

THE BEST COLLEGE RECRUITER™

SPECIAL REPORT 2

"Maximum Utilization of the High School Coach During the Recruiting Process"

TO help you become a more efficient recruiter, you must create a network of support. Part of that network will include the prospect's high school coach. Why is the high school coach in such a pivotal role? It's simply because you can only contact the athlete a certain number of times and during a certain period of time during the year. You need a go-to person during the non-contact times. Your high school coach has to become your liaison with the prospect.

Oftentimes, the coach becomes a sounding board for you. Even if they're not actively involved in their player's recruiting process, they are still going to be a part of the process: taking phone calls, acknowledging emails and text messages, letting you know when the recruit is playing, who the opponent is, or how the team is doing. Even if you are not talking to the coach directly, he or she is still involved.

Coaching research indicates that players like to play for coaches they like on a personal level. Is this important to you as a recruiter? It should. If that player you're recruiting really doesn't like his high school coach, and the coach may not like the player either, do you think you're going to be receiving reliable information? So it's important that you understand the relationship between the prospect and the high school coach.

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The Role of the Coach

The high school coach plays many different roles with athletes. The role can go as deep as being a mother or father figure, or it can be nothing more than providing social support.

The coach's role could be that of a true friend. It might also be the role of a disciplinarian if the player lacks that kind of parental responsibility.

Coaches sometimes have an influence on a player's relationship with his or her family, friends, and significant others. That's important information to know as a recruiter.

What is the Family Influence

As a recruiter, you need to know how involved the parents want to be in the recruiting process. Do the parents and the head coach get along? Does the head coach influence what the parents do and say? Or do the parents carry more influence than the head coach? This is important information to know as a recruiter.

Who is the Decision-Maker?

Recruiting success, for the most part, is contingent upon determining who makes the decision regarding where the athlete attends school. The most important thing a recruiter needs to find out is who is making the decision regarding where the student will play. It could be the athlete. It could be the mother or father. It could be a friend. That's important to know.

There is a story about how Christian Laettner went to Duke back in the 1990's because a close friend was on the baseball team there. Then there are the stories about the athlete following a girlfriend or boyfriend to a particular school. There were allegations a few years ago

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about Tennessee football sending out their “Volunteer welcome girls” to visit recruits in other states to influence their decision to attend the University of Tennessee. Then there were the infamous recruiting tactics that the University of Colorado football program used when hosting recruits on campus a while ago: hookers and alcohol.

Use the Coach’s Resources

Remember that the high school coach has resources that are very valuable to you as a recruiter. You can obtain transcripts, standardized scores, and SAT/ACT scores from the coach once the player has taken the tests. You can get game film as well.

If you have a good relationship with the coach, don’t be afraid to ask his/her opinion: “How do you see your athlete fitting into our system as a recruit?”

Summary

The high school coach can be a tremendous ally for you, or a pain in the neck. It is extremely important that you get to know the mind-set of the head coach as quickly as possible. Is he/she a straight shooter? Is he/she a controlling personality in the recruiting process? Can you trust him/her?

Do your homework on the high school coach just as you would with the prospect. It may play the pivotal role whether you sign that recruit or not.