

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION WITHIN THE COACHING STAFF ROUNDTABLE

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Head Coach of the Spanish Men's National Team

ALEKSANDAR DŽIKIĆ

Head Coach of Georgia Men's National Team

Dr. FRANCESCO CUZZOLIN, PhD

Hungarian National Team Player

FILIP MIHAJLOVIĆ

Strength and Conditioning Coach
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MODERATOR: Prof. Dr. Sc. IGOR JUKIĆ

Coach Džikić emphasised at the beginning of the conversation that he always tries to set some standards in his teams, for the players and the staff as well. He highlighted that perhaps this is because of his cultural background, he does not like to praise his colleagues too much but tries to encourage everyone to focus on their work and do it to the best of their ability. He also considers it is important to be as loyal as possible to his colleagues. He stressed the importance of the role of the volunteers, he is always asking them do they want to come to the training sessions, but he always keeps one rule: if someone wants to participate in the training, he/she must do it on court, being an active part of the session. His focal point is that everyone in the changing room can say whatever they want, but as soon as they walk out the door, everyone must follow the same path and there is zero tolerance for "I told you so" comments.

Coach Scariolo mentioned that in soccer the coaching staff usually moves together to the next team, but in basketball, we don't have this pattern. During the discussion, he pointed out the importance of doing the coaching work with loyalty and commitment. At the beginning of his career he felt that communication meant basically talking and then he learned that if you create a good atmosphere around you and people can tell you how they feel, you've done most of the work. So he tries to be a good listener. He recognized that every human being is motivated by a different thing and he takes notice of their body language as well. He believes that everyone in his coaching team can say what they think and feel, even if they think that he was wrong about something, but it is important to do it at the right time and in the right

way. The debate should be open.

Sergio Scariolo emphasised that a coach has to be consistent with himself, he strongly feels it is a priority. He also highlighted the gravity of using the time and taking the time: a coach has to know what is urgent and has to be able to make the right decision at the right time.

Coach Cuzzolin is always looking for high level professional people. He expects that after in depth interviews, the team members will bring their knowledge, their experience on board. From that moment on, they are working together so there must be "full trust". He sometimes finds the main problem with staff members is that they are not able to work together because they are all top level professionals and no one wants to give in. This is why it is difficult to find people who can work together and can bring value to the group.

Filip Mihajlović talked about the difference between working for someone or with someone. According to the coach, people who are working with each other can do everyday jobs without external validation or motivation, on the other hand, working means that the assistant coach just follows what the head coach wants.

Aleksandar Džikić said that he can work effectively and deliver in a club where there is nobody between him and the president. He likes the direct line of communication. He used a restaurant analogy: let's see the club as a restaurant, which belongs to the president, who lets the head coach cook and then some good things may happen.

At the end of the discussion, the coaches shared some tips with the audience.

Dr. Francesco Cuzzolin emphasised that words have meanings so everything a coach says is important and he has huge responsibility. Filip Mihajlović said that finding trust and confidence is relevant and could help to have better relationships with people. Aleksandar Džikić points out that trainers should not complain, because a very large proportion of people are happy when others have difficulties. Sergio Scariolo also finds listening and respecting others a huge deciding factor in success.

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