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Dear Coaches,

Quote of the week:

"We all need a check-up from the neck-up to avoid stinkin' thinkin' which leads to hardening of the attitudes."

~Zig Ziglar

Think: When You Make the Team

By Lindsay Mintenko, USA Swimming National Team Managing Director

Well that came fast. It is already 2016, the year of the summer Olympic Games in Rio. Many of you are starting to prepare for the 2016 U.S. Olympic Team Trials in Omaha later this summer. It is such an exciting time to be in the sport of swimming. As you prepare for Trials, it is also time to start thinking about what happens after Trials when you make the team. So stop thinking about just Trials, start thinking about the Olympic Games.

I am a list person. I love crossing things off my list, but more importantly if I don't have a list, I often forget to do things. Here is my list of nine things you need to start thinking of now for WHEN you make the Olympic Team in Omaha.

1. Your passport! You need to have a passport to travel to Brazil, and it needs to be valid for 6 months after the close of the Games. This means your passport needs to have an expiration date after **February 21, 2017**.
2. Olympic Team training camp starts officially **July 13**. What are your plans after Trials and before camp? Where are you training? What media obligations and celebrations do you have? Plan your time now.
3. Get a plan for training during the domestic and international camps. There are 33 days from the start of Trials to the start of the Games. Have a plan for 41 days (when swimming ends in Rio).
4. Who is handling the tickets for your family to Rio? It should NOT be you. Designate someone
5. Are you going to Opening Ceremonies? Work with your coach to make the decision. Opening Ceremonies for an athlete is at least a 5-8 hour process.
6. When are you coming home from Rio? Are you going to stay through closing ceremonies, or do you need to get back to school? Plan now!
7. The prelims start at **1 p.m.**, and finals start at **10 p.m.** Start to plan how you are going to adjust to the start times
8. Plan your nutrition. What do you like before you race? In between races? Nutrition at the Games isn't always the same and might not be what you are used to!
9. Finally, be flexible. While you can plan all you want, the Olympic Games always has different factors you aren't going to be used to. Be ready for your best plan to change.

22 weeks until Olympic Trials start.



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Protein: It's All in the Distribution

By Jill Castle, MS, RDN

Protein is always a hot topic, but most articles focus on how much an athlete should eat during the day, or when they should eat it to best recover or build muscle.

As I describe in my book, *Eat Like a Champion*, protein is a nutrient that is well received and best utilized by the body when it appears regularly throughout the day.

Consider these scenarios:

Protein illustration. (Small) Jake, a 16-year-old swimmer, has an egg, cheese and ham bagel (~25 grams of protein) after his early morning practice. At school, he snacks on crackers and fruit (~5 g), opts for soup, a roll and chips (~9 g) for lunch, eats a granola bar and juice (5 g) before practice, and at dinner he eats a large steak, baked potato with the works, 3 glasses of milk and a small salad (~85 g).

Protein assessment: Jake is off to a good start, but his protein intake plummets mid-day, he forgets to eat recovery protein, and loads most of his protein intake at night.

Protein illustration, small.

His buddy, Mark, also 16-years-old, eats the same sandwich after practice (~25 g). During school, he has a chicken Caesar wrap and some soup (~35 g). Before swim practice in the afternoon, Mark eats a snack of a mini bagel with peanut butter and a banana (~12 g). After practice, he drinks 10 ounces of chocolate milk (10 g) and heads home for a dinner of shredded chicken and cheese enchiladas with rice and beans (~45 g).

Protein assessment: Mark's protein intake is fairly evenly distributed throughout the day.

[What the research says](#)

Three Lessons All Leaders Should Learn

By Katie Arnold, USA Swimming National Team High Performance Consultant

This past summer I was fortunate to be able to attend the Leaders Sport Performance Summit in New York. During the two-day conference, I heard panel discussions that included coaches, athletes, psychologists, and even a neurosurgeon. During these discussions I was exposed to a lot of new concepts that I had never previously learned. I also had a number of "forehead slap" moments when I realized that the fairly obvious idea that was being explained on-stage was actually something that had never really occurred to me before. Below are three of these ideas I heard that have proven to be the most valuable and most often repeated in my work and life.

[Learn more:](#)

Teen Sports Faces a Nutritional-Supplement Debate

A question of whether companies should market their products to young athletes
By Rachel Bachman, Wall Street Journal, Jan. 11, 2016

Concern is growing in the world of high school sports about nutritional supplement companies' increasingly aggressive marketing of their products to teen athletes. Among the tactics: One company sponsors a national high school sports association and another a 16-year-old swimmer.

Sports-nutrition supplements, sold online or over the counter and including everything from protein shakes to capsules promising bigger muscles, represent a growing market. They have \$6.7 billion in annual sales in the U.S., says Chris Schmidt, senior consumer health analyst for market-research firm Euromonitor. Many athletes, including Olympians, take nutritional supplements to help them fuel or recover from grueling workouts.

Some doctors, school districts and athletic organizations have concerns about marketing

nutritional supplements to young athletes because there is little scientific research on how supplements affect growing bodies. Supplement makers don't need approval from the Food and Drug Administration.

The International Olympic Committee published a statement in the British Journal of Sports Medicine in 2015 saying it is "inappropriate and unacceptable to encourage dietary supplements for performance enhancement with youth athletes." A spokesman for USA Swimming, the sport's national governing body, says the organization "does not support nor endorse the use of supplements, particularly for athletes under 18 years old."

[Learn more here:](#)

USADA Updates

IMPORTANT!

[Major changes to 2016 Prohibited List](#)

[Athlete Guide to the 2016 Prohibited List](#)

[2016 Monitoring List](#)

[2016 Wallet Card](#)

12 Simple Yet Significant To Dos for Leaders

From The Coaching Toolbox, Written by Jeff Janssen, Founder and president of Janssen Sports Leadership Center

Jeff directs cutting-edge Leadership Academies for high school and college coaches and all across the nation including North Carolina, Pittsburgh, Illinois, Yale, Baylor, Wake Forest, and Winston-Salem State.

His site has several other useful articles for coaches and team leaders. Here is the link: [Coaches Championship Network](#)

Student-athletes of all ages often wonder, "What can I do to be a better leader?"

Fortunately leadership opportunities abound and present themselves on a daily basis. While they may be subtle, leaders are usually given at least a dozen opportunities to demonstrate leadership every single day.

These leadership opportunities are rarely available in the form of dramatic, rousing, "win one for the Gipper" type speeches, but most often present themselves in simple, yet significant interactions on a daily basis.

There's a quote we often use in our Leadership Academies by Helen Keller that drives home the value of these seemingly trivial, yet critical leadership moments. She said, "I long to accomplish great and noble tasks, but it is my chief duty to accomplish humble tasks as though they were great and noble. The world is moved along not only by the mighty shoves of its heroes, but also by the aggregate of the tiny pushes of each honest worker."

[Learn more here:](#)

Teaching and Motivating Youth Athletes—A Personal Perspective

By Ryan McClure CSCS, NSCA-CPT

Coaches should strive to teach athletes in a way they can understand: by hearing, seeing, and practicing. This article describes some techniques that a coach can use to accomplish this.

[Full Article:](#)

This article provided courtesy of the National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA).

Why We Struggle to Communicate (and How to Fix It)

By Dr. Travis Bradberry, Coauthor Emotional Intelligence 2.0 & President at TalentSmart, Dec 20, 2015

When it comes to communication, we all tend to think we're pretty good at it. Truth is, even those of us who are good communicators aren't nearly as good as we think we are. This overestimation of our ability to communicate is magnified when interacting with people we know well.

Researchers at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business put this theory to the test and what they discovered is startling. In the study, the researchers paired subjects with people they knew well and then again with people they'd never met. The researchers discovered that people who knew each other well understood each other no better than people who'd just met! Even worse, participants frequently overestimated their ability to communicate, and this was more pronounced with people they knew well.

[Learn more here:](#)

10 Strategies to Help Coaches And Athletes Defeat Adversity

By Juan Pablo Favero, Associate Head Coach San Diego State University Women's Soccer

It's frustrating for athletes when they're running on fumes, feeling like they have nothing more to give and that no matter what they do there is nothing left to push past a seemingly insurmountable wall. They can feel hopelessness, discouragement and defeat knocking at their door.

Whether the exhaustion is physical, emotional, mental or a combination of the three, we have all experienced what it's like to "hit the wall." While the wall is definitely not a good state to be in, there are two important facts we must remember for our own sake as well as that of the groups or teams we lead or coach.

First, athletes must understand that these moments can be overcome. They do have more in the tank if they grind it out. Second, when we don't quit and we overcome these walls, they serve as a catalyst for growth and potentiate future success in a way that we, and our teams, would otherwise never experience.

In overcoming personal and professional walls, as well as helping athletes and teams overcome their walls, I have developed a very practical list of strategies over the years that I trust can assist both you and your teams to overcome obstacles.

[Here are 10 ideas you can use with your own programs:](#)

The Humble Leader Paradox

By Ken Downer, Learn Concepts, RapidStart Leadership, January 9, 2016

How does a humble leader lead without becoming a door mat?

I believe the Servant-Leader mindset is the best sustainable approach to leadership. But if you are not careful, it is easy to fall into the idea that to lead, you are supposed to be running around doing everything you can to make everybody happy.

But are you really going to be a better leader if you are always playing coffee boy or gopher girl when someone on your team has a whim? In this post, we'll look at this "Humble Leader Paradox" and give you a guide you can use to sort out the confusion.

[Learn more:](#)