

# 3 Muscle Fiber Types

- ⦿ Slow Twitch
  - Endurance oriented
  - It's important to maintain this system
- ⦿ Fast Twitch A
  - High Power but loses energy quickly
- ⦿ Fast Twitch B
  - Similar characteristics to FTa but are convertible to longer endurance through training

# 3 Parent Types

- ⦿ Slow to rile
  - Endurance oriented, in it for the long haul
  - Best supporters, they'll do anything for you
  - It's important to maintain this system
- ⦿ Fast to cause a problem
  - High Power but loses energy quickly
  - Jump from program to program
  - You need to protect yourself from them
- ⦿ Fast to cause a problem – but convertible
  - Convertible through parent education and good communication skills

# WORKING WITH SWIM PARENTS

SUBTITLED: HOW TO IMPROVE  
YOUR STAY-ABILITY

Presented by

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# WHO IS THIS FOR?

- **EVERYONE!**
  - *Head coaches*
  - *And those who want to be head coaches*
  - *Assistant coaches*
  - *Team owners... because*

# WHERE DOES THIS PRESENTATION COME FROM?

- *The people you work for!*
- *Personal Experience (good and bad)*
- *Listening, watching, reading*

# WHAT IS “STAY-ABILITY”

- *The ability to keep your job more than 3 years*
- *The ability to move from servant to partner to leader of the board.*
- *The ability to form partnerships with parents.*

# FIRST, A LITTLE ATTITUDE...

- Take responsibility.
- Play the role of the victor, not the victim.
  - Hey! What's coaching all about?
- Most Parents are good people in need of guidance
- Seek to become “humbly confident” yet coachable
- Communication skills are your responsibility
- Pride can degrade any relationship

# WHY COACHES GET FIRED

- ◉ Commonly, a series of differences of opinions made worse by:
  - poor communication skills,
  - pride,
  - and lack of previously secured support.
- ◉ Beneath the surface:
  - Difficulty handling challenges to your judgment calls
- ◉ Poor coaching (rare)
- ◉ Slow or no growth
  - Professional, and/or program



# WHEN COACHES GET FIRED

- There are always...
  - The Official Reasons
  - The Unofficial Reasons

# SOURCES OF CONFLICT

The top 5 NON-technical issues parents find problems with:

- 1) Communication
- 2) Communication
- 3) Communication
- 4) Communication
- 5) Communication

# SOURCES OF CONFLICT

The top 5 technical issues parents get involved in:

- 1) team structure and grouping of swimmers
- 2) meet schedule
- 3) Amount of, or quality of stroke teaching, or perception of it not being done
- 4) meet entries
- 5) relay swimmers

# WHY ARE YOU CHALLENGED?

- ◉ Parental lack of knowledge
- ◉ Too much knowledge
- ◉ No respect (either way, or both ways)
- ◉ Your style (True Colors, DISC)
- ◉ Your philosophy
- ◉ Out of line expectations
- ◉ Not attending to a parent's agenda
- ◉ Not attending to the direction of the BOD
- ◉ You screw up

# HOW ARE YOU CHALLENGED?

## ◎ Direct

- Be respectful
- Be patient
- Use your best listening skills
- Deal with the emotion first, facts second
  - 21 Ways to Defuse Anger and Calm People Down by Careertrack.com

## ◎ Indirect

- Taking the “high road”
- Using Parent Education pathways

# WHO ARE YOUR CONFLICTS WITH?

- ⦿ All parent types including supporters
- ⦿ With supporters it's important to:
  - Remember to contribute to the emotional bank account
  - Remember that “familiarity breeds contempt”
  - Remember to never assume support. Know you have it.

# PROTECTING YOURSELF FROM FTA'S (THOSE WHO WANT YOU TO COACH *THEIR WAY*)

You need two things:

- 1) Support, from the vast majority due to your...
  - 1) Good work and accountability
  - 2) Communication skills and connections with everyone
  - 3) Humility and coachability
- 2) Contract

# WHAT DO YOU DO WITH THE FTB'S?

- These are the aggressive parents who are convertible.
- Convertible How?
  - By seeking to form a partnership with them.
    - Details coming



# BUILDING AND MAINTAINING SUPPORT

- ◉ Do not assume you have support.  
**Know it.**
- ◉ Using the BOD for a systematic process for staying in touch with all families
- ◉ Personally Calling all families -- using open ended questions
- ◉ What's needed?
  - 1. Time
  - 2. Communication skills: listening, writing, body language

BUILDING SUPPORT:  
**BE PROFESSIONAL**

◎ Appearance

- Not just dress...
- Do you really want to eat a Big Mac at the BOD meeting?

◎ Approachability

◎ Actions, doing the right things

◎ Accountability

- Reporting, goal setting

## BUILDING SUPPORT:

# “THE PRINCIPLE OF THE ONE”

- ⦿ Gather support for your ideas, one person at a time
- ⦿ Present it, then listen, then adjust...
- ⦿ Then go to the second person.
- ⦿ Never take a brilliant new idea to a BOD meeting without first bouncing it off of several members, one at a time.

BUILDING SUPPORT:  
FORMING PARTNERSHIPS WITH  
PARENTS

- It is actions that speak the words “Let’s do the right things for the child”
- Proactively approach the parent about their child
  - Two common responses
    - I want her in the Olympics, it’s your job...
    - Thanks for asking, we need your help

## BUILDING SUPPORT:

# KEYS TO FORMING PARTNERSHIPS WITH PARENTS

- Approachability
- Parental Involvement
- Common goals
- Communication
- Mutual Respect
- Humility
- Trust from accountability,
- consistency, dependability
- Learning to ask, not tell
- Education
- Patience
- Friendliness without friendship

# COMMUNICATION SKILLS

## THE DARK SIDE

Why are we not good communicators?

1. Poor skills or not knowing what to do
2. Lack of awareness that it's a problem
3. Ego, defensiveness, protection of authority
4. Uncertainty combined with avoidance of accountability
5. Simply, don't care

# MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

For today's presentation, two basic topics:

1. **Written Communication**
  1. Email
  2. The One Page White Paper
  3. Monthly Report
  4. Texting
2. **Verbal Communication**

# EMAIL RECOMMENDATIONS

- Try to Limit Use to Information and Idea Sharing Only
  - Excellent parent education tool
  - Schedule changes
  - Discussion items, agendas, document sharing
- Not for personal issues with individual parents
  - Misreading of Tone (or correct reading which you regret)
    - Anger/irrational thinking that comes back to hurt you
- Careful when discussing Board issues, employment issues , policy issues
  - See notes on two slides ahead
- Sit on important emails for one day
  - Both receiving and sending
- Always imagine EVERYONE will be reading your email



# WHAT IS THE ALTERNATIVE TO EMAIL?

- The old fashioned method of...

# PRINCIPLES OF WRITING

- ◉ Give the bottom line at the top. Call for Action.
- ◉ Short paragraphs with a blank line between.
- ◉ No sarcasm.
- ◉ No innuendo.
- ◉ No accusing.
- ◉ No mean-spirited comments.
- ◉ Humility, but do not be the victim.
- ◉ Give Your view of the Facts.
- ◉ When it is your opinion, say so clearly.
- ◉ Pose questions. What if's.
- ◉ End with the bottom line a second time. Call for action.

# THE ONE PAGE WHITE PAPER

- A response to a direct or indirect question or concern
- Not directed to one person or group
- When you hear of a problem, question, concern...assume many people share the concern, or will in the near future.
- Keep it simple.
- More white space than black print.
- Topics:
  - Why we use all this equipment at practice
  - How we define workout groups
  - How to watch your child at practice
- These pages become part of your team handbook and web pages.

# MONTHLY REPORT

- Be accountable! Better security.
- Include at least the following:
  - Numbers - how many swimmers, ages, groups in water
  - Quality - how many BB, A, AA, AAA, AAAA, Sectional, National swimmers
  - Meet results - best time percentage
  - Schedule update for next month
  - Report on monthly goals
  - List goals for next month
- Send to BOD before next meeting
- Send to others not expecting it:
  - Facility director, Parks and Rec Director, mayor, councilmen, etc

# TEXTING

- ⦿ Use for important last minute changes
- ⦿ Do not use for personal communication

# VERBAL COMMUNICATION

- Includes

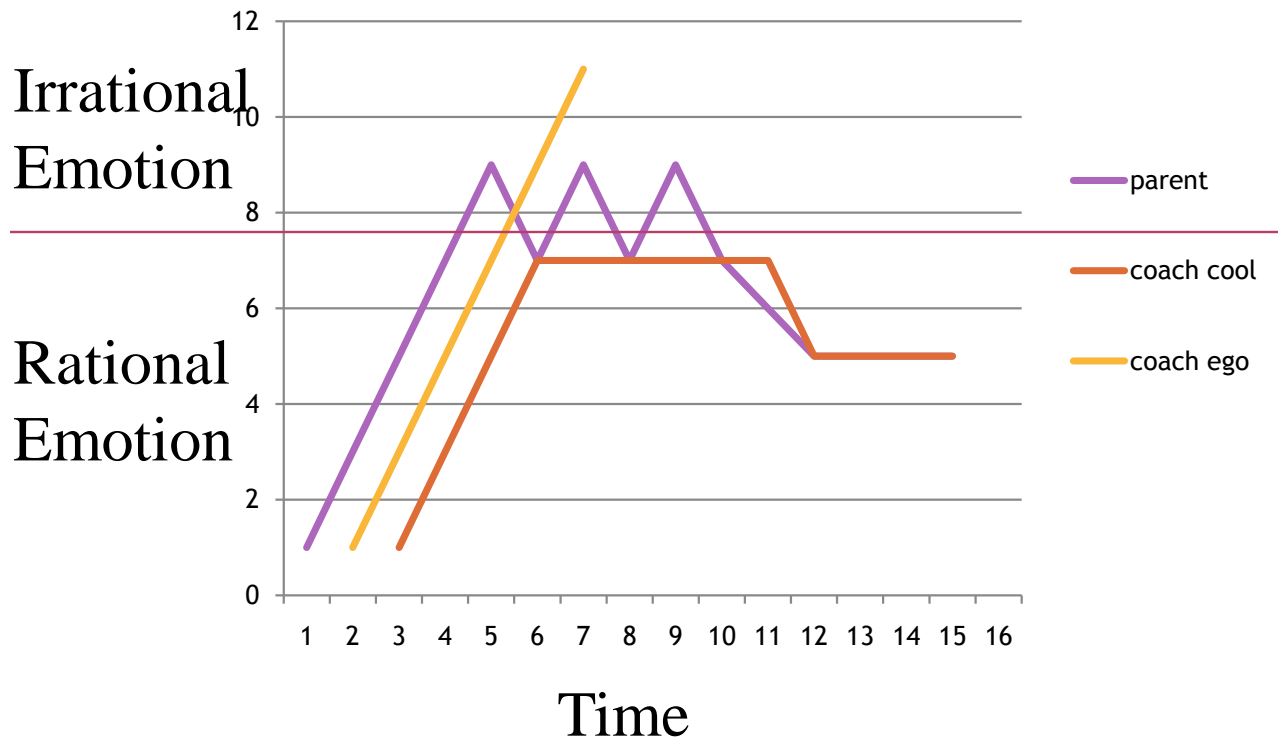
1. Conversation in person
2. Conversation on Phone
3. Small meeting -- 3-8 people
4. Larger meetings, Presentations

- Verbal communication also includes non-verbal cues and tone of voice

- Understanding the “emotional curve” and the “zone of rationality” (next slide)

# UNDERSTANDING THE EMOTIONAL CURVE

- Learn how to calm emotion and diffuse anger
  - Deal with the emotion first, facts 2nd



# CONVERSATION, 1

- The most important conversation skill is LISTENING
- What is good listening?
  - The ability to understand (doesn't mean you have to agree)
- Why are we not good listeners
  - Not taught
  - Conversation is often competitive: he who breaths first loses
  - Lack of humility, big ego, feel threatened, impatient, stubborn
  - Thinking speed versus talking speed: inability to stay in the now
- Body language: frontal, open, be aware of distance
- Eye contact but not starring or confrontational
- Rephrasing for clarity
- Take notes



# CONVERSATION, 2

- Do not be a bushwhacker nor allow yourself to be bushwhacked, either in person or on the phone (being suddenly pulled into a difficult conversation)
  - Ask permission, sincerely
  - Setting a future time allows each to think through the issue
- If in public, take the conversation out of sight
- Phone discussions change conversation dynamics
  - On the phone, body language is out, but tone plays a big part

# SMALL MEETINGS, 1

- 1) Develop a verbal (or written) agenda.
- 2) For In-person meetings, hold the meeting in your office, or in a neutral site you select.
  - Use your turf. If you have an office filled with awards, Certification papers, diplomas, etc. use that.
  - Seating strategies.
- 3) After the courtesies, get directly into your agenda
- 4) stick to the issues
- 5) take notes, keep a parking lot

## SMALL MEETINGS, 2

6. calm the emotion, move towards facts
7. practice good listening skills
8. be prepared to offer “what if’s”
9. In any event, make sure the parent knows that you appreciated the opportunity to meet with them individually to work on the situation.
10. Consider having a third party present
11. End the meeting.
  - Sometimes you will need to agree to disagree

# ADDITIONAL ACTIONS

- ◉ Call every family
- ◉ Visit every workout
  - Talk to parents
  - Evaluate coaches
- ◉ Run weekly coaches meetings
  - 50% administration
  - 50% education
- ◉ Contact your Board President every day

# ADDITIONAL ACTIONS

- ◉ Facilitate a long range planning process with the BOD
  - (or ask to have one facilitated for you)
- ◉ Promote and maintain the chain of command
- ◉ Build the good works bank account
- ◉ Act Professionally
  - Dress, Communication, Manners

# ADDITIONAL ACTIONS

- ◉ **Invite an evaluation**
  - Positive, not negative
  - Every 6 months
  - Formal and written

# FINAL WORDS

Never assume support or loyalty - work for it all the time.

THANKS FOR LISTENING!

*Guy Edman*

