

Recruiting Coaches

When you're recruiting new coaches to Coaching Boys Into Men (CBIM), make sure to present yourself and the program in the best way possible. These recommendations will help you prepare for your initial meeting with a coach and provide you with strategies for establishing a productive relationship with coaches.

Connecting with Coaches

Coaches are busy, so it is important to respect their time and to be patient and flexible with them. If they aren't responding to emails or phone calls, try to make yourself available to talk with them in person. Don't shy away from popping in on them at school, catching them before or after practice, or in their office. It is harder to ignore someone if they are there in person! If they turn you down, be sure to thank them for their time and consideration.

SCRIPT:

- ✓ "Hi coach, I'm _____. I've been trying to reach you about the Coaching Boys into Men program. I know you're busy, but can I have just a minute of your time to tell you about the program? If you're pressed for time now, could we set up another time to meet? I'm happy to work around your schedule. It'll only take a few minutes to show you what the program is and discuss if you'd be interested in doing it."

Presenting the Program

Before meeting with a coach, brainstorm with the AD or others on the best way to introduce the program to them. Explore if there is someone that is an advocate of CBIM who has a prior connection with the coach that can help you pitch the program.

Recognize the Need for a "Sales Pitch"

CBIM is manageable: for the first meeting with the coach, it's best to show them that the program is easy to use by only bringing the card series with you. Having just the card series in your hand shows how manageable the program really is. Allow the coach to flip through the card series to get a feeling for what is expected of them. Save the full toolkit and other materials for the training.

SCRIPT:

- ✓ "This is the whole program and it fits in the palm of my hand."

Focus on what they care about, their athletes: when building your relationship with coaches (schools, and ADs), focus on selling them on the benefits of the program. The key is to emphasize what they already care about: their athletes. You might find that some of them don't have an interest in the topic or don't see how it's related to their jobs. The most effective way to address this in your pitch is to make an emotional appeal such as highlighting a relevant local story.

SCRIPT:

- ✓ "The value of this program is that it will help young men avoid unhealthy or abusive behaviors in their relationships that could potentially change the trajectory of their lives." (cont.)

- ✓ After highlighting a locally relevant story (or other well-known story): “This is the type of thing we are trying to avoid, the type of thing you can have an influence on.”

CBIM is a leadership program: it’s also a good idea to reinforce that the program is not just about coaches teaching their athletes about healthy relationships, but also about empowering them to respond to abusive behaviors, model healthy behavior as leaders in their school and communities, and become good men.

SCRIPT:

- ✓ “This is about helping boys become role models in their school”
- ✓ “It is just another tool for you in what you are already doing: building good character in your athletes”

Handling Uncomfortable or Disinterested Coaches

Coaches are used to talking about sports, not necessarily about harassment, assault, and relationships. It is important to be honest and acknowledge that presenting this material may be uncomfortable for them at first and speak to those concerns. Listen to the coach and be prepared to address any obstacles they may bring up.

SCRIPT:

Coach: “We already talk to our athletes about this stuff.”

You: “That’s great! But are you teaching your athletes about how to influence their peers?”

Coach: “My athletes are good kids, they don’t need this program.”

You: “That’s great to hear! However, this program is not just about teaching them what healthy relationships are but empowering them to intervene when they see abusive behavior.”

Coach: “I’m not sure I am comfortable with presenting this information. I am no expert.”

You: “I understand. That is why each training has a sample script you can follow and I am also here to support you present what can be uncomfortable or difficult conversations.”

Coaches may express any number of reservations about the program and/or the content. It is important to try to be prepared to address these issues but recognize you may need to continue to address reservations ad hoc.

Communication and Logistics

Presenting the program and getting a buy-in from the coaches is only half the battle. It is also important to be organized and set up a system for ongoing communication between you and the coach. Here are some best practices for keeping in touch with your coaches:

1. Intake Form

Start your communication with your Coach on the right foot by having them complete an intake form – a brief one-page form for you or the coach to fill out with the following key information:

- ✓ Contact information
- ✓ Practice times
- ✓ Best time to reach them
- ✓ Preferred contact method

It is helpful to receive this information as soon as the possible, preferably at the initial meeting with the coach or at the Coaches' Clinic Training. It allows you to maintain contact them when it's most convenient for their schedule.

2. Become Organized

Create a spreadsheet or other system to keep notes and contact preferences for each coach you work with. This allows you to easily find contact information for each coach as well as allowing you to share information with others.

3. How to Communicate

When developing a relationship with a coach, it is ideal for the ADs to make the first contact – typically done by email – with a follow up from you. If the coach doesn't reply, then try another contact method such as a phone call or showing up in person. Once you have had the first meeting with them, in future communications always try to contact the coaches via their preferred method.

It's best to try to encourage verbal communication (phone, in person) so you can better gauge their comfort with the program and content by hearing their voice. Always meet the coaches where they are and honor their preferred communications method even if it is not ideal.

Be prepared for coaches to not respond. If this is the case, try another contact method including trying to meet them in person before or after practice.

REMEMBER

- ✓ Always be respectful of their time and schedule. While it is important to make sure you are having regular contact with the coach, exercise caution so they don't feel overwhelmed.

4. Always Be Closing (ABC)

Remember the sales pitch? Keep this in mind when communicating with your coaches with the sales mindset of 'always be closing.' You always want to get the next thing taken care of, whether it's a soft or hard commitment to complete the next step in the implementation journey. Work on getting the next step scheduled and taken care of right then and there (i.e. filling out intake form or schedule a training).

5. Provide Your Contact Information

Make sure coaches know you are available to them! Let coaches know how you can support them, whether it is co-presenting difficult topics, or conducting the program evaluation. Certain aspects of CBIM require more advocate support than others; ask coaches what they can foresee needing to partner with you on for support. Provide them with your contact information, preferred contact method, and availability.