

## **JON GORDON-THE POWER OF A POSITIVE TEAM**

No one creates success alone. We all need a team to be successful.

It's challenging to work towards a vision and create a positive future. It's not easy to pursue greatness and do what has never been done before.

Positive teams are not about fake positivity. They are about real optimism, vision, purpose and unity that make great teams great. Positive teams confront the reality of challenging situations and work together to overcome them.

Negative teams talk about and create problems but they don't solve them.

The future belongs to those who believe in it and work together with other positive people in order to create it.

The more you energize people in your workplace, the higher your work performance. Positivity leads to winning.

Positive teams happen when team members invest their time and energy to create a positive culture; work towards a shared vision with a greater purpose; work together with optimism and belief and overcome the negativity that too often sabotages teams and organizations.

Positive teams commit to the mission and to each other. Instead of serving themselves, they serve one another.

People on positive teams have a lot of belief in each other, a lot of love for each other and a lot of desire to accomplish something great together.

Culture is a living and breathing essence of what a team believes, values and does.

Culture isn't just one thing. It's everything. Culture drives expectations and beliefs. Expectations and beliefs drive behaviors. Behaviors drive habits. And habits create the future.

You must create a positive culture that energizes and encourages each other, fosters, connected relationships and great teamwork, empowers and enables your team to learn and grow, and provides an opportunity for you to do your best work.

Your culture is not just your tradition. It's the people in the locker room who carry it on.

You are creating culture every moment of every day by what you think, say and do.

Culture is not static; it's dynamic. You can change it by what you say. You can elevate it by what you think. You can improve it by what you share.

There's a lot you can't control, but you can control how much time, energy and care you invest in your culture.

Focus on the root and not the fruit. The fruit is just a by-product of how well you invest in the root. If you focus on the fruit and ignore the root, the tree will die.

Each day you are broadcasting to your team how you feel; the emotions you feel are contagious and affect the people around you. Are you going to be the germ or are you going to be the big dose of Vitamin C?

Great teams are collectively positive and positively contagious. It means that, from the heart, you simply broadcast the love, passion, positivity and purpose that you have for your team.

It's your team and your culture. Own it. Don't expect someone else to create it. Keep in mind that the stronger you are on the inside, the more you can withstand the outside forces.

To create your culture you must identify what you stand for and what you want to be known for.

What do we want to be? They asked what kind of culture they want to create. What kind of team did they want to be? What did they want to accomplish together? Know what type of team you want to stand for, what kind of team you want to be, and then have your culture

Have a shared vision; as a team you must continually point each other towards the "North Star". This will guide us when necessary.

Research shows that people are most energized when they are using their strengths for a bigger purpose, one that goes beyond themselves as individuals.

Purpose-driven goals. It's not the goals that will make you successful. Instead, it's your commitment to the process, your growth and your purpose that drives you to reach these goals, that will determine what you accomplish.

Numbers are to your purpose what a scale and measuring tape are to a diet. It's an indicator of how you are doing.

Combine a vision and a mission statement together. Almost every organization has a mission statement today, but only the great ones have people who are on a mission.

We get burned out because we forget why we do it.

The telescope and the microscope: you need to frequently pull out your telescope to remind yourself and your team where you are going and why you are going there, and you'll need to look through the microscope daily in order to focus on what matters most and follow through on your commitments.

I want to encourage you to write down your vision and purpose and find ways to keep them alive.

Hard hat: tangible reminder of their purpose.

## ONE WORD

Everyone means *Everyone*; it includes the people who directly influence the people on your team. If you are a sports team, it is recommended that the parents of the athletes get on the bus. When everyone who influences the team gets on the bus together with a shared vision and greater purpose, the team becomes an unstoppable force of momentum and positive energy.

I've found that great teams are not only positive in the beginning but throughout the journey. The key to your season will be if you stay positive together through the losses and throughout the year. If you want to accomplish great things together, you must believe together.

“Let's be legendary. Let's be great.”

Each individual contributes to the collective optimism, belief and positivity of a team. To be a positive team, all of your team members must cultivate optimism within themselves and share it with each other.

We all have a positive vs. negative battle going on each day. The more you feed the positive dog, the more it grows, and the more the negative dog becomes smaller and weaker.

I've learned to talk to myself instead of listening to myself. Too often we listen to ourselves and hear all the complaints, self-doubt, fear and negativity that lead to unhappiness, failure and unfulfilled goals.

Many of your negative thoughts come from fear, and fear is a liar.

Instead of talking about what you have to do, start acknowledging what you get to do.

Life is a gift, not an obligation

Anyone pursuing anything worthwhile will fail and fail often. In actuality, we aren't failing, we are becoming

Learning Opportunity Stay Strong

Everyone who has been successful has experienced misfortune in their lives. They all turned misfortune into fortune. Keep your head up. Look for an opportunity and the good that is coming your way.

People, companies and teams that thrived during the Great Recession were the ones that embraced the change.

Rookies create their good ole days right now. Think like a rookie, forget the past and create your good ole days right now.

The fight with this named Murphy.

Remember, it's never about the circumstances. It's always your state of mind and your thinking that produces how you feel and respond.

Ultimately, being a positive team is all about working with faith in a world filled with cynicism, negativity and fear. Fear believes in a negative future, while faith believes in a positive future.

Tell your team that if you all believe that your best days are behind you, that's the truth. If you believe that your best days are ahead of you, then that's the truth.

## **The Positivity Experiment**

Coach Kate focused all of her energy on building up her players and creating a positive environment. Instead of halftimes filled with corrections and blame, she gave feedback about what was going right and how they could use that to have a stronger second half. At the end of every single game, win or lose, they had a celebration circle where the players gave each other positive shout-outs. It wasn't long before the team began to mirror this approach with each other, and small huddles started to form on the field, where they would problem solve for themselves. Huddles began to form at practice, too. The players were encouraging each other with positive feedback and direction, and they were getting excited about it. Eventually, they broke every team record that season despite spending less time on drilling skills, taking more rest and cutting out Saturday practices.

Share your belief together as a team. Talk about it openly.

Since a team will have to overcome negativity from the outside, which is hard to do in and of itself, they then can't allow negativity from within to weaken them.

One of the biggest mistakes teams make is that they ignore the negativity within their team.

If a player or coach acted like an energy vampire, the team took his picture from the media guide and put it on the wall

**I have found that the best way to address the problem of negativity on a team is at the culture level, where you set the expectation that people who drain the energy of others will not be tolerated. You talk about the detrimental impact of negativity. You explain that one person can't make a team, but one person can break a team. You talk about what a great culture looks like and how you want everyone to be a positive contributor to it. You make it clear what a great team looks like, and that it doesn't look like a bunch of complainers and blamers. You explain that it's unacceptable to be a source of negative energy that hurts the team. You build a culture so positive and strong that negativity can't breed, spread and grow.**

When you feed the positive and create a culture where negative people are uncomfortable being negative, they will either change or walk off the bus themselves. However, the first step in dealing with an energy vampire is not to remove them, but to transform them. The first steps should always be to listen with empathy and love, try to understand, and to coach and help them transform. Don't sit in the dark with them. Instead, turn on the light.

*Energy Vampires welcome! Expect to be transformed!!!*

If transforming the negativity doesn't work, you must remove it. This doesn't mean that you don't care about the negative person, it means that you care about everyone else. You must weed out the negative and feed the positive.

Know that one of your key roles as a team member is to create an environment where you and your team can do your best work.

When you are moody, people around you don't know what to expect from you and this causes them to lose trust in you.

To build a great team, you and your team members need to show up every day with a positive attitude.

Be the kind of consistent team member and team that everyone knows they can trust and count on.

The "No Complaining" rule says that you are not allowed to complain unless you have a solution to your complaint. After all, if you're complaining, you're not helping. Complaining causes you and your team to focus on everything except being your best. It's a really simple message and rule that guides you and your team to show up each day with a positive attitude and share positive energy instead of being energy vampires, complainers and blamers.

Positive teams are going to disagree. Conflict is necessary to have a strong team. All positivity and no conflict means that no one is asking the difficult questions. Having difficult conversations is key to being a great team. Constructively criticizing a team member doesn't make you a bad team member. Don't let your ego get in the way when your desire is to produce something great together. I've found that positive conflict makes the team stronger if there is trust, respect and love. The problem is not the fighting. The problem is the lack of connection and relationship among the team members.

When team members are connected, have trust, feel emotionally safe, and feel like their ideas are being heard, they are able to do their best and most creative work.

One of the biggest complaints that I receive from leaders is that their teams aren't connected. They have a bunch of people who usually focus on themselves, their personal goals, their social media followings and their egos. People who put themselves and their projects before the team don't build great teams.

Communication starts the process of building a connected team. Without great communication, you don't have the connection and trust to build a strong relationship.

**Where there is a void, negativity will fill it. When there is a void in communication, we assume the worst and act accordingly. Fill the void through communication.**

**Communication is often the last thing you want to do, but it's the most important thing you must do. Make time for one on one communication. Strong individual relationships help build a stronger team.**

The research shows that when we are busy and stressed, we activate the reptilian part of our brain, which is associated with fear and survival. We are not thinking about using our teams and connecting with others. As a result, we focus on what is urgent rather than what matters. We don't make the time to communicate and connect. Scientifically, this is called *cortical inhibition*. When you are busy and stressed, your reptile, in essence, eats your positive dog, and it's what happens when team members fail to make time to connect with their teams. The good news is that research shows that we have a quarter-second to override the reptile within the positive dog. We can take a deep breath when we realize we are getting stressed and find something to be thankful for in that moment. The research shows you can't be stressed and thankful at the same time.

The best communicator is not the person who is the most eloquent speaker, but the person who has the ability to listen, process the information, and use it to make decisions that are in the best interests of the team. To be a great team, you need to be people who listen to each other and learn from each other.

As a team, you don't just want to communicate. You want to communicate to connect. Everyone wants to have a committed team, but you will never have commitment without connection.

You may not have the most talented people on your team, but if you are a connected team, you will outperform many talented teams that lack a close bond.

If you really know someone, shouldn't you know about what's important to them?

Each person had to learn about the family of the team members they picked from a hat. They had to call the player's family members and interview them, and also learn about their teammate. Not doing this exercise is not an option.

Too many teams don't make the time to invest in relationships and team building. Exercises that cause people to be vulnerable, transparent, and authentic cause the walls of pride and ego and selfishness to come crumbling down and lead to strong connections and meaningful relationships.

Team building should be consistently built into the team practice schedule. You have to be intentional about it throughout the year.

If you love your team, you won't give up on them. If you are committed to each other, you will fight for each other, not with each other. I've found that the grittiest teams are the most connected and committed to each other.

Every great team has team members who commit themselves to the team.

When each person plays their note and commits to the team, they are able to create great music together.

When *we* comes before *me*, you become the person and team you are meant to be.

Commitment recognizes commitment

When you focus on helping others improve, you improve. Great teammates serve their team members.

Great teams care about their teams. If you don't care about your team, you won't be great.

A carpenter just builds something, but a craftsman puts in more time, energy, effort and care to build a work of art. They care more, and because they care more, they invest more. Positive teams are made up of craftsmen and craftswomen who care more, and as a result, they create more masterpieces.

Your team knows if you care or not. You can't hide it and you can't fake it.

Why were the Spartans great? It's because their culture valued the tactics and mind-set necessary to fight together as a single-minded unit. The individual warrior saw it as his job to keep his shield up and to stay alive so that he could stay in the fight.

Great teams are made up of people who pursue excellence and are always looking for ways they can learn, improve and grow.



Great teams aren't born. They are made up of individuals who are always striving to get better, who pursue excellence and make their team members better.

Get 1% better every day.

Row the Boat!

Seal Team Six: They look for people who is not just someone who performs at the highest level but who, while performing at the highest level, also looks out for his team members, making them better in the process.

If you want to be the elite of the elite, you have to be a transformational positive team member, someone who makes others better in the process.

Two words are the most important keys to making your team better: love and accountability.

You need to let your teammates know that you love them. If you love them and they know it, you will earn the right to challenge and push them.

Rules without relationships lead to rebellion. Rules are fine, but without love and relationships, team members will rebel, burn out or disengage.

If teammate truly love each other, they'll want to be their best for each other. I've found that the more team members love each other, the fewer rules they need.

The best teams have a combination of love and accountability. You and your teammates are united by something you love to do together. You love each other and hold each other to a higher standard, and you will achieve great success. You don't cover for each other; you hold each other accountable, not to rules but to a standard of excellence.

If someone is not giving maximum effort, you have a crucial conversation with them and challenge and love and encourage them through the process. But professionally, you don't allow your team to be comfortable with the status quo. Discomfort leads to growth, so you keep raising the bar and pushing your team out of their comfort zone while pursuing excellence and growth together.

**LOVE TOUGH**

**LOVE TOUGH=STRONGER TOGETHER**

If you hit someone with constructive criticism, they are less likely to be open to hear it if they don't think you care about them.

Positive Discontent: Whether they succeed or fail, they are always looking to get better. They are never satisfied because they know improvement is always possible.

Tell The Truth Mondays: As a team, you must be able to communicate clearly during emotionally charged conversations and challenging circumstances. The way you do this is to expect that difficult conversations are part of the process of becoming a great team, and as a team, you decide the rules of engagement. This is how we handle conflict. This is how we stay calm when having an emotionally charged conversation. Don't run from the difficult conversation. Don't be scared of the feedback..

Teams must understand the difference between disagreement and dislike.

If your team just wants to be liked and don't have difficult conversations, then you will never grow to love each other. It's through challenges, conflict, vulnerability, transparency and connection that great teams are refined and formed.

It's easy to be average, it's hard to be a great team. But when things aren't going well and issues arise, that is when great teams come together. Through connected relationships they commit to their vision and purpose and take care of each other and execute together.

Meraki: A Greek word that means to do something with love, soul and creativity; to leave a piece of yourself in your work; to leave something behind.

## **ARE YOU A REAL TEAM?**

- People who are just on a team focus on their own goals
- People who are part of a real team focus on team goals first and then individual goals second
  
- Individuals just on a team are committed to getting better and improving themselves
- Individuals who are part of a real team are not only committed to self-improvement, but they are also committed to making each other and the team better
  
- People just on a team think about how the team can serve their desires
- People who are part of a real team desire to serve the team
  
- When people are just on a team, communication isn't a priority
- When people are on a real team, communication is essential to build trust, commitment and teamwork
  
- On a team, each individual's time is more important than the team
- A real team member makes time with the team a priority
  
- On a team, trust, love and respect are not often discussed or cultivated
- A real team focuses on building trust, sharing love and showing respect
  
- On a team, people fight, which hurts the team because members don't have trust and love
- On a real team, members also fight, but the fighting makes the team stronger because they have trust and love. They grow from their disagreements
  
- On a team, not everyone is on the bus
- On a real team, everyone is on the bus and with a shared vision, focus and purpose
  
- On a team, there's a lack of leadership
- On a real team, there are strong leaders who develop other leaders
  
- People just on a team have egos and want to be great
- People who are part of a real team also have egos and want to be great, but they give up their egos to serve their team and a bigger cause in order to be truly great

