

A GOAL-SETTING SYSTEM
FOR OFFENSIVE FOOTBALL COACHES

by

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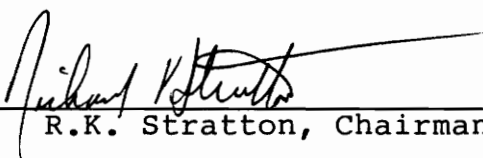
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Introduction

In recent years, several techniques and training strategies for enhancing athletic performance have been identified. Goal setting is one such technique. While much of the research to date that has been performed on goal setting has been provided by organizational and industrial psychology, many of these studies have either direct or indirect implications for sport.

Locke and Latham (1985), among others, have argued that these findings can be generalized to a sports setting. However, while the components of effective goal setting have been identified and transformed into a comprehensive goal setting program that may be used in industrial settings, management by objective, for example, little has been written describing a complete goal setting system that coaches and athletes may use effectively in a team sports setting. The purpose of this paper was to develop such a program using the available research and writings.

Too often coaches set goals such as "having a winning season" in an attempt to use effective goal setting techniques. Such vague statements have generally been shown to be ineffective in producing significant performance enhancing results.

This paper consists of two sections. The first section consists of a brief overview of goal-setting literature. The second section uses the information derived from this review, along with additional literature sources, to suggest how a specific goal-setting program might be developed in a team sport setting. For purposes of illustration, this paper develops a goal-setting program that could be used by a college offensive football coach.

The program addresses such areas as:

1. Goals for motor skill development.
2. Goals for psychological preparation.
3. Goal implementation.
4. Goal evaluation.
5. Strength and fitness goals.

The program focuses not on what specific goals should be set, as this would vary greatly depending on the specific personnel that a coach has available and the level of competition, but rather on suggesting how a coach might effectively use goal-setting techniques to enhance performance levels in the areas mentioned above.

Literature Review

Defining "Goal"

While a number of definitions are possible for the term "goal," the one that is used in this paper is the one used by Locke, Shaw, Saari and Latham (1981). A goal can be defined as "allowing a specific standard of proficiency on a task, usually within a specified time limit." (Locke, et al., 1981, p. 145). Thus, using this definition, goals focus on achieving some standard, such as increasing the amount of weight one can lift, within a specified period of time, such as by the end of the week, or the end of the season. While this definition provides a good framework for the discussion of goal setting, many researchers have found it useful

to make some specific distinctions between two different types of goals.

Outcome vs. Performance Goals

Martens, Christina, Harvey and Sharkey (1981) and Burton (1984) found it useful to make distinctions between outcome goals, which focus on the results of a contest or event, such as winning a game, and performance goals, which focus on improving on one's past performances, such as a receiver trying to catch a greater percentage of passes with his hands rather than against his body. These distinctions are important because the research suggests that performance goals are more effective than outcome goals in enhancing performance levels.

There are two main reasons why outcome goals may not be as effective as performance goals in enhancing performance levels. The first reason is that outcome goals do not allow the coach or athlete to control their success in achieving their goals. Even though athletes are indoctrinated to believe that they will win if they perform well, often this is not true, as winning is the result of many factors, such as opponents' ability, playing

conditions, officials' decisions, and luck, that cannot be directly controlled by the athlete (Lowe, 1971; Martens, 1987). As a result, athletes can never totally control winning regardless of their ability or level of performance. The implications are that because of the limited control that athletes have over the results of outcome goals, these type of goals are not as effective as motivators as are performance goals.

The second reason that outcome goals may not be as effective as performance goals is that they rarely allow coaches to provide athletes with the optimal challenge level needed to motivate them into putting forth maximum effort. Outcome goals optimally challenge athletes only when the competition pits together two performers of equal ability. Thus, for less skilled athletes, winning offers excessive challenge because they typically cannot win (Martens, 1987). Failure to win in this situation only tends to confirm the perception of low ability, thus reducing motivational levels (Roberts, 1984). For highly skilled athletes, outcome goals often lack sufficient challenge to

motivate them. Success comes easily, promoting overconfidence and eroding motivation and performance levels by creating a false sense of security (Martens, 1987). Overconfident athletes are seldom motivated to improve skills or to work hard to prepare mentally or physically for competition (Martens, 1987).

As a result of these factors, researchers have recognized that the solution to the problems created by outcome goals is to view success in terms of surpassing personal performance standards rather than attempting to exceed the performance of others (Maehr, 1984; Martens, 1987; Nicholls, 1984). The flexibility of performance goals allows athletes of all ability levels to raise or lower their goals so that they are continually motivated to perform their best. Moreover, as athletes who are performing their best have the highest probability of winning, coaches and athletes who primarily focus on achieving excellence have the added benefit of increasing their probability of winning. Thus throughout this paper, performance goals are used as examples whenever it is feasible to do so.

Even using performance goals however, it is misleading to think that all goal statements are equally effective in enhancing performance (Botterill 1977; Burton, 1983). In their paper on "The Application of Goal Setting to Sport," Locke & Latham (1985) lists several findings from the Locke et al. (1981) review of goal-setting literature that may have applications to sport settings. These findings include the points below.

Specific Findings from Goal-Setting Research

1. Specific goals are more effective than general or vague goals in altering behavior (Locke, Mento & Katcher, 1978). For example, the statement to "do your best" is ambiguous and does not tell an athlete exactly what is expected of him/her. In contrast to this, telling a quarterback that a three step drop pass pattern should be thrown in 1.7 seconds informs the athlete of exactly what is expected. One key that can aid coaches in setting specific goals is to make them as quantitative as possible.

2. Research has shown that difficult, challenging goals produce higher performance levels

than easy or moderately difficult goals (Locke, 1968). An important point regarding this however is that the athlete must perceive the goal as attainable. Goals that are too difficult will not be taken seriously. However, goals that are too easy will not lead to optimal performance. Effective goal setting involves to a large extent the ability to combine points 1 and 2. It has been repeatedly shown that specific, challenging goals lead to better performance than a goal of "do your best" (Latham & Yulk, 1975; Locke, 1968).

3. Short-term goals can be used as a means of achieving long term goals (Bandura & Simon, 1977). Many times the achievement of a goal involves such a long period of time, or such a large altering of performance levels that the goal seems unreachable. For example, if an athlete wished to reduce the time it took him/her to complete a 40 yard dash from 4.9 seconds to 4.6 seconds, he/she might set subgoals of reducing the time .10 second per month for 3 months, or whatever is realistic. Setting sub-goals helps prevent the end-goal as being perceived as beyond one's reach.

4. Goal setting only works if there is timely feedback showing progress in relation to the goal (Locke et al., 1981). Before feedback is given, performance must be measured. Many times the act of measuring performance itself leads to spontaneous goal setting on the part of the athlete (Saari & Latham, 1982). Athletes must be continually aware of how they are performing in relation to their goal. One way to provide feedback is to use a feedback chart which plots performance across time. If these charts are posted for other team members to see, friendly competitions may develop between individuals leading to further improvements in performance (Latham & Baldes, 1975).

5. Goals must be accepted by the athlete in order to be effective (Erez & Zidon, 1984). Goals that are not accepted by the performer, or that do not have a high degree of commitment will not affect performance. Problems with goal commitment are most likely to occur when goals are difficult or challenging to the athlete. This is not surprising as difficult goals require more effort and entail a greater risk of failure.

In organizational settings several procedures have been used to attain goal acceptance and commitment. These are briefly discussed below as they may be valuable for coaches as well.

Often, simply asking individuals to attempt a certain goal and explaining why the goal is necessary aids in obtaining goal commitment (Latham & Kinne, 1974). Support for the goal by the coach aids commitment as well (Latham & Saari, 1979). Participation by players in the setting of goals may increase commitment to some degree, but in most industrial studies, goals set by superiors are just as effective as goals set by a superior-subordinate combination (Locke & Schweiger, 1979).

Training can aid goal commitment by helping to give athletes confidence in their abilities to reach their goals. This is especially important in that the structure of practice sessions may affect how committed the athletes are to the goals that have been set. It is important that the athletes see a relationship between the time spent practicing certain skills, and their goals. In other words, coaches should plan their practices so that athletes

can see how the practices will help them to achieve their goals.

Selection of personnel is relevant to goal commitment in that people can be selected who are already highly motivated to improve and perform well. Such individuals are usually very receptive to goal-setting programs that challenge them. This is an important consideration when recruiting athletes.

Rewards in industrial settings usually involve money and/or recognition. While money may be used by coaches as a reward at the professional level, it cannot be legally used by coaches at the high school or intercollegiate levels of play. Thus, recognition must be the major form of reward given for goal attainment. This can take a variety of forms from recognition by a coach, to national awards being given to the athlete or team.

6. Goal attainment is facilitated by a plan of action or strategy (Carroll & Tosi, 1973). In athletics this may take the form of training or practice schedules with specific objectives to be accomplished in each practice during the year.

These objectives may involve performance directly, or they may involve preconditions of an effective performance, such as the development of strength or endurance. The plan might also involve developing competence in subcomponents of a task.

For example, the skills that a wide receiver in football might need could be broken down into the task components of running pass routes, catching the ball, running with the ball, and blocking. These tasks could be further broken down into specific types of blocks and catches. Catching the ball could be broken down into catching low balls, high balls, balls thrown into the body, balls thrown behind or in front of the body when running, balls thrown to the left and right, and so forth. Proper techniques could then be developed, and goals set for mastering each technique.

7. Competition, a key element in sports, can be viewed as a form of goal setting (Mueller, 1983). Two distinctive features of competition as a type of goal setting are (a) the goal is the standard of performance of another person or persons, and (b) the goal is dynamic as it changes, typically

by going up, due to the level of performance of other athletes. The result is a high level of performance that constantly improves over time. A good example is track and field records. Thus, it is possible for a coach to use competition to enhance performance levels. An excellent time to do this would be during drills in practice.

8. Finally, there are at least four mechanisms that explain why goal setting improves performance. First, goal setting directs and focuses one's activities (Locke & Bryan, 1969). Second, goal setting regulates one's expenditure of energy (Locke, 1966). The harder the goal, the greater the effort, assuming the goal is accepted. Third, goal setting enhances persistence as effort is continued until the goal or sub-goal is reached (Laporte & Nath, 1976; Latham & Locke, 1975). Finally, goal setting can promote the development of new strategies to enhance performance (Latham & Baldes, 1975; Terborg, 1976). For example, if certain techniques are not effective for an athlete, the athlete might be motivated to modify or develop new techniques that would enable him or her to achieve their goal.

The Goal-Setting System

Before the actual goal setting process is discussed, it should be stated again that, where possible, specific examples will be given regarding possible goals that a coach or athlete might set. However, the specific talents of each player, the system of play, and the level of play, will necessitate changes in the specific goals set. For example, the general outline presented in this paper is applicable to both high school and college coaches. However, the individual goals set by the college coach or athlete would most likely be considerably more difficult than the ones set by the high-school athlete due to the advanced talent level and experience of the college athlete.

Also, the system of play that a coach uses will affect the specific goals set. For example, a coach who runs an offensive scheme in which the option play is not a major component of the offensive attack may practice techniques that are quite different than the ones used by a coach who utilizes option strategies in his/her offense.

A second way the coach's offensive system will affect goal setting is the emphasis a coach places on the pass verses the run balance in the offensive scheme. This will primarily affect the amount of time devoted to developing specific types of skills in players. For example, a team that passes the ball 60% of the time would devote more time, and set goal priorities for a wide receiver learning to run pass routes and developing skill in catching the football, than would a team that runs the ball 60% percent of the time.

Having expanded on those points, the actual goal setting system will now be discussed. This will be broken down and discussed in three stages (a) the planning stage, (b) the implementation stage, and (c) the evaluation stage.

The Planning Stage

By far the largest amount of time spent by offensive football coaches in an effective goal setting program should be spent during the planning stage. Ideally, the planning should start at the end of a season in preparation for the next season. This allows the coach ample time to develop and

evaluate the plans without the time pressures associated with the approaching season. A thoughtfully planned program and practice schedule is important if a coach expects maximal goal commitment from the players

In the planning stage, coaches should identify individual and team needs in the following areas:

- I. Fitness levels
 - A. Aerobic fitness
 - B. Anaerobic fitness
 - C. Strength
 - D. Flexibility
- II. Psychological skills
 - A. Precompetitive
 - B. During competition
 - C. Post-competitive refocusing
 - D. Stress reduction skills
- III. Psycho-motor skills
 - A. Individual skills (by position)
 - 1. Quarterbacks
 - 2. Halfbacks
 - 3. Fullbacks

4. Centers
 5. Guards
 6. Tackles
 7. Tight-Ends
 8. Wide receivers
- B. Team skills
1. Plays to be implemented
 2. Coordination of players during practice

During the planning stage, each of these areas should be broken down into as much detail as possible in regards to the skills the team and players will need to acquire. The following sections examine each of these areas and provides examples as to some specific goals a coach might set, and suggests additional resources that might be consulted. The first area that is discussed is fitness level goal setting.

Fitness level goals. For each type of fitness discussed earlier, aerobic, anaerobic, strength, and flexibility, a specific program, with specific goals for increasing conditioning levels should

be developed. Fitness is one area where individual goals rather than team goals are especially important, as there are vast differences in conditioning levels, particularly at the beginning of a program.

An example of a goal that coaches might set regarding the aerobic conditioning of their players is that on the first day of fall practice, quarterbacks will be able to complete a 1.5 mile run in 9 minutes and 45 seconds or less, lineman in 11 minutes or less, and tight ends in 10 minutes and 15 seconds or less. To achieve these goals, the players would be given a summer conditioning program that they could follow that would allow them to achieve that goal. A complete example of such a summer program is provided in Edwards and Stiggens book (1985) mentioned below.

Those players who did not achieve the goal would be required to perform extra aerobic conditioning either before or after practice until the goal is achieved. Goals such as these should be set for different periods of the year, both in and out of season, for all the types of fitness

mentioned. While it is beyond the scope of this paper to pursue an in-depth discussion of fitness and conditioning programs as they relate to football, the book Total Conditioning-The BYU Football Way (Edwards & Stiggins, 1985) provides an example of a year round, scientifically based, comprehensive program with goals than can be easily adapted to a particular coach's needs.

Psychological skill goals. One area that is overlooked by many coaches in formulating plans for the season is the development of a formal psychological skills training program. This can be easily coordinated with a goal-setting program without using additional amounts of valuable meeting time, as goal setting is a major component of such a program. Four areas need to be addressed in a psychological skills program.

The first is a precompetitive-affect plan to aid each player in achieving an optimal state of mind and level of arousal prior to performing. The second is a competitive-affect plan to be used during an event when adverse situations are encountered. The third is a refocusing plan to

be used after an event to help athletes refocus on the next challenge and not be preoccupied with the results of the last game, regardless of the outcome. The fourth area that should be addressed in a psychological skills program is one that is often overlooked, the development of stress reduction skills for coaches. Coaches, as well as athletes, need to have a plan for handling stress prior to, during, and after an event. Coaches are often asked to make quick and complex decisions under the constraints of time and heavy pressure. Without the psychological skills to handle these pressures on a weekly basis, a coach may not be able to make the best decisions for his/her team, or cope with the results of these decisions after the game is complete (Nelson, 1990).

One goal that might be set for the enhancement of precompetitive affect is the development of a precompetitive psychological warm-up for each player that involves the use of positive imagery and self-talk statements. Each player would develop a specific program that would be used prior to an event to achieve their optimal activation level.

A similar program can be developed for use both during competition and during the post event refocusing period. Such a program can also be developed for a team setting.

For example, the University of Notre Dame has what they refer to as a relaxation period the night before every game. In this hour-long period the players are asked to relax and are led by their head coach, Lou Holtz, in a series of positive imagery scenarios regarding the upcoming game (Holtz & Heisler, 1989).

As with physical conditioning, a complete discussion of the development of a psychological skills program, along with appropriate goals, is beyond the scope of this paper. Two books that develop such an in-depth program are Psyching for Sport by Terry Orlick (1986b), along with its companion volume Coaches Training Manual to Psyching for Sport (1986a). These two volumes cover, in a very practical manner, a program that a coach may use to teach psychological skills, even with little or no experience in these techniques. Each meeting that a coach should have is outlined, and

forms are provided that coaches may use and give to players. These forms can also be used for the first team goal-setting meeting discussed later, in the implementation stage section of this paper.

Individual and team skill development. The focus of this paper will shift to goals for the development of individual and team motor skills. For coaches, this task primarily takes the form of developing effective and comprehensive practice plans.

The first step in developing any type of practice/skill development plan is to isolate the exact skills that need to be learned by each player. During the summer prior to the season, coaches should meet with their staffs and determine the exact offensive plays that will be used in the upcoming season, given the individual talents of their players and the team's offensive system. These plays should then be diagrammed against all defensive alignments the coach expects to encounter during the upcoming season.

When these two steps are complete, each position coach should then use this information to develop

a task sheet of all the skills, regardless of how small, that players at their position should master. This list should also include mental skill areas such as terminology to be learned, defensive alignments to be recognized, play adjustments etc., that are related to motor skill development. If done correctly and completely, the list for each player should be quite extensive.

The reason for taking the time to develop this goals list is two-fold. The first is that many coaches may not realize the variety and number of skills they are asking their players to perfect. By examining these lists, a coach may discover that by eliminating only a few plays they may be able to eliminate several skills that need to be taught. Also, they may discover that there are plays that could be added without having to spend time teaching any additional skills to their players. Many coaches use this concept to diversify their offense. By having several plays with similar skills made to look different to the defense, by using a variety of formations, for example, it is possible to have a diversified offense that presents a variety of

structural looks to a defense, yet have relatively few skills to teach.

It is important to note at this point that while every effort should be made prior to the season to identify all relevant offensive plays and skills, this does not rule out the addition of "special" plays added during the season for particular opponents. These special plays should be a supplement to the basic offense though, and not a substitute for it.

Once goal sheets are developed for every position, the skills that are listed should be prioritized by how difficult they are to learn and how often they are used. This will aid the coach in deciding how much practice time to allot to each skill. Again, at this point coaches may realize that there are certain high-complexity skills that are used infrequently in the offense but are using valuable practice time to master. The plays requiring these skills might be eliminated to allow additional practice time for more frequently used skills.

Having identified the skills each player must learn, how often they are used, and their complexity, the coach must now design drills and progressions to teach each of these skills. In other words, a plan should be developed for achieving the skill acquisition goals. It should be remembered that more than one skill can be taught in a single drill, especially if they are relatively simple skills. For example, the quarterback-center exchange may be practiced at the same time as the quarterback pass drop, thus combining the practice of two skills into one drill. This saves considerable practice time as well as making the drills more realistic, as rarely in football is one skill used in isolation.

It is also important that drills emphasize, as nearly as possible, actual game situations. It does little good to have a quarterback and receiver stand still, 20 yards apart and throw and catch passes if this situation will never occur during a game.

In developing drills, for example, it may be determined from the goal sheets that a receiver needs daily practice on 12 types of catches. Perhaps

catching a ball thrown high and behind the receiver is one of these. It is not enough to assume that receivers will get sufficient practice in this specific catch simply by having balls randomly thrown to them. A specific pattern of drills is necessary if all receivers are to receive sufficient repetitions each day on every type of catch. (See Raymond Berry's Complete Guide for Pass Receivers (Berry & Gilbert, 1982) for more specific information on such a series of drills.)

There are many excellent books, manuals, and video tapes available to aid coaches in designing effective drills and progressions. One such book is the American Football Coaches Association Guide Book to Championship Football Drills (Tolley, 1984). Books such as this can serve as valuable references for coaches during this stage.

After individual drills for motor-skill goals are devised, group and team drills must also be developed. Many offensive skill areas, such as those involved in the passing game, require the involvement of players at many positions, such as quarterbacks, receivers, and even defensive personnel

to practice against. Sufficient time should be spent prior to the season developing practice plans to effectively coordinate the use of these players and drills so that minimal time is wasted and players are "on task" as much as possible. Without expressed goals and priorities, however, it would be impossible to know what "on task" actually is, thus the importance of goal sheets. If this is not done, groups of players will most likely end up "standing around" for considerable periods of time with little or nothing to do or else spend valuable time practicing low-priority skills. This can result in a drop in motivational levels and goal commitment, as well as being a poor use of valuable practice time.

Bill Walsh, former head football coach of the San Francisco 49ers and currently head football coach at Stanford University, suggested, in a lecture in Chicago (1989), that daily practices could be broken down into the following time allotment goals:

1. Fifteen minutes of fundamental skills, such as blocking, that nearly everyone would use (5 minutes each on three fundamentals).

2. Twenty-five minutes on specific skills involved in plays.
3. Fifteen minutes of play installation (explain in classroom first).
4. Fifteen minutes of group drills where the plays that were installed are repeated.
5. Fifteen minutes of 7 on 7 skeleton pass drill (15 passes, linemen work on pass blocking schemes).
6. Twenty minutes on special situation football (20 plays, 10 each on two separate situations).
7. Thirty minutes of team play (10 passes-20 runs).
8. Twenty minutes on the kicking game.

This equals 2 hours and 35 minutes of practice per day. Naturally, this plan would vary depending on the time of year, whether spring or fall practice, in or out of season. But it does present a coach with basic time allotment goals by which effective, practices may be organized.

Finally, a coach should develop a master goals plan listing all plays and skills to be taught,

and on what days they will be introduced and practiced thereafter. Naturally the weekly practice plans can be varied during the season to meet particular needs. By preparing a master goals sheet however, coaches can be sure that all necessary skills and plays are practiced a sufficient number of times. This master plan is also useful after the season in determining if a particular area received enough attention given its performance during the season.

The Implementation Stage

Having identified the team's goals in the previously mentioned areas, and developed a plan for achieving these goals, the coach must now schedule a series of goal-setting meetings with the players. The first of these meetings should include the entire team. In this meeting, general goal-setting information should be given to the team. Much of this information was covered in the first section of this paper. Information such as the value of setting goals, types of goals to set, and the importance of setting performance goals should be discussed. The goal-setting form from

Orlick's (1986a) book would be an excellent outline to use during this meeting.

Athletes should be asked to think about their objectives in playing, from both an individual and team perspective. Coaches may also want to identify some of their personal goals for the team as examples. For instance, a coach may say that he/she has set a goal to complete 60% or more of the passes attempted this year and then explain the steps that have been planned to achieve this goal. General team goals that are given at this point should be phrased as performance goals if at all possible. The players should be given a few days to reflect on this information and formulate potential goals before a second meeting is held.

The second group meeting should have players meet with their position coaches. In this meeting, the individual coaches should be more specific in discussing and identifying goals and strategies, developed in the planning stage, that they have developed for the team and their position. Players should be given the opportunity to provide input as to the relevance and the level of challenge that

they feel these goals provide. The objective of this meeting is to provide both players and coaches with a more in-depth view of the other's expectations and needs. In most cases, it will be impossible to set specific individual goals at this point for each player. Therefore, a series of individual meetings should be scheduled with each player. It is in these individual meetings that individual goals are recorded, specific strategies for achieving these goals are formulated, and evaluation procedures are established. Before and after practice are excellent times for these meetings. Several suggestions are offered at this point:

1. Each player should write down their goals. They can then be placed on a locker or other prominent location to constantly remind the player of his/her goals.

2. Goals should be performance oriented and as specific as possible.

3. The goals should be challenging but attainable.

4. Goals should have a plan for achieving them, and a target date for completion established.

5. Priorities should be established for goals. This will be examined more later. Since it is not possible to achieve all goals at the same time. Each player and coach must determine which goals are the most important and are the most immediate.

Many of the areas discussed in this paper do not require written goals by the players. Rather they are areas that the coaching staff needs to set goals for prior to the season. Thus, while it may seem that a large amount of information is discussed in this paper, much of the work is done by coaches during the off-season rather than by players or coaches during the season or pre-season.

Ideally, no more than two or three goals would be set by each individual player. While there is no empirical evidence suggesting that this is the optimal number, coaches and sports psychologists who have had practical experience in goal setting warn against setting too many goals, especially in any one particular area (Harris, 1984). After these goals are achieved, new ones can be established. In general, coaches should be sure that the information on setting effective goals

discussed in the first section of this paper is adhered to when players set their individual goals.

Follow-Up/Evaluation Stage

As mentioned earlier, goal setting will not be effective unless evaluation and feedback are provided. This is where many goal-setting programs fail. Goals are set, then forgotten about. Individual goal-evaluation meetings should be scheduled periodically throughout the season, perhaps after each game. These meetings need not take large amounts of time if significant goal modifications are not needed. At these meetings, players and position coaches should discuss individual player goals and the progress that has been made toward achieving these goals. Goals and individual practice plans should be evaluated to see if they are realistic, and to examine if they need to be modified because of sickness or injury or other factors.

Coaches should attempt to provide players with some form of systematic goal feedback at these meetings. Coaches could provide each player with a form that lists the player's name and the specific goals that have been established for that player.

The progress towards these goals should then be evaluated using some sort of objective system. Many coaches rate players on a percentile scale for each time a skill is performed. That is, if a skill is performed 10 times, and performed correctly 6 times, that player would receive a grade of 60%. These evaluation cards could be completed after each competition and posted for players to see, perhaps promoting some friendly competition.

There should also be periodic evaluation periods both during and after the season for coaches to examine team goals in all the areas mentioned in this paper, such as how effective general practice plan goals have been. Time pressures prevent continuous review throughout the season of all areas mentioned in this paper, however each area should at least be reviewed to some degree at mid-season to examine if the stated goals and plans for achieving them are still appropriate for the current team. A comprehensive, in-depth review of all areas should also be performed annually examining the specific goals and the general goal-setting system from the past season to explore possible

modifications that might be implemented in preparation for the upcoming season.

Summary

Goal setting is one of the most effective techniques developed for enhancing performance. This paper has presented an outline of how the principles of goal setting might be applied to offensive football.

As teams and situations vary greatly, it was not the focus of this paper to provide exact goals and examples for every situation, but rather to suggest how the principles of goal setting might be adapted to an offensive football setting, and to suggest resources that a coach might use in adapting this program to fit his/her particular needs. Goal setting enables coaches to be sure that appropriate amounts of time are spent on all areas relating to football, and that the time spent on these areas is maximized. By using the principles outlined in this paper, a coach can begin to apply the powerful techniques of goal setting to their

teams practices and games, and begin using it to effectively to enhance team performance levels.

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