

COACHING TIP

From Rex C. Houze

Benefits of Keeping Score

Keeping score generates excitement for players and fans. Scorekeeping improves individual and team performance; enhances concentration and focus; helps coaches and players make better decisions; helps prevent and solve problems; identifies opportunities for training; and makes it easier to accurately project outcomes.

Keeping score provides early warning signals. The gauges on the dashboard of your vehicle provide a form of keeping score. They indicate how much fuel you have, how well your engine is performing, and whether it needs maintenance. The odometer indicates how far you have driven – overall and on a given trip. A thermostat is used to keep score on the room temperature and adjust the heat or air conditioning accordingly. In business, it is crucial to have a method of keeping score in place that provides early warning signals so you can make the appropriate adjustments.

A doctor uses a person's vital signs to keep score on how the body is performing and if any attention is needed. Scales help people know if they are maintaining their desired weight. What are the vital signs for your business? Can you identify and measure them with the same degree of accuracy as a blood pressure gauge or a set of scales?

Keeping score helps break goals into bite-sized chunks. This promotes confidence when people think and say, "I can do *that*." Knowing that you are winning at small goals helps build momentum and increase your opportunities to accomplish larger goals.

Keeping score provides trends and direction. Where you are now is important. Even more important is what direction you are moving and at what speed. Knowing trends and direction helps reduce the chance of surprises and uncertainty. Increased certainty enhances confidence and increased confidence promotes increased success.

Keeping score helps you celebrate successes. One response to seeing the score is, "Hooray!" When you reinforce "Hooray," progress and success are reinforced. Reinforcing progress and success creates a motivational environment that leads to more progress and success.

Keeping score can help you take corrective action. Another response to seeing the score is, "Oh no." Following "Oh no" situations with a corrective plan of action of additional training and coaching reduces future "Oh no's."

Keeping score enhances change. Keeping score creates insight and insight precedes change. When you know where you stand and what direction you are heading, you can set new goals, adjust your behavior, and produce new or better results.

Keeping score improves accountability. When a good scorekeeping system is in place, people can run, but they can't hide.