

DIFFERENCE

What's the difference between _____ and _____ ?

Situation: An athlete took her leadership to a different level. To reaffirm her approach, and educate the generation behind her, I asked her a few questions in front of an elite group of aspiring youth athletes:

“What’s the difference between a leader and a performer?”

“A performer does their job. A leader elevates those around them.”

“What do you think about that?”

“I’ve always evaluated myself based on my stat line. I never prioritized the affect that I could have on my teammates.”

“Why?”

“It’s like when my coach sent you game film for the first time. They sent you an edit of all the plays that happened during the game. Each clip started and ended with the play. You wanted to see what happened in between plays. I’ve never looked for that. I’ve only watched film like my coaches.”

“What do you learn about you and your team when you watch the action between the action?”

“You get to see how you respond to the events inside the game, how your teammates process your responses and also how they respond to events.”

“Why do you think you haven’t valued that before?”

“Nobody put a value on that before from a film perspective. I’ve always watched film to see what I can do better. I’ve never thought about watching what happens between plays to help me become a better leader.”

“How does that help?”

“First, I didn’t realize how much my body language affects my teammates. Second, that’s the real game. When people at the next level are looking to invest in you, they want to know your leadership capacity. This has taken me to a different level. In all of our film sessions, you’ve literally never talked about execution in a sport-specific way. You only cared about what was happening from a human perspective.”

“Thoughts?”

“It was like a whole new world was exposed to me. I found a different part of the game that I could master. It was right in front of me the whole time, but I never saw it. But, once you see it, you can’t unsee it because you know it’s what makes the difference when the talent margin is thin.”