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Dear Coaches,

Quote of the week:

“I had rather do and not promise than promise and not do.”

~Arthur Warwick

Planning & Management: Job One!

The Chuck Wielgus Blog, November 4, 2015

I eat lunch in the dining hall at the Olympic Training Center once a week. It's a great place to bump into people and informally chat. That is exactly what happened a few days ago when I found myself in the food line just ahead of Michael Phelps.

We stepped to the side and talked for 5-10 minutes about his stellar summer performances and the lead-up to Rio. Later, a guest in the dining hall stopped me and said, “You must have the coolest job, to be working all the time with the country's top swimmers.” Outside the walls of USA Swimming, that's what a lot of people seem to think... and little could be further from the truth.

I do have the coolest job, but it's not because of interactions with world-class athletes. It's because of the team that most people don't see every day, our talented staff and volunteers who serve USA Swimming's 400,000 members daily.

The most important aspects of my job involve business planning and staff management. Once every four years, the senior staff team works together over several months to produce a business plan for the ensuing quadrennial. This business plan is then presented to the Board of Directors for their review, input and ultimately for their approval. The business plan is then our road map for the next four years.

Many business leaders will be surprised that our business plan is a short document, certainly no more than 10 pages. There are no elaborate spread sheets, complicated financial forecasts, nor three-ring binders filled with appendices. I'm a firm believer in keeping things as simple and as focused as possible.

When we get into the actual planning process, I want the group to concentrate on three principal themes:

- What are the opportunities to take big leaps forward
- Where can we find new revenue for the sport
- What are threats that could affect us adversely

In focusing on the big picture during business planning, USA Swimming has made substantial enhancements such as re-vamping the Olympic Team Trials from a natatorium to a 17,000-seat arena and creating news-making events like the Golden Goggle Awards and Mutual of Omaha Duel in the Pool. I don't want to waste valuable planning time with the senior staff getting stuck in the details, but identifying opportunities and conceiving how to move the organization forward are critical parts of business planning.

It's also important that we dedicate time exploring where we can generate new revenue for the sport. Money is like oxygen, it gives us the wherewithal to breathe new life into projects that benefit the sport. We can't forget that just because USA Swimming is a non-profit organization doesn't mean that we can ignore the practical realities of what it takes to grow a successful business.

And lastly, we've learned from experience that we need to scan the horizon to see what could cause us risk. As examples, we see concerns with the future of college swimming,





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and there is always a reason to worry about the impact that performance-enhancing drugs can have in the sport. We can't predict every situation, but it's essential that we do our best to see what clouds could be forming on the horizon.

In earlier years, we started the business planning process with a zero-based approach, reviewing every program and service and re-justifying their importance and the budget allocation to support them.

Today, because our business plan has now gone through four quads and been consistently constructed around the same three core objectives – Build, Promote & Achieve – we put our focus on how we can make the most impactful enhancements going forward, be it existing programming or exciting new initiatives.

Though it's early in the planning process, there are already a number of issues that I know will have our attention as we look forward at the next four years. These include:
•Membership Growth – Most youth sports are facing a leveling off or decline in participation. We need to identify ways to ensure that USA Swimming continues to grow and flourish. USA Swimming membership has grown 40 percent over the last 10 years and we want to encourage similar growth over the next 10 years.

•Diversity & Inclusion – We will determine what the most effective ways are to ensure that USA Swimming has an inclusive environment and how we can best extend participation opportunities to those in under-represented groups. Swimming is truly a sport for everyone, where all athletes can thrive athletically and in life.

•Promotions – USA Swimming is active in the social media world, but we need to enhance our strategies to develop and distribute content to a broader range of audiences. Promoting our sport strategically can also directly impact our membership growth and diversity efforts.

My own work priorities are directly tied to the USA Swimming Business Plan. It is my responsibility to ensure that our staff remains focused implementing the business plan and that we are allocating our resources in the most effective way possible. I am always measuring everything we do against the three Build, Promote & Achieve objectives that guide our business strategies.

The months ahead are going to be very exciting, and the closer we get to the time of the Olympic Team Trials, the more publicity our sport will receive. But while that is going on, the most important work being done by the staff is to remain focused on our plan that will provide the roadmap for our sport to prosper for years to come. And for the senior staff team, our most important job over the next few months is to bring together the USA Swimming Business Plan for the 2020 quad.

It's my job to lead this effort ... and I think that's a pretty cool role and responsibility.

2020 Business Planning Survey

Over the next six months, we will undergo a process to develop the business plan for the 2017-2020 quad. This is one of the most important and exciting responsibilities that any organization has, and we would like your input. This process gives us time to look at existing programs, plan for the future and set the course for USA Swimming through 2020 and beyond.

As we start this process, our vision is to stay focused on our three core objectives:

- BUILD the base
- PROMOTE the sport
- ACHIEVE sustained competitive success

Below is the link to a survey that shouldn't take you more than 15 minutes to complete. Your feedback will help give us some important direction as we get deeper into the planning process.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WNQDCH3>

The survey will close on Tuesday, November 10 at 5:00 pm Mountain Time.

When the survey closes, we will compile the results and share a verbal summary with the Board of Directors at their November 21 meeting. This information will then be incorporated into the process as we build-out the 2020 business plan during the winter and spring months. We will certainly keep the Board of Directors updated on our progress, and the business plan and quad budget will ultimately be presented at the House of Delegates meeting next September in Atlanta.

Thank you in advance for taking a few meeting to contribute your thoughts to this important initiative. You are truly helping to plan for the future of USA Swimming and the sport.

Thank you,

Chuck Wielgus

Small Changes Make A Big Difference...

By Lindsay Mintenko, USA Swimming National Team Managing Director

We are finally here. This is the year we have all been waiting for. The end of the quad, the Games are in sight. What are you doing differently to make yourself better? As Olympic Trials approach, we all think we need to make big changes to make a big difference. For some of you, you are probably right. For others, it can be simple changes that will make a big difference. You are a part of the conversation. Don't lose sight of what has gotten you there, but challenge yourself to make small changes that will impact eight months. Olympic Trials will be here before you know it. Here are a few simple things you can do that will make a difference when you need to get your hand on the wall in Omaha.

I am sure you are working with your coach to make the small changes you need to make in the water! You are showing up to work, you are practicing your finishes better than you ever have before (because at Olympic Trials what you have done in the past doesn't matter, a good finish does). You are visualizing your race and you believe in the plan you and your coach have put together, so what are you doing outside of the water to be your best?

- Take time for yourself
- Stop drinking soda
- Eat right
- Sleep

And finally...

- Get caught up on "Game of Thrones" and "House of Cards" so you aren't binge watching at Trials!

What small changes are you making to be your best?

America's Swimming Coaches - Holiday Gifting Campaign For Teams – Win \$500

Many teams support needy children in their community during the holidays by collecting gifts and canned goods. Here's a program being sponsored by SWIMMING COACHES through the College Swimming Coaches Association, high school, YMCA and Boys and Girls Club teams and Winning Spirit Swimming. Please consider implementing it with your team. Visit the website to download prepared materials and join America's swimming coaches' supporting their entire communities.

The program is FREE and provides; 1) organization/procedures, 2) poster, 3) receipt, 4) press release, 5) award application. Just visit;

www.gamesgimmickschallenges.com/gifting to get the materials FREE.

In the words of Thomas Davis, Carolina Panthers, NFL Man of the Year, who grew up on the streets, living without family, "some disadvantaged youngsters think they are bad people because they don't receive a gift during the holidays".

For the most part swimmers come from giving families. Participating in this program helps participants of all ages feel good about "giving" and volunteering to prepare gifts for delivery. It is estimated that volunteering leaves a positive imprint on one's brain that lasts for four years. Gifts are collected from aquatic center patrons for youngsters of all ages; infants, pre-school, elementary school, middle school and high school. Value ranges from less than \$10 to \$100 depending upon the contributor.

This is a cooperative effort between Americas swimming coaches and a local social service agency in your community. Parents', team captains or assistants may carry it out under your leadership. The coach/team that collects the most toys/items will win \$500 from Winning Spirit Swimming.

Teams may have complimentary projects like having swimmers at a holiday meet to bring a toy or can goods. Philly's Jimmy Ellis places a box in the pool lobby for EACH TEAM to place donations and the team with the most wins a prize. Please get involved for the sake of young people in need in your community and the "good feelings" benefit you and your swimmers will have.

Happy Holidays,
Bob Steele

Co-sponsors: College Swimming Coaches Association of America
Winning Spirit Swimming

2016 USA Swimming Regional Build A Pool Conferences USA Swimming's Facilities Department

Objectives of the Build A Pool Conference

Attendees will be able to...

1. Plan and build your facility for TOTAL AQUATIC PROGRAMMING
2. Validate the needs to explore possibilities for aquatic centers
3. Understand and identify adversaries and advocates for the project
4. Project your cost to operate and programming income potential
5. Have a better understanding of pool and building size options and the cost to build
6. Learn about other management options and value received pricing
7. Learn about new building technologies

Confirmed dates and locations below:

Dates of Regional BAP	Location/State	In conjunction with:
January 7-9, 2016	Napa, CA	Pacific Swim Coaches Association Clinic
April 22-23, 2016	Chicago, IL	Aquatic Therapy Rehab Institute
June 11-12, 2016	Missoula, MT	
July 3, 2016	Omaha, NE	Olympic Trials
September 10-11, 2016	Fort Lauderdale, FL	American Swimming Coaches Association
October 22-23, 2016	Nashville, TN	World Aquatic Health Conference
November 12-13, 2016	Morgantown, WV	West Virginia University

RE: For a visual map of the Regional Build a Pool locations [click here](#)

DO NOT WAIT until the week of the conference to register!
Things to consider when wanting to register for one of the regional BAP Conferences. Many times we have contracts with hotels and catering groups. This means we have two deadlines we have to meet. One for the hotel rooms and one for the conference.

Please make sure you can get into the BAP Conference of your choice by registering as soon as you can. We have to have at least 10 people registered by 30 days of the first day of the conference or we will cancel.

USA Swimming Organization Membership

by Joseph Bloggers

In addition to Club membership, USA Swimming offers an Organization membership available to groups such as Booster Clubs.

The USA Swimming Rule Book, 502.3 Group Membership .2 defines the membership as “Any organization which is interested in competitive swimming, on either the national, state or local level may join USA Swimming.” The entity would not have any athlete members or coach members.

This membership provides a means for a local organization, such as a team booster club, to have insurance coverage under the USA Swimming insurance program for USA Swimming “insured activities” including fund raising activities. Insurance is not automatic but is provided for activities the Organization has received approval from either the USA Swimming Risk Manager or from Swimming’s insurance broker. The fee for an Organization membership is the same as for a member club: \$70 to USA Swimming plus the LSC fee is for club membership.

We are seeing more and more clubs changing from volunteer run to coach owned with a booster club set up as the fund raising Organization for the club. As such, the Organization will run swim meets and other fund raising activities on behalf of the member club. Some booster organizations believe they are provided coverage because of their relationship with the member club. This is not the case. Other booster organizations purchase insurance from local agents for these activities. Booster organizations are missing out on an opportunity to be provided inexpensive insurance for their activities by simply joining USA Swimming as an Organization. We are encouraging LSCs and Clubs to promote this valuable Organization membership to booster organizations.

For additional information contact [George Ward](#).

Developing Athleticism is the C.O.R.E. of Positive Youth Development

By Rick Howard, MED, CSCS,*D, USAW

To develop athleticism for youth we must understand these C.O.R.E. principles:

- Context in which to apply movement patterns
- Opportunities to develop proper movement
- Recognition of the physical attributes that youth require
- Environments in which youth explore movement

[Read the article here:](#)

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

How To Increase Mental Toughness: 4 Secrets Of Navy SEALs And Olympians

Posted by Eric Barker, November 2015

Know what’s really interesting? Learning how Navy SEALs build mental toughness to handle deadly situations.

Know what else is really interesting? Learning how Olympic athletes deal with the pressure of competition when the entire world is watching.

Know what’s the most interesting of all? When you find out they do a lot of the same things. [Learn more here:](#)

The Only Two Rules You Need To Know To Be Successful In Work And Life

Staying focused on the right things can make all the difference.
By Vivian Giang, FastCompany.com, November 2015

There are three skills you need to be financially successful: making money, keeping money, growing money. James Altucher is mostly only good at making money.

"I've had several instances where I've started a business, sold it, made a lot of money, and then basically lost everything I made, whether it was \$50 million or \$5 million or whatever," he tells Fast Company. "I always have a tendency to lose everything I made."

At some point, Altucher started thinking about the routines and habits he kept while he was making money starting and running more than 20 companies, investing in over 30 companies, advising another 50 private companies (ranging from \$0 in revenue to a billion in revenue), publishing a handful of books, including the upcoming The Rich Employee, and hosting a number of podcasts, including an upcoming one with Freakonomics' Stephen J. Dubner called Question of the Day.

[Learn more here:](#)

Redefining Success: 8 Tips for Being a Great Sports Parent

By James Leath, Changing the Game Project, November 2015

Man, is it hard to be a parent these days. You are bombarded with information, trying to keep your kids safe, while giving them the independence to grow and thrive; all of it can drive you nuts.

When it comes to sports, it's pretty easy to get overwhelmed by all-star teams, camps, expensive equipment, private training and more. It all make you feel, perhaps, inadequate, or that somehow you are failing your kids.

Not at all.

In this week's blog, James Leath redefines success for parents when it comes to sports. You don't have to do everything under the sun for your kids to be a successful parent. You don't have to give up every weekend and every vacation. It doesn't mean you have to get a second mortgage to send your kids to six camps next summer. And it certainly does not mean that what team your kid makes, or how many trophies he or she wins is a reflection upon whether you are a good parent or not.

How do we define success?

[Click here](#) to read this week's article on "Redefining Success" for parents

Enjoy!

John O'Sullivan