

TEAMWORK

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Some might say that I'm trying to justify all the time and money my husband and I have spent for our children being on youth/high school/collegiate sports teams. But now that my children are adults I can see that it was time and money well spent and I would gladly do it all over again. The lessons learned from participating in a team sport or any "team-like" activity are very relevant to the workplace and to life in general. Below are some of the more valuable team lessons that I've observed through my children's participation in baseball and equestrian sports:

1. Lead with positivity. The good teammate does not kick a teammate when they're down. He/she offers to help.
2. After a big win, it's time to celebrate as a team. If players think in terms of the good of the team, rather than their own personal glory, the team benefits.
3. Everyone strikes out or has a bad day in the ring some times. Without undue drama, get off the field or show ring and cheer for your teammates. It's not all about you.
4. If someone drops the ball or throws their helmet in frustration, forgive them, console them and expect everyone to quickly move on. Every game/day is a new chance to hit it out of the park.
5. Listen to the coach. The coach has the knowledge and experience to call the shots. Everyone wants to be the player of the week but if a player is advised to bunt, then bunt is what a good team player does.
6. Utility players are key. Flexibility to take up the slack for an injured player and the willingness to be open to what is best for the team are critical.
7. Bad draws happen. If the horse that has been chosen for you to ride this show is feisty and a known bucker, do the best you can with your confidence and acquired skill. Complaining will not help.



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8. Everyone cleans out stalls or picks up balls after practice. Do your share of the dirty work.
9. Do the drills. Someone will always have more natural talent, be faster, stronger, etc. Level the playing field with your work ethic.

Like coaches, employers should value team players for all that they add, in particular a mature long-game viewpoint and an infectious winning attitude.