17 Essential Qualities of Being a Team Player

Adaptable: If you won’t change for the team, the team may change you

Quote 1: “Inflexibility is one of the worst human failings. You can learn to check impetuosity, overcome fear with confidence, and laziness with discipline. But for rigidity of mind there is no antidote. It carries the seeds of its own destruction.”

- Anonymous

1. What does this mean?
2. With rigidity of mind, what happens to the team?
3. Team players who exhibit adaptability have certain characteristics: - explain
   - Teachable
   - Have emotional security
   - Have creativity
   - Service minded (put the team first)

Quote 2: “Blessed are the flexible, for they shall not be bent out of shape”

- Michael McGriff

1. What does this mean?
2. Why is it important to be flexible?
3. How can being flexible help our chances of being successful as a team?

Quote 3: “Doing nothing for others is the undoing of one’s self”

- Horace Mann

1. What does this mean?
2. How can we help others on the team?
3. The first key to being a team player is being willing to adapt yourself to the team, not an expectation that the team will adapt to you- explain
Collaborative: Working together precedes winning together

Quote 1: “To collaborative team members, completing one another is more important than competing with one another.”

- John Maxwell

1. What does this mean?
2. Teammates should perceive themselves as a unit working together, and they should never allow competition between teammates to get to the point where it hurts the team. – explain.
3. When something happens do you say “What’s in it for me?” or “What does this do for the team?” Where you focus your attention says a lot about whether you compete with others or complete them. – explain

Quote 2: “True progress in any field is a relay race and not a single event.”

- Cavett Roberts

1. What does this mean?
2. If you focus on the team and not just yourself, you will be able to pass the baton when it is necessary instead of trying to complete the race by yourself. -explain
3. How does having a good attitude and trusting your teammates, instead of being suspicious of them help the team?

Quote 3: “When you work together with teammates, you can do remarkable things. If you work alone, you leave a lot of victories on the table. Collaboration has a multiplying effect on everything you do because it releases and harnesses not only your skills but also those of everyone on the team.”

- John Maxwell

1. What does this mean?
2. Do you bring cooperation and added value to your teammates- even to the people you don’t enjoy being with?
3. Collaboration is multiplication - explain
Committed: There are no halfhearted champions

Quote 1: “There is no such thing as a halfhearted champion”

- John Maxwell

1. What does this mean?
2. What does it mean to be committed?
3. What are some ways we can become more committed?

Quote 2: “The harder you work, the harder it is to surrender”

- Vince Lombardi

1. What does this mean?
2. Struggles strengthen a person’s resolve. Adversity fosters commitment, and commitment fosters hard work. People don’t really know whether they are committed to something until they face adversity—explain
3. How can we apply this to what we do in the weight room…on the practice field?

Quote 3: “Nobody who ever gave his best regretted it”

- George Halas

1. What does this mean?
2. How is taking risks a way of commitment.
3. Can we be committed to our team, even if our teammates are not committed?
Communicative: A team is many voices with a single heart

Quote 1: “If you have not a good degree of eloquence in speaking and writing you will be nobody; but will have the daily mortification of seeing people with not one tenth part of your merit or knowledge”

   - Lord Chesterford

1. What does this mean?
2. Why is communication so important?
3. How can having good communication help us understand more about each other as individuals and as a team? Also how can this lead to better team unity?

Quote 2: “To state it bluntly, you cannot have teamwork unless you have communicative players. Without communication you don’t have a team; you have a collection of individuals”

   - John Maxwell

1. What does this mean?
2. What are some characteristics of communicative players
   - Do not isolate themselves from others
   - Make it easy for teammates to communicate with them
3. Most communication problems can be solved by proximity - explain

Quote 3: "Union is strength. But there can be no union without good communication"

   — Aesop

1. What does this mean?
2. We can we do to improve our communication, and how would it improve our union?
3. Open communication fosters trust - explain
Competent: If you can’t, your team won’t

Quote 1: “The quality of a person’s life is in direct proportion to their commitment to excellence, regardless of their chosen field of endeavor”

- Vince Lombardi

1. What does this mean?
2. It’s not what you do, it’s how you do it - explain
3. Why is it important to be committed to excellence…in the weight room? On the field?

Quote 2: “People forget how fast you did a job. But they remember how well you did it”

- Howard W. Newton

1. What does this mean?
2. How can we make sure we are competent in what we do?
3. Highly competent people have some things in common
   - They are committed to excellence
   - They never settle for average
   - They pay attention to detail
   - They perform with consistency

Quote 3: “Inspiration is easy. Implementation is the hard part.”

- Bob Taylor

1. What does this mean?
2. How can we bridge the gap between coming up with ideas and putting them into practice?
   - Get your teammates together and discuss how you can improve the process.
3. Success happens because of competence and dedication to following through - explain
Dependable: Teams go to Go-To players

Quote 1: “Dependability is more than ability alone.”

- John Maxwell

1. What does this mean?
2. How does being a dependable team player require a strong sense of responsibility?
3. Responsibility indicates the want to be dependable. - Explain

Quote 2: “It is not enough that we do our best; we have to do what’s required.”

- Winston Churchill

1. What does this mean?
2. Being dependable requires consistent contribution to the team. - Explain
3. How can being consistent allow your teammates to depend on you?

Quote 3: “You know it when you have people on your team upon whom you cannot depend. Everyone on the team knows it. Likewise, you know the ones you can depend on.”

- John Maxwell

1. What does this mean?
2. Discuss the 4 qualities of being dependable.
   - Pure motives
   - Responsibility
   - Sound Thinking
   - Consistent Contribution
3. When crunch time comes, do your teammates work around you or are you a go-to player?
Disciplined: Where there’s a will, there’s a win

Quote 1: “Discipline is doing what you really don’t want to do so that you can do what you really want to do.”
   
   - John Maxwell

1. What does this mean?
2. A team needs disciplined players. How can we possess discipline as a team?
3. How can working hard as a team in the short term during these workouts benefit us in the long run?

Quote 2: “People have just two choices when it comes to their emotions; they can master their emotions or be mastered by them.”

   - John Maxwell

1. What does this mean?
2. How can we master our emotions?
3. How can having discipline with our emotions benefit our team?

Quote 3: “Discipline means doing the right things at the right time for the right reason.”

   - John Maxwell

1. What does this mean?
2. Do we have good habits?
3. Even though these workouts are challenging and we may not want to come, by showing up we can strengthen our work habits and become a more disciplined team player - Explain
Enlarging: Adding value to teammates is invaluable

Quote 1: “People will always move toward anyone who increases them and away from others who devalue them.”

- John Maxwell

1. What does this mean?
2. How can we add value to our teammates?
   - point out their strengths
   - help them focus on improvements
3. How can we encourage and motivate our teammates out of their comfort zone, but not out of their gift zone?

Quote 2: “No man is more cheated than the selfish man”

- Henry Ward Beecher

1. What does this mean?
2. When a teammate unselfishly enlarges others, he also enlarges himself. – Explain
3. How does being non selfish benefit ourselves and our teammates.

Quote 3: “The most important measure of how good a game I played was how much better I’d made my teammates play.”

- Bill Russell

1. What does this mean?
2. How can we empower our teammates to be successful?
3. Players who enlarge their teammates have several things in common: - Explain
   - Value their teammates
   - Value what their teammates value
   - Add value to their teammates
   - Make themselves more valuable
Enthusiastic: Your heart is the source of energy for the team

Quote 1: “People who wait for external forces to help them spark their enthusiasm are at the other people’s mercy all the time.”

- Charles Schwab

1. What does this mean?
2. Positive people are positive because they choose to be - Explain
3. How can we take responsibility for our enthusiasm?

Quote 2: “Enthusiasm is contagious. It’s difficult to remain neutral or indifferent in the presence of a positive thinker.”

- Denis Waitley

1. What does this mean?
2. How could enthusiasm be more contagious on our team?
3. How can believing in what we do spark the enthusiasm inside us?

Quote 3. “The best preparation for good work tomorrow is to do good work today.”

- Elbert Hubbard

1. What does this mean?
2. How can we make sure we do a job well done?
3. If we ease off when it comes to our work standards, how can we redouble our efforts to do things according to our highest levels of excellence?
Intentional: Make every action count

Quote 1: You’ve got to think about “big things” while you’re doing small things, so that all the small things go in the right direction.”

- Alvin Toffler

1. What does this mean?
2. What does it mean to do things with a purpose?
3. How by being intentional can we turn our visions into reality?

Quote 2: “What does it mean to be intentional? It means working with purpose-making every action count?”

- John Maxwell

1. What does this mean?
2. What does it mean to be mission conscious, while keeping the big picture in mind?
3. Being intentional is about focusing on doing the right things, moment-to-moment, day to day, and then following through with them in a consistent way. - Explain

Quote 3: “One is not born into this world to do everything, but to do something.”

- Henry David Thoreau

1. What does this mean?
2. How can we know our priorities and work according to them?
3. Once you know the why of your life, it becomes much easier to figure out the what and the when. - Explain
Mission Conscious: The big picture is coming in loud and clear

Quote 1: “The secret of success is constancy to purpose”

- Benjamin Disraeli

1. What does this mean?
2. What is our team’s purpose (mission)?
3. How can we be always conscious of our team’s mission and act to help achieve it?

Quote 2: “A team isn’t really a team if it isn’t going anywhere.”

- John Maxwell

1. What does this mean?
2. What are our goals as a team?
3. If you could create a mission statement for our team what would it be?

Quote 3: “Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality”

- Warren G. Bennis

1. What does this mean?
2. For a team to win, the leader must be allowed to lead –Explain
3. Explain the 4 qualities of mission conscious players:
   - They know where the team is going
   - They let the leader of the team lead
   - They place team accomplishment ahead of their own
   - They do whatever is necessary to achieve the mission
Prepared: Preparation can mean the difference between winning and losing

Quote 1: “The man who is prepared has his battle half-fought”

- Miguel de Cervantes

1. What does this mean?
2. Where are we headed as a team?
3. How can we prepare ourselves properly?

Quote 2: “Courage has no greater ally than preparation, and fear no greater enemy”

- John Maxwell

1. What does this mean?
2. Being prepared means being ready to take that first step when the time comes- Explain
3. Ultimately will we be ready to take action when the time comes?

Quote 3: “You can claim to be surprised once; after that you are unprepared”

- Ray Charles

1. What does this mean?
2. Preparation may not guarantee a win, but it sure puts you in position for one- Explain
3. How does being mentally focused during our training help us be prepared for our games?
Relational: If you get along, others will go along

Quote 1: “Relationships help us to define who we are and what we can become. Most of us can trace our successes to pivotal relationships.”

- Donald Clifton

1. What does this mean?
2. How can we really get to know our teammates?
3. Will our relationships with each other help lead us to success? Why?

Quote 2: “Relationships are the glue that holds teams together”

- John Maxwell

1. What does this mean?
2. How can connecting with our teammates make the team more cohesive?
3. How can we focus on others rather than ourselves? How can we add value to our teammates?

Quote 3: “You will never develop common ground with your teammates unless you share common experiences.”

- John Maxwell

1. What does this mean?
2. How is time together while working as a team essential?
3. How is time together outside a team atmosphere essential?
Self-Improving: To improve the team, improve yourself

Quote 1: “Perfection is what you’re striving for, but perfection is impossibility. However, striving for perfection is not impossibility. Do the best you can under the conditions that exist. That is what counts.”

- John Wooden

1. What does this mean?
2. Progress is becoming superior than your previous self-Explain
3. Why should we adopt the attitude of a learner not an expert?

Quote 2: “It’s not what you are going to do, but it’s what you are doing now that counts.”

- Napoleon Hill

1. What does this mean?
2. How can we improve today?
3. At the end of the day we should ask ourselves. What have I learned today and what do I need to learn more about tomorrow?

Quote 3: “A time comes when you need to stop waiting for the man you want to become and start being the man you want to be.”

- Bruce Springsteen

1. What does this mean?
2. How can we apply what we have learned? Does it require change?
3. Our goal is to keep learning so that we want to change for the better every day-Explain
Selfless: There is no I in team

Quote 1: “We are here on earth to do good for others. What the others are here for, I do not know.”

- W.H. Auden

1. What does this mean?
2. No team succeeds unless its players put others on the team ahead of themselves—Explain
3. As a team member how do you cultivate an attitude of selflessness?
   - Be generous
   - Avoid internal politics
   - Display loyalty
   - Value Interdependence over Independence

Quote 2: “Loyalty fosters unity, and unity breeds team success”

- John Maxwell

1. What does this mean?
2. How can we show loyalty to our teammates?
3. You must live for others, if you wish to live for yourself—Explain

Quote 3: “You have not lived today successfully unless you have done something for someone who can never repay you.”

- John Bunyan

1. What does this mean?
2. Why is it important to promote our teammates?
3. How can we find positive things to say about our teammates?
Solution Oriented: Make a resolution to find the solution

Quote 1: “Someone who thinks in terms of solutions instead of just problems can be a difference maker. A team filled with people who possess that mind-set can really get things done.”

- John Maxwell

1. What does this mean?
2. How can we meet obstacles and setbacks with a solution-oriented mindset?
3. Solutions are usually in the eye of the beholder—Explain

Quote 2: “Obstacles will look large or small to you according to whether you are large or small”

- Orison Swett Marden

1. What does this mean?
2. How can we cultivate an attitude of being solution-oriented?
3. How can we not only overcome obstacles, but become a better person in the process?

Quote 3: “No problem can withstand the assault of sustained thinking”

- John Maxwell

1. What does this mean?
2. Why is it important to set aside time with teammates to work on the problem?
3. How can we become a more solution-oriented player?
   - Refuse to give up
   - Refocus your thinking
   - Rethink your strategy
Tenacious: Never, Never, Never Quit

Quote 1: “Success is a little like wrestling a gorilla. You don’t quit when you’re tired—you quit when the gorilla is tired.”

- Robert Strauss

1. What does this mean?
2. If you want your team to succeed you have to keep pushing beyond what you think you are really capable of—Explain
3. Explain how tenacious people hang on till the job is finished.

Quote 2: “To see far is one thing; going there is another.”

- Constantin Brancusi

1. What does this mean?
2. How can we improve our tenacity?
   - Work harder
   - Work smarter
   - Stand for something
3. No matter what happens, never quit—Explain

Quote 3: “Trying times are no time to quit trying.”

- John Maxwell

1. What does this mean?
2. If your team hasn’t found a solution are you willing to keep plugging away to the very end in order to succeed?
3. How can we find motivation from our teammates?