



# When A Leader Gives, Everybody Grows

In the summer of 2004, the Milwaukee Bucks of the National Basketball Association (NBA) were just coming off tough Playoff loss to the Detroit Pistons. I was entering my fourth season as a part of the Bucks Video-Scouting department. As with every off-season, staffing changes occurred. One addition to our team was Jim Boylen, a new Assistant Coach. We referred to him as Coach B.

On his first day, I knew right away that there was something different about him. Although we only spent one season together in Milwaukee, Coach B taught me the following 9 lessons for developing me as a leader:

- 1. Led himself.** Coach B had strong personal values. He exercised, ate well, spent time with his family and went to church. You cannot lead others if you cannot lead yourself.
- 2. Went first.** In my experience at the NBA and Division I level, most coaches tended to avoid the video rooms because they were dark, lacked interaction and were not a lot of fun to be in. Coach B was different. In fact, he was a "video guy" under Rudy Tomjanovich for the Houston Rocket's two championships in the mid-90's long before his stint in Milwaukee. Coach B understood the importance of our department, initiated contact with me on his first day and then continued to check in with me daily.
- 3. Saw my potential.** Coach B saw my spark early and knew that I had the desire to do whatever it took to grow and win. He always said that he saw a lot of him in me, which was a huge confidence boost.
- 4. Knew my dream.** When I was growing up, I had a dream just like every other kid. My dream was to be an NBA basketball player. Between high school and college, it finally hit me that playing professionally was not going to happen, as I could barely jump over a piece of paper. My dream quickly changed to becoming a Head Coach. Coach B made it a point to ask about my dream and remind me about it regularly.
- 5. Shared experiences with me.** In the second week, we started playing one-on-one together before the players arrived. Starting the second month, he invited my girlfriend, Rachel, and me, over to his house for dinner. Both experiences continued for the entire year. If you find somebody great, don't wait.

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- 6. Evaluated my skills.** Like most coaches, Coach B gave me a number of video assignments to test my ability. However, unlike most coaches, he took me on the court to teach me the individual fundamentals the same way that he taught NBA All-Stars Hakeem Olajuwon and Michael Redd. Immediately after, he checked for understanding by having me teach the fundamentals back to him.
- 7. Gave me feedback.** After I finished a pre or post game video clip, Coach B came alongside of me and showed me what he liked, what he didn't like and what I missed.
- 8. Kept me in-the-know.** If you Google the 2004-2005 Milwaukee Bucks team roster, my name is not on it, nor should it be because I was part-time. Even though I didn't get any public recognition, Coach B made me feel significant by constantly asking me what the team could do better and what I saw. He was the first person at this level to see me as a basketball mind.
- 9. Freed me.** Coach B connected me to Tom Crean at Marquette university because Coach B knew that for me to achieve my dream, I had to be active at practice versus sitting in a video room. He gave me a platform to grow but not a ceiling to achieve.

The result. When a leader gives, everybody grows.

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I know many others who have been positively influenced by Coach B adding value to them. Coach B grows by being able to focus on his big priorities. I am convinced that he became a Head Coach at the University of Utah because he poured into the lives of so many people first. Although I decided to stop pursuing my dream to become a Head Coach in basketball, I became a Head Coach in the health & fitness industry. Coach B, thank you for flying with me. Because of you, I have grown and my quality of life has improved.

Now, think about your life. Who helped develop you? How did this person pour into you? Please share your stories.

[Action](#)



**If you find somebody great, don't wait. Use the following questions on the "Develop Others Worksheet" to reflect before, during or after the development of an emerging leader.**

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DEREK DEPREY

# Develop Others Worksheet

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**If you find somebody great, don't wait. Use the following questions to reflect before, during or after the development of an emerging leader.**

1. What is the NAME of the emerging leader that you want to develop?
2. Are you LEADING YOURSELF in the area that the emerging leader is pursuing?
3. What is the POTENTIAL & DESIRE of the emerging leader?
4. What is the DREAM of the emerging leader?
5. What EXPERIENCES will you share with the emerging leader?
6. What SKILLS does the emerging leader need to develop to achieve his or her dream?
7. What ASSIGNMENTS will you give the emerging leader to EVALUATE the skills needed to grow?
8. What positive and constructive FEEDBACK will you provide to the emerging leader on his or her journey?
9. How will you keep the emerging leader IN-THE-KNOW?
10. What date will you FREE the emerging leader?

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