

I enjoyed my discussion with Brian Ehlinger the former Athletic Director and current Assistant Principal at Davenport Central High School. He was very open and honest with me about his school's athletic programs. It was also helpful that he had a working knowledge of the three dimensional program. He was certified two years ago and was implementing the dimensions slowly into his programs. It is these three dimensions that will be the focus of this summary.

In discussing the first dimension of fundamentals, I found that there were some obvious strengths but also some glaring weaknesses. There is a strength and conditioning coach in place for weight training and agility work, but I couldn't wrap my head around how he had difficulty getting all of his head coaches to buy in. I thought to myself that if you can't get buy in at the first dimension in this day and age then you must have the wrong coaches. I loved the fact that the Athletic Director and the booster club has made funds available for the coaches of every sport to attend clinics anywhere at any time. This is a commitment to excellence in the first dimension.

The second dimension of the psychology or the mind of an athlete was our next big topic. Brian was committed to working on this dimension with his coaches and attempted some creative ways to implement. As stated earlier he was having issues with some coaches buying in so he came up with a great idea of mentoring his strong coaches in this dimension and then having them be peer mentors to the weaker coaches. Motivation, confidence, emotions and team cohesion are all issues his coaches and teams face. Exhausted he let slip, "we just don't have what you have over there at Dowling Catholic." I thought about this comment and knew he was talking about parent support, financial support and so on. I have heard this statement many times in the past, but I couldn't get Dr. Jeff Duke out of my head when he explained that, "it didn't matter if you were a rich athlete or a poor athlete you have either the motivation to get more of what you already have or to get that which you don't have." This program's major weaknesses is that it is operating from an extrinsic motivation standpoint. The vision statement alone is testament to this idea as it reads that their goal is to compete for conference/district championships. The strength that I see is that the Athletic Director sees the problems and is actively working on solutions.

The 3rd dimension of the heart is something that felt out of reach for this organization at the current time. The tone in which Brian spoke made me feel like it was almost unattainable and their hands were full just trying to wrap their heads around the first two dimensions. Again, the strength is that he recognizes there are problems and is attempting to find a solution, however; the weakness of this program is getting coaches that are all on the same page.

In conclusion, my interview was very informative about how every organization falls somewhere on the three dimensional spectrum. This particular school would benefit tremendously in my opinion from taking this course with all coaches participating. Fifteen to twenty percent of coaches have strategies in the first and second dimension while only five to ten percent have strategies in all three dimensions. This interview could not have illustrated those statistics more clearly.







