

John Calipari



University of Kentucky Men's Basketball Coach – 2010-present
Head Basketball Coach since 1989

Accolades – 1 National Championship (2012), 6 Final Four appearances (with 3 different schools), induction into Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame

Vision – win the hearts and minds of his players

Mission/Purpose – help his players reach their dreams through a “player first” mentality

Motto – “...it's never a matter of how far you have fallen, but instead it's about how high you bounce back.”

Team Slogan – “refuse to lose”

Fundamental Principle – Players come first.

Coaching Philosophy/Style – Coach Calipari expects his players to compete with passion and heart and for one another; he does not care where they came from or what their past accolades are – if they don't buy into and play his brand of basketball, they don't play. He's been accused by his assistants for often wanting it more than his players. His coaching style is often seen as abrasive, as he will yell at his players, call them names and stretch them; he is often polarizing with opposing head coaches because of his style.

Recruiting Approach – Coach Calipari recruits the best of the best and then gets more out of them by pushing them beyond what they thought they could do. He wants players who are hungry to play at the next level, and has had 39 of his players selected into the NBA draft. His recruiting philosophy is one of honesty – he has a “no guarantees” approach, and is straightforward with his recruits – with hard work, discipline and effort, you can play at the next level and realize your dreams.

Connection with Players – Calipari sees himself as a father figure to his players; he takes a lot of pride of nurturing those given over to his care and commits to doing right by them. Many of his former players credit Calipari for teaching them that it is ok to love and cry if you are passionate about (and believe in) what you do.

Calipari's Role Models – Joe DeGregorio, his Division II college coach at Clarion State. Larry Brown, the first head coach he worked under at the University of Kansas. Calipari is known for never forgetting where he came from, being the hardest working coach in America and giving back through charities. Calipari credits his parents for being loving and humble, and pushing him to pursue his dream of playing (and ultimately coaching) basketball. They ensured he was given the opportunity by sending him to Five Star basketball camp.

Dawn Staley



University of South Carolina Women's Basketball Coach – 2008-present

Head Women's Basketball Coach since 2000

Coaching Accolades – National Champion in 2017; named head coach of USA national team in 2017

Former International, ABL and WNBA basketball player/star

Player Accolades – Gold Medalist in 1996, 2000 and 2004; voted to Naismith Hall of Fame in 2013

Vision – It's going to hurt, it's going to be uncomfortable, but it's good for you.

Mission – treat every player the same – focus on mental and physical development – basketball IQ conditioning, court vision, fundamentals, decision-making / push them to push themselves

Mottos – “A disciplined person can do anything.” / “Dare to do what you don't want to get what you do want.”

Goal – get better every year

Coaching Philosophy – Coach Staley's passion for the game of basketball (“Basketball was – is – my life.”) has carried over into her coaching. She was lured into coaching because of her desire to win, stretch herself and to challenge others and be challenged.

Connection with Players – Staley focuses on connecting with players and teaching the game. She approaches the game as she did as a player = find a connection and share a vision with your team. Coach Staley has found that it is more difficult to connect with players when you are further removed as a player – but once you do, that's where success starts (connecting with your players is key). She is a big proponent of building “reciprocal trust and vulnerability” with players so they will let their guard down and develop a deeper connection with her.

She wants her players to have a passion for something and live it. Work every day for something you love. For players who want to make it to the pros, she talks about the discipline required to make it to the next level. She also has a mentoring program to help her players with life challenges.

Staley's Role Models – Coach Tara VanDerveer, Stanford women's basketball coach who directed Staley and the USA women's team to the 1996 gold medal. Staley credits Coach VanDerveer for teaching her the importance of preparation – how to put teams into situations they will be successful in. Her other mentor is John Chaney, former men's basketball coach at Temple University. While Staley coached at Temple for 8 years, Chaney supported her and helped her develop the culture she wanted. He would attend her practices and allowed her to come to his. Staley calls him as a perfectionist who put his teams in a position to win games through his coaching.

Dabo Swinney



University of Clemson Head Football Coach – 2008-present

Accolades – National Champion in 2017; National Runner-up in 2016

Player Accolades – played collegiately at University of Alabama (1989-1992); was twice named all-SEC academic scholar

Vision – to be (set) the standard for college football

Mission – Follow plan of excellence by having a daily focus and always looking to what is next.

Mottos – “You can’t be afraid to fail.” / “Finish with no regrets.” / “Be defined by being the best you can be.”

Goal – “Believe” / “IT CAN’T BE DONE.”

Coaching Philosophy – Coach Swinney’s philosophy includes the following – Surround yourself with people who will buy in to what you are trying to build. Compete with everything you have. See the future (potential) and don’t be blinded by the here and now. Change it from the inside out by focusing on the problems and how you want to fix by doing the right thing. Let failure develop you, not define you. Every team meeting, Swinney puts out 2 signs – “Believe” and “IT CAN’T BE DONE.” The first time he put out the two signs, he told his team, “This is where it starts.” He has changed the culture to one that expects to win by having the right attitude and believing (how they work and prepare). He demands a little extra from everyone (effort, focus on fundamentals) and talks about not losing to yourself.

Recruiting Strategy – Coach Swinney has created and wants to maintain a family atmosphere/culture. On recruiting visits he looks at where kids are coming from and their potential fit with his culture. The program is relationship driven more than process driven. Who he hires onto his coaching staff must serve the players’ heart and not their talent. Swinney is transparent in the recruiting process – you must be a student-athlete and understand that you have to earn playing time through effort and accountability. The best player plays.

Connection with Players – Swinney allows his team leaders to set accountability with the team and have the players commit to it. He creates a vision board and has each player explain what they will do to contribute to the team’s success each year. He has them stay focused on that vision, even during the trying times where there is adversity. Swinney has his players focus on the positive future using the vision board and leverages the leadership from within. His philosophy and approach with his team and players is to “Reinvent > Reinvest > Grow” (Study, Get Better). Swinney has a relationship first approach (“love > serve > care”). He is a servant leader to his staff and expects the program to “do the common things in an uncommon way”.

Swinney’s Role Model – Gene Stallings, former University of Alabama head coach. Swinney played for and coached with him for seven years. Swinney credits him for, “How he ran the program and managed the staff and practice schedules and just everything. Relationships with people, his involvement in the community, the type of father he was, the type of husband, the balance he created for us as a staff, the balance he created for himself as a head coach, those were powerful things for me as a young man in this profession.” (*Dabo Swinney’s success shines a deserved light on his mentor Gene Stallings* - by Kevin Scarbinsky; www.al.com [1/10/16])

Bill Belichick



New England Patriots Head Coach – 2000-Present

Cleveland Browns Head Coach – 1991-1995

NFL Coach since 1975 (41 years)

Accolades – Five Time Super Bowl Champion; AFC Champion seven times

Vision – Build a team of people who share the same passion about the goals that are set.

Mission – Create a culture where every member of the team feels like a shareholder who can contribute by doing their job and putting the team first.

Goal – Put a good, competitive team together each and every year

Team Slogan – “Every battle is won *before* the war is fought.” (*Sun Tzu, The Art of War*)

Mottos – Everything is important

Coaching Philosophy – Coach Belichick believes that preparation is key to everything. Know what you are going to be doing and have an idea what the opponent will be doing, as well as what their strengths and weaknesses are. This preparation will make adjustments more manageable during the course of a game. His approach is to review the situation and communication to make sure everyone is on the same page. At the end, it comes down to executing on the game plan and making adjustments to it as needed. He credits his success to taking in information, processing it and then determining the next thing to do. Coach Belichick also believes in trying out good ideas, even when they are unconventional. His expectations of his staff are for them to do their job, pay attention to details and put the team first. Belichick reviews each game and analyzes mistakes that were made by himself and the staff, and they work to correct those. Some describe him as a “control freak” who likes to oversee all decision-making.

Connection with Players – Belichick believes in teambuilding and putting the team first. He rewards the entire team when individuals excel in practice to create chemistry. He also does teambuilding activities outside of football and requires them to remove all outside distractions (cell phones, etc.) so the focus is entirely on the experience. Belichick believes in them making personal contacts and sharing experiences so folks get to know one another at a deeper level. He tries to coach all players the same, and gives players what they earn. He believes it’s more than talent and looks at dependability, consistency and the ability to improve being key factors to a player’s success.

Recruiting Strategy – Belichick works to find talent that will fill voids, meet the team’s needs and fit his system. He is known for bringing in “green” assistants and teaching his philosophy and approach to them. The expectation of those coaches is to conduct weekly breakdowns of the upcoming opponent and provide to Belichick so he can use to strategize. Belichick gives coaching candidates assignments to complete as part of the interview process to ensure they have the focus and analytical skills needed. His interviews look at whether you can solve problems.

Belichick’s Role Models – his father, Steve Belichick, an assistant coach at Navy who wrote a book about coaching (*Football Scouting Methods*). He learned coaching styles and approaches early in life because of that. He learned the importance of work ethic, devotion and sense of duty through him and his time at Navy. He credits a lot of different coaches for his success as a head coach, indicating that – as a kid growing up, player and then as an assistant – all provided him with different influences. But Belichick credits Bill Parcells as being his biggest mentor (other than his father). He was the Defensive Coordinator under Parcells with both the Bills and Jets. It is said that Belichick learned how to motivate (and connect with) his players under Parcells.

Joe Maddon



Chicago Cubs (Major League Baseball) Manager – 2015-present

MLB Manager since 2006

Accolades – 1 World Championship (2016), Three-Time Manager of the Year (2008, 2011, 2015)

Vision – “Enjoy the moment.” Ensure that the team has fun and doesn’t see baseball as life and death.

Mission/Purpose – To earn the respect of his players

Motto – 1) Run hard to first base (play hard) and 2) Have fun

Team Slogan – “Never let the pressure exceed the pleasure.”

Fundamental Principle – It takes zero talent to play hard every day.

Coaching Philosophy/Style – Upbeat, positive/optimistic leader who likes to keep the mood light with his players. His focus is on helping his players become the best they can be. Players respect and trust Maddon and do their best to perform for him. He is said to let his assistant coaches coach and his players play. His players know to expect the unexpected.

Connection with Players – Maddon encourages his players to take risks on the field and is fine if they make physical mistakes. He wants them to be loose and have a good time. He believes discipline comes through a consistent, positive approach with his players. He believes that 80% of managing is people, not numbers. Players say he puts a lot of effort into getting to know each player. Maddon’s primary focus is on relationship-building.

Maddon’s Role Model – Gene Mauch (former California Angels Manager), an “old school” manager who could still relate to his players. Maddon wants his players to respect the game and work hard. Maddon will use statistics to help aid his decisions, but generally leads with his gut.

Ned Yost



Kansas City Royals (Major League Baseball) Manager – 2010-present
MLB Manager since 2003
Accolades – 1 World Championship (2015), 1 World Series Runner-up (2014)

Vision – Develop young talent by putting players in positions to gain experience and ultimately compete for championships.

Mission/Purpose – Do right by the team/club at that given moment.

Motto – Have confidence in yourself.

Team Slogan – “Trust the process.”

Fundamental Principle – Let players be themselves.

Coaching Philosophy/Style – Yost has changed his coaching style from one of having players conform to his way of doing things to one that gives his players more autonomy to be who they are and make their own decisions. He lets them take part in the decision-making process instead of telling them what he expects or wants them to do. Yost’s in-game decision-making is seen as “unconventional” and “old school” and has been criticized by many. While Yost understands statistics and percentages based on situational coaching, he rarely goes by these numbers and statistics. He instead relies mostly on instincts to make in-game decisions, as evidenced by him being below the norm in almost every category tracked.

Connection with Players – Much like his Coaching Style changed, his connection with his players, the fans and media has improved in recent years. He is extremely loyal to his players and protects them from media criticism. Players describe his style as laid-back and one who deflects praise to his players.

Yost’s Role Model – Bobby Cox, former Hall of Fame Manager of the Toronto Blue Jays and Atlanta Braves.

Carol Hutchins



University of Michigan Head Softball Coach – 1985-present
Accolades – 1 National Championship (2005), 17 Big Ten Regular Season Titles, 9 Big Ten Tournament Championships, 17 NCAA Regional Championships
National Fastpitch Coaches Association Hall of Fame (2006)

Vision – Maintain a great program/culture that places importance on values over victories.

Mission/Purpose – Teach the game of life so student-athletes leave as better people (women) who are confident and can be successful (someone with no limits). Play for a national championship year in and year out.

Motto – “Play the game one pitch at a time.”

Team Slogan – You take care of the program, the program takes care of you.

Fundamental Principle – It takes zero talent to play hard every day.

Coaching Philosophy/Style – Tough-minded coach who demands a lot from her players. She is known to push her players to their limits while also being there for them. She teaches them how to get out of their comfort zone to get better. Hutchins places a lot of importance on team chemistry. She expects her players to take care of one another and push each other. Hutchins has surrounded herself with great coaches who are loyal to her, with her top assistants having tenures of 24 years and 19 years on her staff. The two assistant coaches turn down head coaching jobs every year to stay at Michigan and coach with Hutchins. Coach Hutchins treats her assistants as equals, and has done so from the beginning of their time together.

Connection with Players – Hutchins is known for her focus on the “total person” and does what she can to give them confidence in softball and life. She wants folks to leave “changed”. Some former and current players describe her approach as “tough love”.

Hutchins’ Role Models – Kay Purves, head coach of semi-pro softball team Lansing Laurels. Coach Purves gave Hutchins her first opportunity to play organized softball. She is recognized as Hutchins’ first and most prominent mentor (and role model) as a coach. Gayle Blevins, head college softball coach at the University of Iowa. Hutchins coached under Blevins at the University of Indiana for one year at the beginning of her career, and credits Blevins for helping her over the past 20 years as a competing coach.

Carlo Ancelotti



*Bayern Munich Professional Football (American Soccer) Coach – 2016-present
Professional Coach since 1995; Professional Player from 1976-1992
Accolades – Has won professional Football titles as a coach in 5 different countries*

Vision – Win at the highest level and have faith in one another doing that.

Mission/Purpose – Fit the system to the players in order to win.

Motto – Let players play.

Team Slogan – “We are who we are.”

Fundamental Principle – “When we win it’s got nothing to do with me. When we lose it’s my fault.”

Coaching Philosophy/Style – Focuses on having a good relationship with his players. He is adaptable, constantly looking at formations and approaches to the game that suit his players to improve their play. People describe him as being a servant leader. Ancelotti places importance on discipline, following the rules and showing respect. Ancelotti is said to be conservative and introverted and likes to keep to himself. He tries to not get too high or low about wins and losses by focusing more on the process instead of the results (wins/losses).

Connection with Players – Players are said to “love him”, as Ancelotti puts his players in a position to be successful. He communicates in a calm manner and is transparent with his players. Ancelotti’s style is one of being a tactician, preferring to have experienced professionals on the roster and letting them play. Ancelotti makes decisions on his own regarding who he plays and benches because that was how he was mentored and what he thinks is an appropriate approach.

Ancelotti’s Role Models – Nils Liedholm was his coach at Roma and first mentor. Arrigo Sacchi was his former manager at Milan.

Hope Powell



Female Coach Educator for Men's Professional Footballer Association – 2016-present

Great Britain Football Association Women's National Coach – 1998-2013

Professional Football Player – 1978-1998

Member of England National Football Team – 1983-1998

Accolades – First Woman of a National Football Team and First Black Manager; Coached England to Two World Cup quarterfinals; instituted Natural Centres of Excellence to help re-shape youth soccer in England

Vision – Continue grassroots effort to open up the sport of Football to hundreds of thousands of boys, girls and young men and women.

Mission/Purpose – Help players become better at their craft and prepare them to become coaches and managers of the future.

Motto – Do not compromise for anything.

Team Slogan – “We live in hope.”

Fundamental Principle – “I will not be bullied and I won't compromise. Not for anything.” / Powell has a passion for equal rights, as well as for winning and being the best.

Coaching Philosophy/Style – As a football manager, Powell had a desire to be the best and would coach with that focus in mind. Was seen as a “ruthless” manager (coach) by many former players, with a command and control style of leading her teams. She set boundaries for her teams and players and held her players accountable. Powell made it clear that the players have a voice but she had the final say on all team matters. Her focus was primarily on defense. Some felt as if she played favorites with specific players and didn't allow opportunities for all.

Connection with Players – Powell likes to give players autonomy to own their development and success. She is a believer in allowing players to lead themselves at times. She supports them but also challenges them by setting high expectations. She believes in providing players with knowledge and guiding them along. She focuses on communication and player involvement. Powell believes in problem-solving during training (practice) and giving that responsibility to the players during games. She tried to extract the best from her players using these different techniques.

Powell's Role Models – Alan May was her first manager with the Millwall Lionesses who taught her how to manage people and inspired her throughout her coaching career. Howard Wilkinson is the LMA Chairman who offered her the Football Association team manager position with the England women's team. He also helped push her to obtain a pro license.