



Group Exercise #1 - *Mental Diversity*

Lessons to be gained:

#1 Importance of mental diversity - everyone brings something unique and valuable to the team

#2 A chain is only as strong as its weakest link - every team member is important

Tools Needed = index cards and pens/pencils for each athlete

Prerequisites = each athlete has completed the TAP assessment and knows his/her TAP AthleteType

When/Where = can be done in conjunction with the Introductory AthleteTypes Team Meeting presentation or stand alone session.

Step 1 - Preparation

choose one of the three below

- Be sure each athlete has a copy of his/her TAP Athlete Type report printed in hand for Step 2
- Have a poster of each type available for viewing on a wall during Step 2
- Show each type's summary on a projector screen for Step 2 -- go through types one by one (go to athletetypes.com/materials for presentations and look for the *Introductory AthleteTypes Team Presentation*)

Step 2 - Action

- Each athlete writes on one index card
 - Side 1 -- **one positive characteristic or strength** from their respective Athlete Type report that the athlete most relates to himself/herself; note on the card if strength or weakness
 - Side 2 -- **one negative characteristic or weakness** from their respective Athlete Type report that the athlete most relates to himself/herself; note on the card if strength or weakness
- If they are doing this exercise in conjunction with the Team Presentation, be sure to stop at each type's summary screen and have each of the athletes from that type write down the strengths and weaknesses on their index cards.

Step 3 - Activities

Activity #1

1. Assemble team into 8 groups - one group for each of the 8 Athlete Types; if there are no athletes for one or more of the types, no worries.
2. Select one of your larger AthleteType groups (e.g., Eagles) to get up in front of the group with their cards in hand
3. Announce that the others should imagine that this group is a single team about to compete
4. Have them place their index card on their forehead with the strength side out
 - Coach reads aloud some/all strengths (depending on size of group) and points out that the strengths are somewhat similar
5. Now have them place their index card on their forehead with the weakness side out
6. Coach reads aloud some/all the weaknesses (depending on size of group) and points out that the weaknesses are somewhat similar
7. OPTIONAL: Repeat with another group(s)

The LESSON TO BE LEARNED here: If we all have similar mental strengths and weaknesses, we can more easily be defeated due to our team's narrow strengths and weaknesses. Coach should explain this clearly.

Activity #2

1. Assemble team into groups around 10 in each - purposely mixing up the TAP Athlete Types
2. Have one group get up in front of the larger team with their cards in hand
3. Announce that the others should imagine that this group is a single team about to compete
4. Have each athlete in the subgroup place their index card on their forehead with the strength side out
5. The coach reads many/all of the strengths and stresses that this sounds like a strong, balanced team
6. Have one athlete flip his/her card over to the weakness side and say it outloud while the others keep their strength side showing
 - The coach then leads the group in analyzing the strengths of the others to identify one or more strengths from the others that will help compensate and overcome the one athlete's shown weakness
 - Repeat multiple times with different athletes showing their weaknesses one at a time

The LESSON to stress here: Everyone has weaknesses. But it is the strengths of other teammates that compensate for each individual's weaknesses.

Examples to talk through with Team

| Athlete Type | A Key Weakness | Who Can Help? |
|--------------------|--|---|
| Rocket | Makes quick decisions without thinking through | Engineer - teach them how to more carefully think through decisions |
| Maverick | Has trouble following rules and directions | Eagle - monitor them re rules and directions |
| Ice | Highly critical and hard on self | Musketeer & Trailblazer - provide empathy to all teammates that mess up, especially Ice. |
| Eagle | Ignores flaws of self, prefers to focus on others | Engineer - has no problem bluntly pointing out an Eagle's missteps and steering them towards improvement |
| Musketeer | Tries to please everyone, can get taken advantage of | Knight - use protective instincts so Musketeers don't get taken advantage of |
| Trailblazer | Poor follow through | Eagle - help them follow through |
| Knight | Keeps it all inside | Rocket & Maverick - help teammates in social situations and in opening up, especially Knights |
| Engineer | Does not push self as hard | Ice - encourage them to push hard to succeed |

Overall lessons to take away from this exercise

- A chain is only as strong as its weakest link
- Every type has weaknesses even professional athletes / superstars
- Other types have strengths to compensate for others weaknesses
- Mental diversity equals a strong team