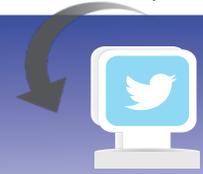


The Monti Navigator

Be Greater than the Average



Tammy Mangus, Superintendent of Schools

December 2016

Hello Monticello!

Back in the '80's, my brother's high school basketball team made the division finals. As the younger sister of one of the starters on the team, I was thrilled to be able to touch a piece of the small-town lunacy associated with advancing through the regional finals and heading to Buffalo to play in the big division-qualifying game. As an adult looking back, I can't help but note the behaviors of the players and the coach making our historically athletically mediocre school capable of such a feat.

Here are the facts as I recall them:

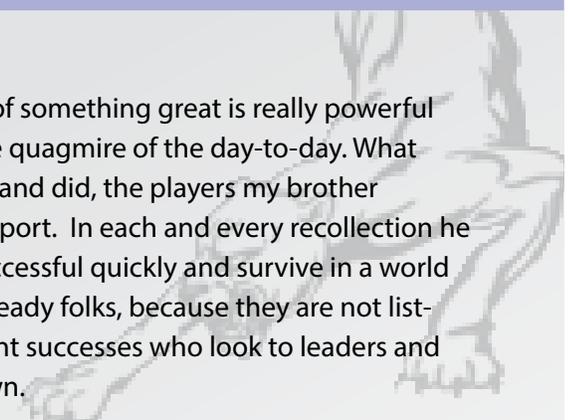
1. The coach believed the team could do great things, told them so **and asked the players if they agreed**. They said they did.
2. **The coach held his players accountable to their hope, kept them up-to-date on their current abilities and outcomes and used that data to press them regularly for perspective about the goal**. The coach would ask the team if they wanted to win an occasional game here or there or if there was a bigger aspiration beneath the surface. There was.
3. The team didn't start the winning season as winners. The coach sat them down after a few losses to reiterate his belief that one must attend to their goals and aspirations daily if they really wanted to achieve them. **The truth: occasional wins can be possible without much effort, but season wins are intentional**. Seasons are not won by checking off that you were in attendance at practice and completed the minimum activities required. Seasons are won step by step and action by action each and every day.
4. My brother would ride his bike to the fire hall every single day for a pickup game with any available teammate. The team worked together outside of regular practices, because they realized winning wasn't only about doing what their coach had told them to do, but also about each player's development as well as collaboration and growth as a team. This was not overt or innate. **It had been built under the guidance of the coach**.
5. **Inspiration leaves its mark forever**. My brother seemed blasé about most things associated with his high school years. He rarely recants "the good old days" and was quick to become successful and head off across the country, putting thousands of miles between himself our small town. When I recalled this season as I sat to write this, I texted him the following and was a bit shocked by his response given his apparent high school disenfranchisement:

ME: Weird question - Your high school basketball team advanced how far? Class D Finals?

HIM: Yes. Great season, but lost 51-25. Only scored 6 points in the second half.

ME: You remember the score?!

HIM: Also, remember when.... (and the texts go on and on.)



Emotion + learning = forever learning, and being inspired and a part of something great is really powerful emotionally. What you gain from these moments cannot be lost in the quagmire of the day-to-day. What followed these text messages were stories about what the coach said and did, the players my brother admired, and the growth the team achieved through each other's support. In each and every recollection he sent, I saw a snapshot of the skills that helped my brother become successful quickly and survive in a world 3,000 miles away from our small town. You see, inspired folks are life-ready folks, because they are not list-checking minimalists -- they are super-skilled, flexible and independent successes who look to leaders and teammates to be inspired, but can knock it out of the park on their own.

These next few months we must seek to inspire action in others, not mere acquiescence or checked boxes. No matter who you are and what you do here in Monticello, consider who your players are and your true coaching style. Are you building a winning team? Will the actions of your team feed the goals of the organization? If not, how can you get in the game?

Be well, and make it a great month!

Tammy Mangus
Superintendent of Schools