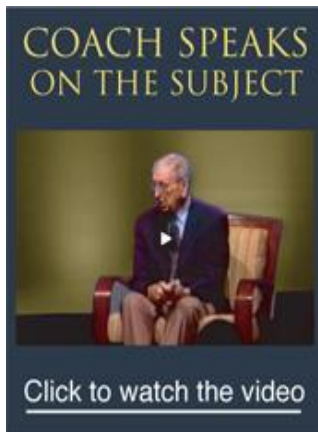


## INDUSTRIOUSNESS: PLANNING

*Industriousness* is defined in the Pyramid of Success as follows: "There is no substitute for work. Worthwhile results come from hard work and careful planning."

While many people focus on Coach's emphasis on hard work that is only half of the equation. Careful planning, which he was careful to include in the definition, is equally important.



## COACH'S FAVORITE POETRY AND PROSE

FAILING TO PREPARE

"Failure to prepare is preparing to fail," was one of John Wooden's favorite maxims. He employed it for his teams as well as in his personal life, stressing to them the importance of preparing properly in order maintain the balance necessary for true success and fulfillment. "The most important word in our language is 'love' and the second most important word is 'balance,'" he was fond of saying.

In order to execute properly and keep balance in his life between his job and his family, Coach Wooden was an expert in time management. This required very careful planning, indeed.

Coach did not equate industriousness to three or four hour practices everyday with his team simply to put in the extra hours, nor did he think it necessary to work six days a week for ten hours a day to become a great basketball coach. That would have thrown off the all-important balance that proper preparation could help maintain.

Instead, John Wooden's basketball practices at UCLA were between 90 minutes and two hours long – maximum – depending on what part of the season it was. Far shorter than the practice time of most of his peers, the practices always started and stopped on time; they were not made longer if the team was not performing well and seemed to need additional work. His secret was simple: extraordinary preparation.

Every detail was recorded on a 3x5 card that Coach and all his assistants carried. These cards gave a minute-by-minute breakdown, as

*If you founded your house  
on the movable sand,*

*And have failed to secure  
a firm hold on the land,*

*Take advice from the Lord  
and His biblical tale,*

*If you fail to prepare,  
you're preparing to fail.*

*If you squander your time  
on the tricks of the trade,*

*On discovering just how  
a shortcut is made,*

*You've neglected to work  
and your skills are but frail.*

*If you fail to prepare,  
you're preparing to fail.*

*Can you fathom a sailboat  
alone on the sea,*

*And the storm and the waves  
dancing violently?*

*Like a crew that's untrained  
for the tempest and gale,*

*If you fail to prepare,  
you're preparing to fail.*

*If a cross country runner  
trains only a stint,*

*And he practices simply  
by running a sprint,*

well as how many basketballs would be needed at each area of the court at each point in time for each and every drill to be run that day.

*“I kept notes with the specifics of every minute of every hour of every practice we ever had at UCLA. When I planned a day’s practice, I’d look back to see what we had done on the corresponding day the previous year and the year before that,” he wrote later. These notes allowed him to “track the practice routines of every single player for every single practice session he participated in while I was coaching him.”*

In fact, Coach laughed a little about his own meticulous preparation in an interview in 2002: I could tell you what we did every minute of practice in my 27 years at UCLA. I could go back to the 48-49 year and tell you what we did on November the 15th minute by minute. I think that doing those plans helped me tremendously as I could always refer back to them. I would always make little notations following each practice, maybe some activities went too long, a couple of minutes or 5 minute too long on this, or we need a bit more attention to this.”

Coach Wooden’s careful planning, precise execution of his plan, immediate written results of his plan, evaluation of those results, and then detailed adjustments to his next plan were a critical cornerstone to his success.

This constant attention to detail and continuous improvement built the consistency which led to the greatest dynasty in the history of college basketball. “Big things are

*He will make it part way down  
the arduous trail.*

*If you fail to prepare,  
you're preparing to fail.*

*Any seeds that are sown  
will not vanish or spoil,*

*If they're spread on the  
tilled and the fertilized soil.*

*It's a soil that's prepared  
for the seeds in the pail.*

*If you fail to prepare,  
you're preparing to fail.*

*If you want no excuses,  
no worries or frets,*

*If you want peace of mind,  
ever void of regrets,*

*Let the wisdom sequester  
you far from the wail.*

*If you fail to prepare,  
you're preparing to fail.*

*Swen Erick Nader,  
A Reason for the Rhyme  
(Ugly Dog Publishing, 2006)*

accomplished only through the perfection of minor details,” he said. “If you do not have the time to do it right, when will you have time to do it over?”

Yours in coaching,

Craig Impelman

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