

Leadership in Cinema



Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program

REMEMBER THE TITANS

Submitted by: Pam McDonald E-mail: pmcdonal@blm.gov
Phone: 208-387-5318
Studio: Walt Disney Pictures Released: 2000
Genre: Drama Audience Rating: PG
Runtime: 114 minutes

Materials

VCR or DVD, television or projection system, Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles handouts (single-sided), notepad, writing utensil

Objective

Students will identify Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles illustrated within Remember the Titans and discuss leadership lessons learned with group members or mentors.

Basic Plot

The year is 1971 and tensions are high in Alexandria, VA. The school board creates an integrated high school, T.C. Williams, by closing one white and one black high school. Coach Herman Boone (African-American) is given the head football coaching position above local Coach Bill Yoast (Caucasian). The film follows the triumphs and setbacks of the team's quest for team togetherness and a state championship.

Cast of Main Characters

Denzel Washington..... Coach Herman Boone
Will Patton Coach Bill Yoast
Wood Harris..... Julius Campbell
Ryan Hurst..... Gerry Bertier
Donald Faison Petey Jones
Craig Kirkwood Jerry 'Rev' Harris
Ethan Suplee Louie Lastik
Kip Pardue Ronnie 'Sunshine' Bass
Hayden Panettiere Sheryl Yoast

Facilitation Options:

Remember the Titans illustrates an abundance of leadership values and principles. Students should have few problems identifying those that correspond to the Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles. The objective is not to identify every leadership principle but to promote thought and discussion. Students should be less concerned with how many principles they view within the film and more concerned with how the principles they do recognize can be used to develop themselves as a leader.

The film can be viewed in its entirety or by clip selection, depending on facilitator intent and time schedules. Another method is to have the employee(s) view the film on his/her own and then hold the discussion session.

Full-film Facilitation Suggestion

When opting for the full-film method, the facilitator should determine a good breaking point near the middle of the film.

1. Review the Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles with students.
2. Advise students to document instances within the film that illustrate/violate the Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles on the handout provided.
3. Break students into small discussion groups.
4. Show students Remember the Titans.
5. Break. (Suggestion: After the team returns from training camp.)
6. Begin the guided discussion.
7. Provide a short synopsis with some “ticklers” to pay attention before beginning the rest of the film.
8. Resume the film.
9. Have students discuss their findings and how they will apply leadership lessons learned to their role in wildland fire suppression. Facilitate discussion in groups that have difficulty.
10. Wrap up the session and encourage students to apply leadership lessons learned in their personal and work lives.

Clip Facilitation Suggestion:

1. Review the Wildland Fire Leadership Value or Principle targeted for discussion. (May be given or ask students to identify the value or principle being illustrated after viewing the clip.)
2. Show the clip.
3. Facilitate discussion regarding the selected clip and corresponding value and/or principle.

4. Break students into small discussion groups.
5. Have students discuss their findings and how they will apply leadership lessons learned to their role in wildland fire suppression. Facilitate discussion in groups that may have difficulty.
6. Wrap up the session and encourage students to apply leadership lessons learned in their personal and work lives.

Mentor Suggestion:

- Use either method presented above. The mentor should be available to the student to discuss lessons learned from the film as well as incorporating them to the student's leadership self-development plan.
- Encouraging individuals to keep a leadership journal is an excellent way to document leadership values and principles that are practiced.
- Suggest other wildland fire leadership toolbox items that will contribute to the overall leadership development of the student.

Hyperlinks have been included to facilitate the use of the [Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program website](#). Encourage students of leadership to visit the [website](#).

Remember the Titans

The following clips illustrate the Wildland Leadership Values and Principles. These are only guidelines and may be interpreted differently by other views; they are presented as a guide for facilitation.

Duty

- Boone given the head coaches position. (Takes charge when in charge.)
- Boone clearly sets expectations by requiring proper dress and punctuality for camp.
- Boone addresses players and clearly states expectations of learning about one another.
- Yoast uses Petey Jones as a defensive player. (Considers individual skill levels and developmental needs when assigning tasks.)
- Boone delegates Gary Bertier to handle cutting Ray Budds from the team.

Respect

- Yoast convinces the Hammond players to play for T.C. Williams. (Take care of your subordinate's needs.)
- Boone resolves conflicts between individuals on the team by requiring they learn about one another—otherwise, 3-a-day or 4-a-day practices.

- Boone mentors Lewis Lastik by encouraging good grades and weekly briefings on progress.
- Yoast addresses Boone when players are reaching their physical limits during practice. “There is a fine line between tough and crazy. . .” (Consider team experience, fatigue and physical limitations when accepting assignments.)
- Boone gives opponent’s defensive analysis to Yoast. (Provide accurate and timely briefings.)

Integrity

- Boone asks the team members to learn about one another. (Know yourself and seek improvement.)
- Boone listens to what Sheryl has to say when she gives her approval of his methods. (Actively listen to feedback from subordinates.)
- Mrs. Bertier asks Julius Campbell not to show discouragement when he visits Gary in the hospital.
- Yoast chooses the difficult right over the easy wrong when he exposes the plot by school board member, Hall of Fame representative and referee to get rid of Boone as head coach.
- Julius Campbell address the team during half time of the state championship game. “We came into this game winners; I’d like to see us go out as winners. “(Accept full responsibility for and correct poor team performance.)

Remember the Titans

Guided Discussion – Possible Answers

1. At the beginning of the film, what physical “sign(s)” is used to show separation between the two high schools? When does the “sign(s)” disappear?
 - Hammond High School t-shirts; segregated buses to camp
 - Disappear when Coach Boone when the team is united after football camp at Gettysburg College; Coach Boone integrates buses--defensive and offensive buses.
2. Racial tension is the main conflict in Remember the Titans. What conflicts do members of the wildland fire community experience? How can those conflicts be mitigated?
 - Race, culture, egos, management, etc.
 - Answers will vary.

3. Coach Boone makes a comment about Jerry Lewis and Dean Martin in the film. How effective is this leadership style? Do you agree or disagree with how the situation was handled?
 - Answers will vary.
4. What players are used as the bridge between the players of the two high schools? Why are these players successful?
 - Lewis Lastik and Ronnie ‘Sunshine’ Bass.
 - Neither player has a bias; they have come from integrated schools.
5. What techniques does Coach Boone use to bring the team together?
 - Integration on the school buses—defensive bus and offensive bus.
 - Presents a motivational speech at Gettysburg.
 - Requires that players interview each other to learn more about each other.
6. What consequence is threatened until team unity is achieved? How effective was this method?
 - 3-a-day or 4-a-day practices.
 - Answers will vary.
7. What were a couple instances in the film that illustrate delegation of authority?
 - Coach Boone has Offensive Coach handle issue on the practice field.
 - Coach Yoast allows players to settle blocking problem during night scrimmage.
 - Coach Boone tells Gary Bertier to handle cutting Ray Budds from the team.
8. What value/principle is Coaches Boone and Yoast alluding to when they make the statements, “I’ll worry about the offense/defense; you worry about the defense/offense.”?
 - Ensure that tasks are understood, supervised and accomplished.
 - Take charge when in charge.
9. Julius Campbell makes the statement, “Attitude reflects leadership.” What is he telling Gary Bertier?
 - Answer will vary.
10. Coach Yoast uses players a couple times to challenge Coach Boone’s authority. What were the challenges? How did Coach Boone handle those situations?
 - Using Petey Jones as a defensive player and later putting Petey in after benching him.
 - He allowed the actions to occur and avoided the temptation to micro-manage or undermine Coach Yoast’s authority.

11. Coach Yoast is presented with losing his Hall of Fame nomination. What is his action? What leadership value/principle does he illustrate?
- Yoast approaches the referee and exposes the plot knowing that it could cost him the nomination.
 - Choose the difficult right over the easy wrong.
12. What characters were used to show the continual struggle for integration and/or team unity throughout the film? Which character has a breakthrough?
- Ray Budds, football player School board member
 - Gary's girlfriend (breakthrough) Hall of Fame representative
13. What leadership value/principle brings the team through when Jerry "Rev" Harris and Gary Bertier are injured?
- Develop your subordinates for the future.
 - Consider individual skill levels and developmental needs when assigning tasks.
14. Which principle does Mrs. Bertier ask Julius Campbell to exhibit when visiting Gary after his accident?
- Don't show discouragement when facing setbacks.
15. If Coach Yoast had taken over head coaching responsibilities, what do you think would have happened?
- Answers will vary.

DUTY

Be proficient in your job, both technically & as a leader.

- Take charge when in charge.
- Adhere to professional standard operating procedures.
- Develop a plan to accomplish given objectives.

Make sound & timely decisions.

- Maintain situation awareness in order to anticipate needed actions.
- Develop contingencies & consider consequences.
- Improvise within the commander's intent to handle a rapidly changing environment.

Ensure that tasks are understood, supervised, accomplished.

- Issue clear instructions.
- Observe & assess actions in progress without micro-managing.
- Use positive feedback to modify duties, tasks & assignments when appropriate.

Develop your subordinates for the future.

- Clearly state expectations.
- Delegate tasks that you are not required to do personally.
- Consider individual skill levels & developmental needs when assigning tasks.

Know your subordinates and look out for their well-being.

- Put the safety of your subordinates above all other objectives.
- Take care of your subordinate's needs.
- Resolve conflicts between individuals on the team.

Keep your subordinates informed.

- Provide accurate & timely briefings.
- Give the reason (intent) for assignments & tasks.
- Make yourself available to answer questions at appropriate times.

Build the team.

- Conduct frequent debriefings with the team to identify lessons learned.
- Recognize accomplishments & reward them appropriately.
- Apply disciplinary measures equally.

Employ your subordinates in accordance with their capabilities.

- Observe human behavior as well as fire behavior.
- Provide early warning to subordinates of tasks they will be responsible for.
- Consider team experience, fatigue & physical limitations when accepting assignments.

Know yourself and seek improvement.

- Know the strengths/weaknesses in your character & skill level.
- Ask questions of peers & supervisors.
- Actively listen to feedback from subordinates.

Seek responsibility and accept responsibility for your actions.

- Accept full responsibility for & correct poor team performance.
- Credit subordinates for good performance.
- Keep your superiors informed of your actions.

Set the example.

- Share the hazards & hardships with your subordinates.
- Don't show discouragement when facing setbacks.
- Choose the difficult right over the easy wrong.

RESPECT

INTEGRITY

Remember the Titans

1. Document film clips illustrating or violating the Wildland Fire Leadership Values and Principles.
2. Discuss leadership lessons learned from the film with group members or mentor.

Duty

- Be proficient in your job, both technically and as a leader.
- Make sound and timely decisions.
- Ensure that tasks are understood, supervised and accomplished.
- Develop your subordinates for the future.

Respect

- Know your subordinates and look out for their well-being.
- Keep your subordinates informed.
- Build the team.
- Employ your subordinates in accordance with their capabilities.

Integrity

- Know yourself and seek improvement.
- Seek responsibility and accept responsibility for your actions.
- Set the example.

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Guided Discussion

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