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Lesson 4: Global Citizenship
2/12/2007

Class Summary:

This class began with ethics case-studies, with pairs of students comparing and contrasting ideas, and arguing the best course of action. My case study was “Good Coach, Bad Role Model,” which essentially was the Bobby Knight case. Discussion from everyone in the class brought out an analysis of professional sports versus the corporate world. After the ethics session, the class joined up with the other section where we listened to two former students lecture on the problems facing the 21st century. They made interesting points on environmental responsibility.

Response:

For my case study, I took the approach that the coach should be reprimanded for his actions, but not severely punished. The incident of intimidation of a University employee is intolerable; however, touching a player is not always assault. Everyone who has played a sport realizes that the coach tries to get under the team’s skin to make them play more as a singular unit. Contact sports, such as soccer, basketball, and football, have a prominence of coaches that may knock their players around, but it is all done to make them more mentally strong. The coach and the players know when he steps over his bounds, whether a parent wants to believe it or not.

Analysis:

I’ve been involved in sports all my life, and have encountered coaches like this throughout the many teams I’ve been a part of. I can understand why some people may feel coaches have no right to abuse their players, but the players (more often than not) don’t interpret this as hard-on physical abuse. Such behavior would not be tolerable in the corporate world because it is not physical in nature. The motivation is different, thus the style of leadership must differ as well. This is why I feel you can’t compare the two personalities.

Sound-bite:

A leader must appreciate the diversity in thought, style, and motivation of the individual members of their organization.