

## Commitments - Together

A commitment can be the solution.

### **Determined together and lived together**

A handshake and horse-trading is a done deal. Anyone who doesn't stick to such uncomplicated agreements is soon out of the game. Whether he is a farmer or a cattle dealer. And in sport? There too, agreements have to be made and kept. It's also about honor and trust.

#### **We are talking about "commitments "**

There are many problematic situations in training where a commitment could be the solution. Ten case studies show when and how jointly developed agreements should be sought.

#### **Ricochet - paying attention**

Situation:

There has been a good atmosphere in the youth squad for years. But one athlete is disrupting training. She is passive, doesn't keep appointments and makes negative comments.

Reflection:

Everyone wants to be noticed. Disruptive behavior often serves to attract attention and receive attention. The athlete's disruptive behavior could serve as a basis for discussing behavior, training diligence and commitment in the group and taking uniform measures.

Commitment

The coach takes advantage of a well-attended training session and confronts the youth squad with some "disciplinary problems" from his point of view. Basic values for training and competition are now discussed together and behaviors before, during and after training are written down in a declaration of intent.

Another consequence:

Such a declaration of intent brings new momentum and more security to sports operations. The group develops a new sense of togetherness. Taking over a training sequence (e.g. running in) as a further measure allows "troublemakers" to slip into the trainer's shoes.

#### **Alcoholism - defining the procedure**

Situation:

Before an internal school games tournament, the sports teacher discovers two vocational students drinking a pint of beer in the restaurant early in the morning. She confronts the apprentices and asks them to report to the PE teachers in the staff room before the tournament.

Reflection:

The school rules of the vocational school state that "the possession, sale and consumption of

narcotics or other substances that impair performance is prohibited." Although the offense took place before school, alcohol has been proven to impair performance and concentration.

**Commitment:**

The PE teacher discusses the case with the teaching staff. They decide to develop a general procedure for such and similar cases, as this problem has already occurred several times. "What do we expect from the pupils? And how can we counter misconduct?" Depending on the degree of the offense, offending vocational students can be excluded from the school tournament or used as referees or letters during the tournament. If necessary, the employer and parents should be informed of the situation.

**Further consequence:**

At a second level, an additional commitment can be drawn up together with the pupils on how pupils are to behave at school events.

## **Newcomer - getting to know customs and traditions**

**Situation:**

At the start of the second half of the season, a player from a different country and culture joins the football team. It quickly becomes apparent that he does not feel at home and finds it difficult to make friends.

**Reflection:**

Playing sport together can have a unifying and integrating effect across all language and cultural boundaries. Newcomers want to fit in, feel accepted and belong. To do this, they need someone to introduce them to the customs and unwritten rules of conduct.

**Commitment:**

The captain recognizes the situation and discusses it with the coach. Together they come to the conclusion that the new player should be assigned a "godfather" to make it easier for him to join the group. During the conversation with the newcomer, the idea arises that he should tell the team something about the sport in his home country and its etiquette.

**Another consequence:**

Trust is not given. Trust is earned. Regular exercises with elements of carrying. Letting yourself fall, being held or other team-building forms promote trust in each other.

## **Overreaction - anchoring fairness**

**Situation:**

The handball player does not want to accept an infraction that has been penalized. She is upset and verbally insults the referee. He then sends her off the pitch.

**Reflection:**

Handball is a physical game and full of emotion. Nevertheless, fair behavior towards teammates, opponents, referees and spectators is important and a necessary part of any sporting practice. Players who do not have their emotions under control and cannot accept decisions not only harm themselves but also the whole team (weakening, punishment, exclusion), the club and the sport (reputation, image).

## Commitment:

A group consisting of the club president, the coaches and the players' council agree on a fairness declaration on how club members should behave on the pitch (club charter). This is communicated in the team sections, throughout the club and externally (posters, club organ).

## Further consequences:

Off the pitch (training, preparation), each team has its own rules. For example, a national league team acts according to different guidelines than the senior team. In addition to the club charter, all teams develop their own additional codes of conduct.

## **Lone warriors - cultivate rituals**

### Situation:

A floorball team is in a losing spiral. The coach notices that every player is fighting too much for themselves and thinking too little about the team.

### Reflection:

Team spirit is a decisive factor in team sport. The feeling that "we belong together" does not always come about on its own and can be influenced. Rituals are suitable for strengthening group dynamics and team spirit. Young people are creative enough to develop their own rituals independently. The trainer does not need to intervene. However, if there is a problem, the formation of rituals should be supported with suggestions.

### Commitment:

In a discussion with the players, the coach discusses how certain rituals can have a positive effect on team spirit, concentration and the game, both before and during the game as well as in training. The team develops three rituals that can be used to strengthen team spirit depending on the match situation. The coach suggests a fourth ritual that she believes is important.

### Another consequence:

The coach and spectators can also influence the game, sometimes to disruptive effect. Agreements with the coach (substitutions, time-outs) and the spectators (not interfering, positive shouts) can have a positive effect on the players.

## **Camp rules - joint decision**

### Situation:

The youth section of the athletics club is going on a one-week training camp.

### Reflection:

Special events and training camps leave a lasting impression and are very popular with young people. However, in order for them to have a lasting effect (physically, mentally and emotionally), they need to be well prepared. The various ambitions and expectations must be reconciled: The coach wants optimal training conditions, the youngsters are looking for fun, variety and adventure, the parents want to be sure that nothing will happen to their children.

### Commitment:

The coach invites the registered youngsters and their parents to a discussion evening. He informs them where the trip is going and what the aim of the training camp is. In a joint discussion, the individual views on the training sessions, the framework program, the rules of conduct in the camp,

the means of transport, the financing, etc. are brought together. The rules of conduct are formulated as a commitment and adopted by the young people and their parents.

Further consequence:

What happens if boundaries are crossed at camp or camp rules are not adhered to? Expressing individual expectations and defining a common set of expectations creates clarity in this regard.

## **Exploitation - looking instead of looking away**

Situation:

There have long been rumors in the community about sexual acts by the sports teacher in lessons and in the checkroom. After evidence was provided, he was immediately released from his teaching duties.

Reflection:

Sexual exploitation begins where a person seeks sexual arousal and satisfaction without being able to count on the free consent of the other person or where a relationship of dependency is exploited for this purpose. Assaults are never a one-off event and must never be excused. The law clarifies what happens in cases of sexual exploitation.

Commitment:

The school authorities take action on their own initiative. In cooperation with the teaching staff, parents and community representatives, a school code of conduct "We are watching" is drawn up, which determines the behavior of the teaching staff and their cooperation with the pupils. By signing the defined guiding principles, all teachers undertake to comply with the code. The community is informed about the new measures through panel events and advertising measures (community newspaper, posters).

Another consequence:

As sexual exploitation is not a private matter, teachers' associations as well as sports clubs and associations are called upon to take a clear stance in order to give their teachers, coaches and athletes support.

## **Rowdies - a clear rejection of violence**

Situation:

During home matches, there are regular riots in the fan blocks and riots outside the stadium after the end of the match.

Reflection:

Fans are part of sport and are important for the clubs. However, violent spectators have no place in the stadium. In their role model function, sportspeople are required to take a clear stance in the event of incidents, as the principles of fair play and respect should apply equally to players and spectators. Agreed rules of conduct and play serve to differentiate between acceptable aggression and undesirable aggression. Violations of the rules must be sanctioned.

Commitment:

The club managers develop a series of measures to reduce the propensity for violence. In a discussion round with representatives of the fan clubs, the club board and the players' council, commitments are formulated on how the players should behave on the pitch, towards the fans and

between the fans themselves. Among other things, it is decided that the team will thank the fans after the match - regardless of whether they win or lose. In an advertising campaign (regional television, posters), individual players commit to non-violent sport.

Another consequence:

The associations - whether at cantonal or Swiss level - are also called upon to prevent violence. With socio-educational projects (e.g. fair play campaigns, cooperation with fan projects), they can support positive fan behavior, act as "peacemakers" and strive for coordination and effective measures.

## **Consumables and addictive substances - Moderate role models**

Situation:

The members of the gymnastics club meet regularly in their local pub after training. The excessive consumption of alcohol and cigarettes is a thorn in the side of the youth squad leader and the head gymnast.

Reflection:

The sport (club) is not an addiction- and stimulant-free zone. This is precisely why a constructive approach is necessary. Questionable rituals that promote the consumption of stimulants and addictive substances should be questioned and replaced by other rituals. Managers who take a measured approach to legal addictive substances act as role models for (younger) colleagues and play an important role in providing guidance.

Commitment:

The men's team has a direct influence on the (consumption) behavior of the participants in the youth team and on new members. The head gymnast discusses the problem of the imitation effect of young people in the men's team. Together they formulate a declaration of intent that a non-alcoholic drink will always be ordered first in the pub and that smoking will not be permitted in the presence of young people.

Another consequence:

Together with the local pub, a club-owned, alcohol-free drink is created, which is sold at a special price (cheaper than alcohol). Furthermore, the entire club and all its squads take part in the national "Sport smoke-free" competition.

## **Doping - We are clean**

Situation:

The Olympic Games have uncovered a number of doping abuses. A group of performance-oriented young athletes are disappointed by this and are tackling the problem.

Reflection:

Doping is a violation of the sporting principle of fair play, both in elite and popular sport. It is a betrayal of oneself (damaging to health), team members (possible exclusion), opponents, clubs, sponsors and spectators.

Commitment:

The young athletes jointly agree that they want to reach the top in their sport without doping and launch the "We are clean!" project. In it, they sign, for example, that they will prioritize long-term

health over short-term success, will not take any doping substances or other medication to improve performance, will discuss the doping regulations and list with their coach and club doctor and will draw up an ideal training plan (including recovery phases and healing processes in the event of injuries).

Another consequence:

The club's own project gives rise to the idea of participating in the national "cool and clean" campaign.

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## Source reference:

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