

Don't Confuse Activity with Productivity

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In both Coaches Outreach conferences this summer we had a discussion time for coaches and spouses to share problems they have encountered in coaching. In both sessions it seemed like the most discussed subject was *coaches spending too much time away from their families*. The people who brought this up were very understanding about the great time demand coaching places on a family. Their concern was with Saturday and Sunday meetings that make family life impossible during football season. These marathon meetings get even longer when we confuse activity with productivity. We work harder when we should be working smarter.

Our coaching staff does something that might help you capture some valuable time for your family during football season and might even make your staff more productive: *We do not meet as a staff on Sundays*. This is a decision I made in my first year as a head coach fifteen years ago. I wasn't even sure how we were going to get the job done at first; it was just a commitment I made to God and to my family. Here are some observations we have made over the years as a result:

1. God will bless your work if you put him **first** (Proverbs 16:3)
2. We make better decisions by taking work home because we're not distracted by all the things that happen at school.
3. Cutting down on our time at school causes us to be more time efficient and better organized.
4. We are less fatigued on Monday and Tuesday (those killer days) as the season progresses.
5. We accomplish more by taking work home and working independently.
6. Heated arguments between stressed-out coaches are reduced.
7. Our coaches and their spouses are more committed to our "coaching mission" because they know we are making a commitment to them.
8. Coaches from other schools have started inquiring about this practice and have started "breaking tradition."

Head coaches, I know how difficult it is to "break tradition" in this profession. Assistant coaches, it will take courage to approach your head coach. This idea may not even fit you at all. But before you make a decision, and whatever format you choose, give some consideration to these three things:

1. Our spouses should be able to trust us to be good managers of our time at work – and to keep our priorities in line.
2. We can usually work smarter, not harder.
3. Don't confuse activity with productivity.

It's a tough decision – and one I have not regretted.