

A New Journey Begins



LEWIS COLLEGE
OF BUSINESS

Monday Morning Memo from the desk of Dean Don Capener

February 12, 2024

Management Wisdom from the Wizard of Westwood



John Wooden is no longer remembered by my students, but he can teach us about life success and management. Nicknamed "**The Wizard of Westwood**" for his legendary coaching career at UCLA, John Wooden's achievements in college basketball are monumental and unparalleled. Since it is basketball season here at Marshall University and our women's team is in 1st place in the conference (despite losing to James Madison), I thought it was worthwhile to remember the legend of John Wooden.

Here's a breakdown of Wooden's most significant achievements:

As a player: All-American for three seasons (1930-32) at Purdue University

As a coach: 10 NCAA championships (1964, 1965, 1967-1973) as head coach of UCLA, including a record 7 consecutive "March Madness" wins (1967-1973 before we called it March Madness).

NCAA record of 88 consecutive victories (1971-1974), .813 winning percentage as a coach (885 wins and 203 losses), 7-time recipient of the prestigious Henry Iba Award as national coach of the year, and 5-time winner of the Associated Press Coach of the Year award.

First person inducted into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame as both a player and a coach.

Wooden is widely considered the greatest college basketball coach of all time. He developed the Pyramid of Success, a set of 15 core principles for personal and professional success. Wooden was known for his emphasis on character,

teamwork, and fundamental skills over individual talent.

He inspired generations of players, coaches, and leaders with his humility, work ethic, and dedication to excellence.

Wooden influenced me and I am grateful to have met him and talked to him when I was 12 and 13 years old.

Wooden's influence extends far beyond sport, serving as a role model for leadership and personal development in various fields. He once said, "It's very easy to get comfortable in a position of leadership but beware of overconfidence."

As players, or employees, we might believe we have all the answers, particularly if you have enjoyed past success. People start telling you are the smartest, brightest, fastest in the business. Don't believe them. The moment you begin to believe it, you've lost your edge, and you will eventually decline. Wooden taught me that any self-belief that keeps you from actively learning and listening to others who are creating innovative and new strategies is a game-stopper. Wooden said, "This is one of the main reasons it's so hard to stay on top." Intellectual curiosity and drive are the two greatest motivators to improve, excel, and succeed.

Wooden told me if there is one key to success, it is [playing or business] experience. Running play after play, adjusting, and investing in hard work makes the difference with the best performers. Many executives lack the willingness to improve their skills, practice important techniques, and be curious learners in their 50's or 60's after they reach the C-level. It is a big mistake to get comfortable or manipulate rather than inspire as a leader. Inspiration is mostly perspiration with a little luck.

According to Wooden, the best-case prospect is a leader who really paid his/her dues while working for someone else in their chosen industry. Better yet they learned hard lessons when she/he failed in a previous business venture.

Once you're No. 1, it is easy to believe positive press, adoring fans, or the most satisfied clients. But this is the point at which you must work even harder. Now that you have achieved success, each subsequent success will take greater effort.

Wooden's Advice to Avoid Overconfidence

Avoid the temptation to believe that past achievements signal future success. As a leader, never be content and think you know everything about your business. Try and learn something from everyone you meet.

Remember that no two customers or employees are the same. No one customer is representative of everyone you will serve. Everyone under your management is unique and has something of value to add regardless of their position within the company. Learn about the backgrounds of people you meet or work alongside. Don't underestimate your competitors. Wooden was known for his emphasis on character, teamwork, and fundamental skills over individual talent. He inspired generations of players, coaches, and business leaders with his humility, work ethic, and dedication to excellence.

Coach Wooden said, "There is no one formula for getting my team to play well together." It is both science and art simultaneously. The "ideal mix" is difficult to pull off, let alone lead to perennial success, but that doesn't mean it's

impossible. From the man who led UCLA to 10 NCAA championships and 88 straight games, we in business can learn a thing or two about how to stay ahead of the competition from John Wooden.

Field Trip to Service Wire

A requirement for Marketing 231 (Selling) students is to produce a role-playing video in which they sell and promote wire products to potential customers. To ensure that the students have sufficient knowledge of the product they will be selling, marketing instructor, Clifton Dedrickson, headed a tour of the Service Wire facilities in Culloden, West Virginia.



This hands-on experience of how the wire is reduced, twisted, and protective coating is added and prepared for selling significantly enhances the student's knowledge and ability to sell this product. Says Dedrickson, "I always get positive comments for arranging these tours, for which all the credit goes to Service Wire."

Taking on the topic of AI

The Truist Center for Leadership hosted a discussion panel on AI in the new SBIS building on Wednesday, February 7. It was a great opportunity for students to witness some of our faculty and administrators discussing the future of generative AI.

Panelists included Diana Adams, Jodie Penrod, Rick Weible, and Haroon Malik. "It is always a leader's job to manage developing technologies." Says Dr. Monisha Gupta, Director of the Truist Center for Leadership.

The Panel was a great success, boasting over 100 students in attendance.



For more information contact [Nancy Lankton](#).

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