

INSPIRE

On Leadership

Spring 2020

Positivity x Progress x People

When I took the job as the Director of Athletics at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside, I was a few years ahead of schedule, in my own mind. My experiences prepared me for the job, but I was not ready to walk in on day one as this buttoned up leader with my polished core values, expectations, and leadership speech.

With this in mind, through self-reflection I created #RangerIMPACT to show our student-athletes, campus, and community my guiding principles and set the foundational values for Parkside Athletics.

- > Inspire Others
- > Mindful of Mission
- > Positivity x Progress x People
- > Appreciation of Differences
- > Commitment to Community
- > Telling Our Story

For the purposes of this column, I want to focus on the #RangerIMPACT value I consider a multiplier – Positivity x Progress x People.

Positivity

I'm a glass half full person, arguably to a fault sometimes. If I'm doing a basic SWOT analysis, the S and O lists are going to grow more rapidly than the W and T. A positive, optimistic focus on a day-to-day basis, even in the face of adversity, allows me as a leader to shift my mindset to the solution. It also fosters creativity, productivity, and vision. Acknowledging and understanding real challenges is critical, but what if we spent

no more than 10% on the problem and 90% on the solution? As a leader, a positive, solution-focused outlook can spread quickly to those around you.

Progress

We have all heard a version of the following... if you are standing still, you are going backwards. For me, that mindset of progress is fuel. My mind races when it comes to progress. When I ask myself questions, most are related to progress. "What is our next opportunity to improve?"... "What should we be doing better?"... "What do we need to accomplish?" I hope our staff would attest that we try not to miss opportunities to celebrate progress, but we do not rest on our laurels long before asking, "Now what, what's next?"

People

Most importantly, focus on people. Focus on the people you impact. People you serve. People you are working for. People you are working alongside. People that complement (and hopefully compliment) you. People that challenge you. Surround yourself with good people focused on working together to impact people.

The Multiplying Impact

If you multiply any two of the Ps, I believe you will inevitably accomplish the third. Multiply your positive attitude with good people, and progress is undeniable. Take good people and multiply them with a focus on progress, and

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Positivity x Progress x People, cont.

outlook and environment, and you will develop, help, and impact people. Focus on all three Ps and multiply them together, and sit back and watch the magic happen!

Disclaimer: The reverse multiplying effect can happen as well, but that is too negative of a topic for me to address.

Andrew Gavin is the Director of Athletics at the University of Wisconsin - Parkside.

