Systems-Based Approach To Using TeamBuildr

8 WAYS TEAMBUILDR CAN HELP CREATE A SYSTEMS-BASED HIGH PERFORMANCE PROGRAM

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Table Of Contents

> ## *You do not rise to the level of your goals, you fall to the level of your system(s)*
>
> James Clear | Atomic Habits

What does this quote have to do with our profession as strength and conditioning coaches? More than we know.

Creating a system that allows for collaboration, autonomy and efficiency in your environment will allow you, the hard working, selfless Strength and Conditioning Professional to use your time to provide what can be the most fundamental skill to those whom you serve: **Care**.

For a coach to have the time to personally be available for athletes, coaching staff, administration and any other stakeholders will have a profound influence on a coach's ability to have the greatest impact in their environment. Spending hours upon hours on a desktop gathering and analyzing data from the host of third-party services, writing programs and configuring reports during otherwise valuable opportunity to facetime with people can certainly place a hindrance on efforts and leave a coach with decision fatigue at best and sense of inadequacy at worst.

We are in the business of service, and being personally available - mentally, physically, emotionally - is what matters in this profession in order to build a community of trust and care that will 'stick' far beyond any computer time will. Coaches can write the best programs and hand out the best reports in the field, but if they are not prioritizing the growth of the humans they are responsible for developing, true and lasting impact will seldom be seen.

TeamBuildr is a tool that builds a system which provides autonomy to athletes, allowing them to be more invested in their personal process amidst the chaos of a massive team or program.

Coaches can automate much of their process to consolidate efforts with coaching and support staff with ease to provide the ultimate care and consistency needed within the program. Why is this important?

Well, why not? Our role in the realm of High Performance cannot possibly be limited to the weight room alone. There is so much more to the life of the athlete that extends far beyond the hour or so that is spent in this space. In team sports, and especially for coaches in the collegiate setting that may be responsible for multiple sports and disciplines, we have to consider a host of variables that are at play to the humans that we serve. 'Humans' are who we are dealing with, are we not? How do they take care of themselves in the other 23 hours of their respective day?

Let's look at this from a bird's eye view below with a simple list of possible variables in the life of a student-athlete (although this list is nowhere near all of the variables):

School: grades, attendance, relationships/friendships, exams, schedule, etc.

Preparation: meals, homework completion, presentation, etc.

Stress: perceptions of stressors and personal belief system of what stress means to them, coping mechanisms, management competency, etc.

Nutrition: eating enough, eating high/poor quality food, affordability, selection, etc.

Sleep: social media, sleep hygiene, work schedule, late practice, etc.

Athletics: practice/game schedule, strength and conditioning schedule, etc.

Home: family life, support system, etc.

By no means is this list describing *all* of the variables at play, although it covers a lot of bases in trying to grasp the myriad opportunities that we may have in serving our student-athletes. Now, what can we do about all of this?

It's easier than you may realize, and TeamBuildr has been a tremendous asset in allowing myself and our staff to be of better service, and improving upon this daily.

The purpose of this eBook is to share strategies and solutions with strength and conditioning coaches in the collegiate setting, especially those in a relatively grassroots circumstance, and how TeamBuildr can help you to facilitate an efficient, robust and collaborative system.

Now let's get to the good stuff. What does TeamBuildr have to do with all of this? 'High performance' requires consolidation with team sport coaches and athletic therapy staff, as well as being value-based and solutions-driven. We can only do this, successfully (as defined by our personal terms), through developing a systems-based focus.

TeamBuildr has provided our program with a variety of tools to be extremely efficient in our service, although we are only scratching the surface and continuing on the path to discovery of how we can always be better, more consistent, and deliver actionable metrics to our sport coaching and athletic therapy staffs alike.

> *"What can I do, and how can I be as valuable as possible to this school?"*
>
> *"How can I integrate with our sport coaches and athletic therapy staff to help one another in discovering how to access the best outcomes for our student-athletes, both on- and off- the field of play?"*

I had a vision of being resourceful, and efficient in helping our student-athletes to live and lead better lives, using strength and conditioning as a means to do so. This vision involved the creation of our Integrated Performance Team.

Here are a few solutions that we have found to face the challenges that our student-athletes face and better grasp strategies that we can use to overcome such challenges.

Daily Wellness Reporting

Remember, the time spent in the gym is extremely small relative to the time spent outside of it. As such, this should not be the only space that we should be serving if we truly want to be of greater value to our team sports and program as a whole.

We have found that creating a 10-question daily wellness report (adapted from **Derek Hansen)**, has helped us to provide our sport coaches and athletic therapy staff with early information regarding our student athletes, whether a practice day, game day, team lift or simply a day off.

Now, although these reports are subjective, we want to allow this insight to start or build upon a conversation with our student-athletes. This provides all with this insight to have more objective discussions and get down to how we can better provide them with care that they may need and overcome the challenges they have experienced on a specific day.

Daily Wellness Reporting

Daily Wellness Questionnaire

<25 Score: RELAX - Perform 'recovery lift' attached (top left)
25-39 Score: -1 set from all exercises/Omit lane 4
40+ Score: GREEN LIGHT - GO!

Sleep Quality

Last night: 1 = Poor / 5 = High Quality

1

Range: 1 - 5

Sleep Duration

Last night: 1 = <4 Hours / 5 = 8+ Hours

1

Range: 1 - 5

Mood

1 = Poor mood, irritable / 5 = GREAT mood!

1

Range: 1 - 5

Energy

1 = Low energy, very tired / 5 = High energy!

1

Range: 1 - 5

Soreness

1 = Extremely sore / 5 = No soreness

1

Range: 1 - 5

Stress

1 = High Stress / 5 = No stress, happy!

1

Range: 1 - 5

Mental Focus

1 = Not focused, foggy / 5 = Clear, awake, ready!

1

Range: 1 - 5

Hydration

1 = <1 Litres , 5 = 4+ Litres

1

Range: 1 - 5

Nutritional Quality

Prepared today? 1 = Poor quality foods / 5 = High quality foods

1

Range: 1 - 5

Nutritional Amount

Prepared today? 1 = Under-Ate / 5 = Fully followed STING portion guide

1

Range: 1 - 5

COMBINED TOTAL

10

Save   Add Note

Here is a snapshot of our questionnaire, with specific instructions to our student-athletes above it so that it may help to facilitate an effective day via our resources and guidance.

More on Health & Wellness Questionnaires

Post-Practice Fatigue Monitoring
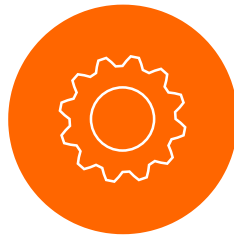
We have added sRPE to team practice sessions which occur 1-2 times per week. Nonetheless with a small frequency relative to days per week, it is still important to assess "workload" for our athletes on any given day.

This, paired with daily wellness reporting and our discussions with our student-athletes, becomes a multi-dimensional assessment of sorts.

Although this may not be ideal for an acute:chronic workload ratio, it provides metrics on the relative intensity week to week to pair with training sessions and practice sessions for insight.

Sports-Science Measurements

We have been fortunate to use VBT devices for objective means of monitoring performance and recovery within our program. Applying sport science allows us to carry analytical value that we can serve as a knowledge translator to transfer to each specific sport team we work with.

We input pre-session jump testing metrics into our custom Evaluation that we send to sport coaches as yet another means of measuring progress, recovery, and wellness. Also important is how this info is used for our athletic therapy staff for athletes in return-to-play protocols; Evaluations are easily accessible via TeamBuildr as reports to assess long-term progress and return to baseline measures.

More on Evaluations

Educating Your Athletes

I feel that this is an extremely important tool for us in the collegiate setting, being able to look at various ways that we can educate our student-athletes on why we are training in the way that we are, and how we are accommodating the academic and sport calendar to improve means of performance in as many facets as possible.

Within our programs, we create 'notes' above specific training days to educate the specifics of the session, the intent required, and how one can take ownership in this specific session.

Intent is everything, and providing all with the education that transfers to their sport in an easily digestible note, helps.

Practice Planning

This is a key component for high performance. Being valuable is taking yourself out of the weight room and onto the field of play. How can you integrate yourself into the team practice setting? Well, it all starts with objective discussion with each sport coaching staff.

What is the coach's plan and goals for the team? How can your expertise better influence the physical variables at play, as well as educate on effective balance of each? Can we prescribe speed, agility, and/or conditioning protocols for the team and integrate into the practice plan? What about warm-ups? The opportunities are endless, dependent on your setting.

This is a discussion that we have, and implement strategies to 'fill buckets' of qualities that may not be expressed during practices. Vertical integration (via Charlie Francis) is one of the most important concepts that I have learned, and continue to assess/apply, in this setting to be of the best value possible to the sport coaching staff. How can we "fill all buckets" to improve not only robustness, but anti-fragility (to thrive in volatile, unpredictable circumstances/sport) in a weekly plan to best prepare?

Practice Planning

We don't have all the answers, which make our role so fascinating, as in everything depends, so long as we are willing to put the pieces in place and assess if they are effective, at all and to what magnitude. You certainly don't know if you don't try, right?

Each team is equipped with the following documents that are linked to their calendars:

- **Warm-Up Guides**
- **Conditioning Protocols**
- **Speed Protocols**

All fit within the respective practice and game calendar to support qualities at minimum effective doses (we test bi-weekly to assess worthwhile changes and effectiveness).

Nutrition, Sleep, & Stress Management Resources

Taking ownership in what you can control is critical. Variables that we can certainly control are in the realm of what we eat, how we sleep, and how we cope with stress. Within TeamBuildr "Documents" section, we provide:

- **Portion Guides**
- **Grocery Lists**
- **Effective Sleep Guides**
- **Stress Management Tools**

It's important to help to tackle obstacles faced for our student-athletes, and equipping all with resources to try and assess what works best for them in order to own each day, one by one, will accumulate in leading a healthy and active lifestyle.

Training "Lanes"
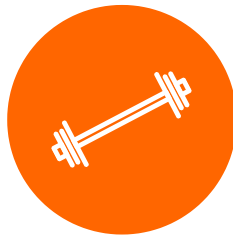
Using 'lanes' in program design is a concept that I learned from Nate Harvey. As we design our programs, it is a helpful tool to break down the components of a session into lanes, so as to 'plug and play' with qualities that you would like to emphasize.

This is also valuable for our student-athletes to see, throughout each training session, the 'lanes' they will be focusing on throughout the specific session, and the intent required.

Not only does this help to objectively separate the session into its components (qualities), but also helps the program to look more aesthetic and organized.

Training "Lanes"

Using 'session breaks', we place 'lanes' with specific intentions into the program. For daily wellness reporting, you will see above that certain 'lanes' are omitted depending on the wellness score that the athlete expresses.

Individualization

Although the collegiate setting is one that is tough to truly individualize for each athlete based on needs, TeamBuildr allows coaches to be more efficient within the software. As you build out your team calendar, you can access individual player calendars within, and make subtle changes thereafter dependent on the athlete.

We simply look at the 'lanes', assess if the athlete may need to be slightly regressed, and plug in exercises that may allow them to be more confident in their efforts. As Joe Kenn has expressed (to paraphrase);

The one quality that you can guarantee to improve in the weight room is confidence.

Individualization

To build on that, I am an advocate of autonomy (within reason) and believe that autonomy is a critical piece in building buy-in and trust for our student-athletes, especially those who may not have the healthiest relationship with the weight room.

We want our student-athletes to be confident and feel better than when they come in after a session, and allowing each at the beginning of a phase to select an exercise (out of 2-3 options) that they feel they can perform with a high quality of intent at that time, guides us to implement that specific exercise into their program.
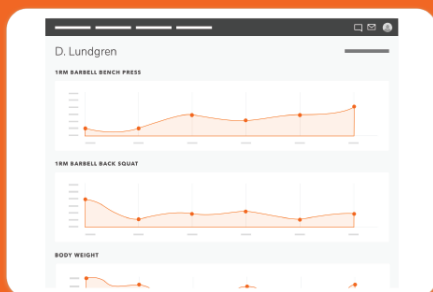
It is important to be driven by the principles and intent.

Allow the athletes to maximize the principle/quality you are looking to build in this phase, and retest the group in time to assess if it worked. You do not want to be married to a specific exercise but rather be robust in your selection of exercises to deliver similar intentional effort.

In Conclusion

If you're looking to save time and energy from your computer and place it where it counts in the areas of human performance development that matter, TeamBuildr can successfully provide you with the tools and resources that you need to create your *own* system as you choose and create tremendous impact.

Used by 5,000 strength coaches. Why?
Because it's affordable and it works.

Try TeamBuildr for FREE for 14 Days