

STANDARDS BEFORE STRATEGY WORKSHOP GUIDE

“Culture is built by what we allow and what we expect. Before we run plays, we define our standards.”

– Coach TJ Rosene

WORKSHOP OVERVIEW

- **Length:** 45–60 minutes
- **Ideal Timing:** Pre-season, after tryouts, or as a mid-season reset
- **Who Attends:** Entire team + coaching staff
- **Format:** Discussion-based, collaborative, coach-facilitated

WORKSHOP GOALS

1. Help your team **define who they want to be**—on and off the court
2. Create a **short list of shared behavioral standards**
3. Give players **ownership of the culture**
4. Establish a **framework for accountability** throughout the season

COACH PREPARATION CHECKLIST

- Whiteboard or large poster paper
- Markers or post-it notes
- Pre-think 2–3 values important to you (don’t share upfront)

WORKSHOP AGENDA

1. Warm-Up Question (5–7 min)

- Kick things off with a quick reflective prompt to get players thinking:
 - “What makes a team great—not just good?”
 - “What’s the best team culture you’ve ever been part of?”
 - “What kind of team would you want your little brother or sister to play for?”
- Let 2–3 players share.

STANDARDS BEFORE STRATEGY WORKSHOP GUIDE, CONTINUED

2. Identity Discussion: Who Do We Want to Be? (10–12 min)

“Before we talk about systems and strategy we need to decide what kind of team we want to be this year—how we show up, how we compete, how we treat each other.”

- Ask:
 - *What do great teammates do—daily?*
 - *How should we respond to adversity, refs, mistakes?*
 - *How do we want to treat each other?*
 - *What do we want opponents to say about us after we play them?*
- Write answers on the board. Capture phrases, values, and actions (e.g. “support each other,” “respond with poise,” “hold each other accountable”).

3. Narrow It Down: Choose Our Standards (15–20 min)

Once the list is built, it’s time to narrow it down to a manageable number of the top standards to guide the team. We recommend 3-5 standards.

- **Steps:**
 - Group similar responses together (e.g. “stay positive” and “encourage each other” = *Positive Energy*).
 - Vote or come to consensus on top 3–5 standards.
 - Write them clearly and simply (“sticky language” that is 1–4 words each).
- **Examples of Team Standards**
 - Championship Habits Daily
 - Habits Over Hype
 - Joy in the Grind
 - Lead with Body Language
 - Lift the Room
 - Play with Gratitude
 - We Before Me
 - Serve Before Self
 - I Am Because You Are (Ubuntu)
 - Greatness Through Service
 - Grateful, Not Entitled
 - Choose Thankfulness Daily
 - Do the Hard Right
 - Hold Each Other High
 - Own Your Role
 - Fall. Rise. Repeat.

STANDARDS BEFORE STRATEGY WORKSHOP GUIDE, CONTINUED

4. Define the Standards (10–15 min)

- Now, define what each standard **looks like in action**.
- Ask:
 - *“What does it look like to Hold Each Other High in practice, on the bench, or when we’re tired?”*
 - *“What does Own Your Role mean when you’re not playing as much as you hoped?”*
- Write 1–2 real-life behaviors for each.

5. Commit Together (5–7 min)

- Communicate the importance of buy-in:
“These aren’t just words on a wall. We are agreeing to live these every day. That means we’ll hold each other to them—with love, consistency, and accountability.”
- Invite each player to sign a poster, dry-erase board, or team pledge sheet that lists your 4–5 standards.
- **Optional:**
 - Do a team chant or huddle to close
 - Take a photo of the standards and share with parents

POST-WORKSHOP TIPS

- **Print the Standards** and post them in the locker room, gym and/or team app
- **Include them on practice plans** or team talks
- **Revisit them weekly:** ask *“Which one did we live out this week? Which one slipped?”*
- Use them to **redirect behavior** in practices or games