image, truth over convenience, or honor over personal gain.”

~ **John C. Maxwell**

The strength of each wolf is the wolfpack and the strength of the wolfpack is each individual wolf. The same is true of teams. Having a successful team requires trust in each other. Together everyone achieves more is true more often than not. Players need teammates that are willing and able to do the things that they can't or don't want to do. We all have strengths and weaknesses.

The best teams have players that understand

that they all fit together like a puzzle. Even the most talented softball pitcher can't strike out every batter. They need competent fielders to make plays in the field when the batter hits the ball. A talented outside hitter in volleyball knows that their skills are not maximized if they don't have a good setter. Understanding the unique talents of your teammates and how their talents fit into the team framework leads to teammates trusting each other.

The Bryan Brothers (Bob and Mike) are, arguably, the most successful tennis duo of all-time. They won several Olympic medals, held the World Number 1 doubles ranking jointly for 438 weeks, which is the longest in doubles history. They have also won more matches, professional games, tournaments, and Grand Slams than any other pair of men in history.

The twin brothers were born on April 29, 1978. Mike was born first and three minutes later Bob was born. Mike is right-handed and Bob is left-handed. Their father, Wayne Bryan, saw the potential for a successful tennis partnership. He had them training intensely from a young age and took them to professional matches to excite them and show them what their dreams could look like.

While many other kids were playing games outside or goofing around with their friends, Mike and Bob were training. Although their parents let them live normal lives and did not pressure them into measuring their worth by wins and losses, they did encourage them to train to their highest potential. 1

Kathy and Wayne Bryan had their sons print

out their short term and long-term goals as boys and put it up on the fridge. Bob Bryan said “We have reached every single goal that we set for ourselves on our list on the refrigerator when we were little tiny boys.” Mike and Bob trusted their parents’ guidance and ultimately trusted the process. Putting in the kinds of hours and hours of work that the brothers did was unusual but then again, so were all of the records that the Bryan Brothers achieved. ²

Doing anything with a partner requires cooperation, doing anything with a partner well requires trust. Whether that be a group project or a business initiative you have to trust that the other people you are collaborating with will carry their weight so that you can focus on your role. Bob and Mike trusted each other in training, in competition, with each match, and in every championship. Mike and Bob trusted that the other twin would put in the same work as they were and push them to be the absolute best.

To prevent the problems that competition brings in relationships, they refused to compete against each other. They would take turns forfeiting individual championship matches and refused to let the unhelpful thought of comparison seep in. They celebrated each other’s victories and the victories they won together with their classic chest bump. On the court, they moved seamlessly trusting that the other would move to the proper position.

“They always anticipate where each other is moving, where each other is going to hit the ball, so the brother who’s not hitting has the chance to reposition himself” said Tom Gullikson, a national

coach for the U.S.T.A. ³

"We're never gonna give up on each other", said Bob Bryan. "You know, other teams are worried if they play a bad match, is the guy going to leave me and leave me out on the street? And we're never going to do that." ⁴

They trust that despite the good and bad they will have their partner's back. You can build a career and many championship runs on a strong foundation like that.

The core of any successful business partnership, team, or tennis duo is a sturdy foundation glued together by a deep trust for those we are working with. This is trust that people have our best interest in mind and can lead us to greatness. We also need to trust that our peers will work as hard as we do, push us, do their job, and never leave our side. Mike and Bob Bryan displayed this through and through and they have many championships to show for it. ⁵

Someone else with plenty of championships on display is Nick Saban, who is a 6-time national championship college football coach. He once described why his defense is so effective by saying, "Players need to trust and respect the fact that if I do my job we have the best chance of being successful. I don't have to make every play I just need to make the plays I'm supposed to make in the gap I'm supposed to make them and trust the guy next to me will do the same."

Duke basketball coach Mike Krzyzewski likes to talk about collective responsibility. If we are in a sinking boat, we should not be glad that the hole is at the other end of the boat. Eventually, the hole at

the other end of the boat is going to end up sinking everybody. With collective responsibility, we are all accountable to each other.

When a player hits a double, that is our double. When a player scores a touchdown, that is our touchdown. When a player misses a shot, that is our miss. Collectively, as a team, we are responsible to one another. You are your brother's keeper. What one teammate does affects everybody else. What we do affects others. In order to maximize the potential of our team, we need to trust that our teammates are going the same direction