

DO YOU HAVE THE MINDSET OF A WINNER?

Here's a checklist for "the intangibles," developed by Mark Verstegen and the training staff of Athletes' Performance, that can help you achieve your potential

By Jim Brown

Physical skills are observable and measurable. Emotional skills are observable but hard to measure.

Intangibles, something coaches like to talk about, are hard to observe and to measure, but they are as much a part of sports performance as running, jumping, catching, hitting, or throwing. They are the qualities that cannot be taught, but athletes, coaches, and parents of athletes can discuss them and be aware of them.

At the highest levels of competition, everyone is talented. As a result, intangibles can mean the difference between winning and losing. Intangibles offer a window of opportunity for athletic success to athletes who might not make it on physical talent alone.

Below are ten athletic intangibles. Athletes who possess them are rare and gifted. Their opponents get discouraged when they realize that they need something more than superior talent to win.

A dedicated athlete can do something about each of the ten attributes in the Intangible Skills Checklist.

- * Drive
- * Passion
- * Stability
- * Mental Toughness
- * Positive Attitude
- * Realism
- * Focus
- * Effort
- * Persistence
- * Competitiveness

Complete the checklist (or have an athlete with whom you work complete it) by circling, underlining, or highlighting the number that best matches each mental or emotional attribute (1 is low; 5 is high). Depending on who completes the form, the results can be printed out and discussed with a coach, player, friend, or parent. Write or discuss at least one action plan for each intangible skill that you think needs improvement.

1. Gets the most out of ability

1 2 3 4 5

2. Has a positive psychological influence on teammates

1 2 3 4 5

3. Has a nose for the ball

1 2 3 4 5:

4. Makes big plays

1 2 3 4 5

5. Makes teammates better in game situations

1 2 3 4 5:

6. Anticipates

1 2 3 4 5

7. Is coachable

1 2 3 4 5:

8. Adjusts to game situations

1 2 3 4 5

9. Rises to the occasion

1 2 3 4 5

10. Has a killer instinct

1 2 3 4 5