

Dedication in Sports

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Abstract – *The purpose of the study was to share few guidelines to coaches and physical education teachers and directors to enlighten the athletes with the possible modes for attaining optimum performance through their dedication. Dedication is the will to work on achieving goals. Commitment is the inner drive to put heart and soul into accomplishing them. To reach your potential as an athlete you must have a strong work ethic and an underlying belief that you can succeed. "To wholly commit yourself to a goal." That is what "Dedication" is and it is what you need to be the best athlete you can be. It will require extra training, critical thinking, and work ethic, but to a dedicated athlete, the results will be worth it! You would challenge yourself to see how far you can go if you really dedicate yourself to training your hardest. Work on your passing, trapping, striking, skills, etc. more than you are required to. Go above and beyond what most players are content to do. That is what sets dedicated players apart from the rest.*

INTRODUCTION

The quality of being dedicated, committed to a task or goal or purpose. Dedication and commitment come from the desire to achieve success. In sport, one must establish goals that will guide the path to success. Being dedicated and committed to these goals is essential for anyone to excel at the highest levels.

Dedication is the will to work on achieving goals or task. Commitment is the inner drive to put heart and soul into accomplishing them. To reach your potential as an athlete you must have a strong work ethic and an underlying belief that you can succeed. High achievers are dedicated to work hard even when they don't enjoy some of the tasks, because they are committed to the efforts necessary for their goals.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

The purpose of the study was to share few guidelines to coaches and physical education teachers and directors to enlighten the athletes with the possible modes for attaining optimum performance through their dedication.

TOP DEDICATED ATHLETES IN THE WORLD

DHYAN CHAND: (29 August 1905 – 3 December 1979) known as "The wizard" for his superb ball control, and having scored more than 400 goals during his international career. And the government of India awarded him the third highest (then second highest) civilian honour of Padma Bhushan in 1956. And his

birthday 29 the August is celebrated as National Sports Day in India.

JESSE OWENS: James Cleveland "Jesse" Owens (September 12, 1913 – March 31, 1980) was an American track and field athlete and four-time Olympic gold medallist in the 1936 games. Owens specialized in the sprints and the long jump and was recognized in his lifetime as "perhaps the greatest and most famous athlete in track and field history". His achievement of setting three world records and tying another in less than an hour at the 1935 Big Ten track meet in Ann Arbor, Michigan, has been called "the greatest 45 minutes ever in sport" and has never been equalled.

MICHAEL JORDAN: Michael Jeffrey Jordan (born February 17, 1963), is an American retired professional basketball player. "By acclamation, Michael Jordan is the greatest basketball player of all time." Jordan was one of the most effectively marketed athletes of his generation and was considered instrumental in popularizing the NBA around the world in the 1980s and 1990s.

GEETA PHOGAT: (born 15 December 1988) is a freestyle wrestler who won India's first ever gold medal in wrestling at the Commonwealth Games, in 2010. She is also the first-ever Indian woman wrestler to have qualified for the Olympics.

MICHAEL PHELPS: Michael Fred Phelps (born June 30, 1985) is an American former competitive swimmer and the most decorated Olympian of all time, with a total of 28 medals. Phelps also holds the all-time records for Olympic gold

medals (23), Olympic gold medals in individual events (13), and Olympic medals in individual events (16). In winning eight gold medals at the 2008 Beijing Games, Phelps broke fellow American swimmer Mark Spitz's record of seven first-place finishes at any single Olympic Games. At the 2012 Summer Olympics in London, Phelps won four gold and two silver medals, and at the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, he won five gold medals and one silver. This made him the most successful athlete of the Games for the fourth Olympics in a row.

USAIN BOLT: Usain St Leo Bolt, born on 21st August 1986, is a Jamaican sprinter. Regarded as the fastest human ever timed, he is the first man to hold both the 100 metres and 200 metres world records since fully automatic time became mandatory. He also holds the world record as a part of the 4 x 100 metres relay. Due to his achievements in the athletic field, he is widely considered the greatest sprinter of all time. Nine time gold medallist at Olympics, Bolt won the 100 m, 200 m and 4 x 100 m relay at three consecutive Olympic Games.

WHAT EXACTLY IS “DEDICATION” AND WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO A ATHLETE?

The definition of dedicated is “wholly committed to something such as personal goal”. If you are dedicated to your sport, what does that mean? Or just going to practice, showing up for games, and relying on your natural talent is enough? Or does it mean “going above and beyond” for a goal that you absolutely want to achieve?

LEVELS OF DEDICATION

- **Minimum Dedication:** Showing up in the normal physical activity.
- **Moderate Dedication:** Working hard at normal physical activity or practices and some optional practices.
- **High Dedication:** Working hard at all available practices and doing a little bit extra outside of the field.
- **Total Dedication:** Working hard at all available practices and doing everything you can outside of the field (mental training, nutrition, strength/flexibility training...)

HOW DEDICATION WILL IMPROVE IN ATHLETES:

MOTIVATION:

Dedication Starts with Motivation. The individual dedication hinges on individual motivation. The athletes who often show the most dedication are those who love the sport and work for improvement. Getting athletes to focus on becoming their best can be difficult, but when leaders build a culture emphasizing pride in effort and daily improvement, team members shows more dedication to what they do in both practice and competition. By having athlete's situational goals for each practice and by rewarding the process of achieving those goals, athletes will give importance of individual improvement. This increases their sense of intrinsic motivation which will then enhance their dedication to the team.

Several signs of low motivation:

- A lack of desire to practice as much as you should.
- Showing Less than 100% effort in training.
- Skipping training or shortening training.

The first step to improving your athletes' motivation is to know what gets your athletes motivated. You also need to understand what causes athletes to lose motivation and want to quit. There are few points to motivate athletes.

- Love to practice and compete.
- Like to work on their weaknesses, so that they can improve
- Show serious interest about competition
- Build attitude like- Want to win and hate to lose
- They should dedicated to their sport
- Stay committed even when challenged and never give up.

Know your purpose:

Another important aspect of dedication is sense of purpose. Athletes should know that they are contributing something to their team. For athletes whose talent may not be as great as their effort, it can be hard to feel like they are important to their team. Whether it's their physical ability or their support of teammates, and when they discover their purpose

they will further dedicate themselves to bettering the team through their identified strengths.

Practice:

Mentally be ready to train. Show up early and be the last one to leave the field because you want more. Listen to your coach's instructions and apply them instead of just going through the motions. Seek out additional training techniques and tactics to elevate your playing level. Finally give all out performance.

Critical thinking:

When you learned a new skill or technique, do not just accept it. Be willing to think "outside the court" in order to learn. Think about how to properly apply techniques as well as why those techniques work the way they do. If you learn a new move, think about when to use it, when not to, what leads to the execution, and what follows the skill. Many players learn fancy new techniques only to not understand how to apply those techniques properly in game situations. When trapping a ball, consider your posture/balance as well as where you intend to move next. When striking a ball, think about how your approach and posture can affect the path of the ball and why!

Time:

Dedication requires time. More time than what is considered the minimum. For example Soccer practices and matches last on average 1.5 hours (depending on age). That would mean if you had a game or practice only 7 days a week, you would be dedicating 10.5 hours a week to the sport you "love". Does that seem like a lot to you? What are you using your time for? TV? Hanging out with friends? Video games? Or are you training with a soccer ball instead? Maybe you take 30-60 minutes a day to work on foot skill repetition? Maybe 30 minute a day of juggling? Maybe arrange a 1 hour private training session?

Effort:

Effort can mean a lot of things, but in the end it is how hard you work. If you only go through the motions or at half speed in your training, what do you think your game play will resemble? If you are comfortable with a certain training technique, why not push yourself faster or challenge yourself with another? Never settle for the easy training if it does not push you to be better! Hard work is exactly that.... hard work, but if you can push yourself past your current limits, imagine how far you can go?

Confidence/Responsibility:

You are the one ultimately responsible for the amount of dedication you have. Not your coach, not your teammates, and not your parents. They can all try to influence you for better or worse, but you have the final say on how much effort you put towards your training. You may have people that say you cannot accomplish your goal, but in the end, it is how bad you want to be better.

"To wholly commit yourself to a goal." That is what "Dedication" is and it is what you need to be the best athlete you can be. It will require extra training, critical thinking, and work ethic, but to a dedicated athlete, the results will be worth it! Work on your passing, trapping, striking, skills, etc. more than you are required to. Go above and beyond what most players are content to do. That is what sets dedicated players apart from the rest!

CONCLUSION:

Finally "*Dedication is when you are bent over, drenched in sweat, just about to pass out, and then you smile.*" It means that dedication is about pushing your limits and still enjoying the process. If you can get yourself and your team to do that, you know they have the dedication necessary to succeed.

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