

## The Athletic Director as an Instructional Leader Swen Nater

The key to improving student achievement is quality instructional leadership. But what is “Instructional Leadership?”

*An Athletic Director must be an active “Instructional Leader” for one reason; the players deserve the best instruction possible. For this reason, Instructional Leadership involves training and follow-up for The Five Needs of a Coach: Knowledge of the Sport, Knowledge of the Responsibilities, and skill of Instruction, Building Strong Relationships, and Continuous Improvement.*

### The Five Needs of a Coach

1. Knowledge of the Sport
  - a. Effective and focused collaborative learning
  - b. Adequate resources for learning
  - c. Extra training
  - d. Tutoring from an experienced coach
2. Knowledge of the responsibilities
  - a. Plan and Act to produce a competitive team
  - b. Care for the safety and health of the players
  - c. Monitor the academic progress of the players
  - d. Prevent player harassment by coaches and staff
  - e. Report player abuse to proper authorities
  - f. Report breach of ethical behavior by colleagues
3. Skilled Instruction
  - a. How to Prepare to Instruct
    - i. Have a timetable
    - ii. Break down the job (the JBS)
    - iii. Have all equipment ready
    - iv. Have the practice plan prepared and shared
  - b. How to Instruct
    - i. Show the Whole
    - ii. Demonstrate and Explain
    - iii. Imitation and Correction
    - iv. Repetition, Reflection, and Follow-Up
4. Skilled Coach-Student Relations
  - a. Let them know how they are doing
  - b. Give credit when and where credit is due
  - c. Let them know, in advance, of things that will affect them
  - d. Make best use of each player’s talents and gifts
5. Skilled Continuous Improvement
  - a. Follow the Practice Plan
  - b. Take notes during practice and transfer to practice plan
  - c. Make adjustments to next practice plan
  - d. File the practice plan
  - e. Refer to previous practice plans when planning
  - f. Follow Up