EXCELLENCE WITH INTEGRITY™

ASSESSMENTS

SPORT TEAM CULTURE SURVEY

OVERVIEW

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Excellence with Integrity™
INSTITUTE

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Introduction: Rigorous, Resilient, Fair

There is no single simple metric by which to assess something as complex as a competitive team culture. However, the essential aspects of team culture clearly ***can be measured*** to yield vital data needed to develop it in intentional ways for the betterment of every player, coach, and team. The Excellence with Integrity™ Team Culture data tools and metrics, when implemented in conjunction with thoughtful deliberations and relationship building, have the potential to inform the process needed to create, sustain and nurture an intentional culture where there is consistent and authentic alignment between espoused values and lived experiences.

It is possible to create a *tyranny from metrics* where data are not utilized to create a full and accurate description. In this reality, data are often used as a weapon and not a tool. In contrast, the Excellence with Integrity Team Culture assessment and development process has been developed to provide ***nuanced*** data to inform intentional conversations about essential aspects of competitive team cultures, which are inherently complex and dynamic.

We believe the process we have vetted through many years of working with clients is theoretically sound and practically rigorous. Our experience shows that the team and department data are capable of showing real differences between teams and between different coaches with different coaching styles. But our process is resilient in that it doesn't overrespond to a single unhappy player or an incident in the life of the team. The process is fair to both players and coaches. The data we have worked with over the years consistently show players "admitting" 'we're not working hard enough,' 'we don't like constructive criticism,' and 'we could be better at x, y, or z.' This kind of feedback is often in support of what coaches are seeing as key barriers to team development and competitive improvement. However, the process also allows for fair feedback to coaches regarding how particular coaching practices might be missing the mark, or working against competitive greatness, selfless teamwork, or growth mindset.

The systematic use of an intentional approach, such as provided by the Excellence with Integrity Team Culture Assessment, will not only improve the overall consistency of the student-athlete experience, but it will provide vital feedback for continued growth of coaches' expertise in shaping their team culture, which is the foundation of the team culture experience – and ultimately its performance in competition.

Survey Content and Structure

The Team Culture Survey has been developed for, and with, coaches and administrators to support team and department continuous improvement.

The survey seeks insights on performance in competition and in practice, personal and team integrity, teamwork, and growth mindset among student-athletes.

The survey also gathers feedback on coaching practices, such as communication of expectations, targeted practice, mindset formation, and accountability that contribute to student-athletes' success in competition and in life.

The same survey is completed by student-athletes and by coaches. This approach to data collection allows for side-by-side comparison of stakeholder perspectives and supports review of the results as an informed, balanced, and fair process.

While focusing on performance enhancement, the survey results are also instrumental in creating a culture that prevents alcohol, drug, hazing, or sexual assault incidents and promotes safety, integrity, and inclusion. Results can guide strategic planning, as well as intentional human development and productive performance review at the team and department level.

EXCELLENCE WITH INTEGRITY™ ASSESSMENTS SPORT TEAM CULTURE

Survey Matrix

Part A	Part B
Team Culture Among Players	Coaching for Optimal Performance
1.1 Competitive Greatness	2.1 Communication to Clarify and Reinforce Expectations
1.2 Personal and Team Integrity	2.2 Targeted Practice for Habit Development and Growth
1.3 Selfless Teamwork	2.3 Accountability through Support and Challenge
1.4 Grounded Self-Awareness and Growth Mindset	2.4 Mental Preparation and Mindset Formation

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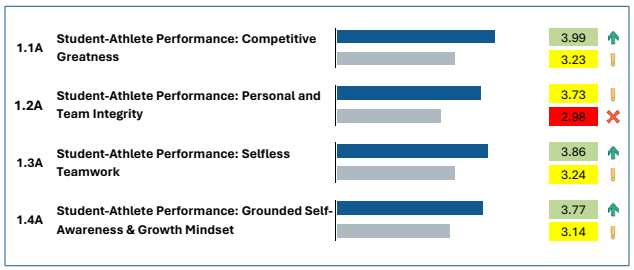
Data Report At a Glance

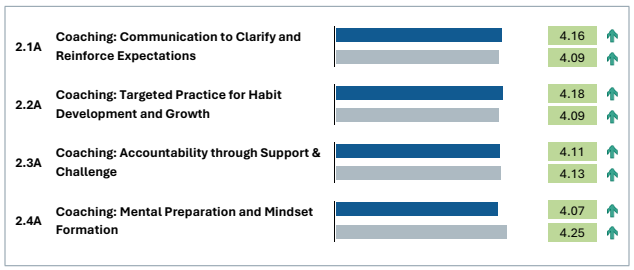
Part A

Team Culture Among Players



Part B

Coaching for Optimal Performance



SUMMARY REPORT — Summary Report presents scores on the Poor-to-Optimal performance scale, shown both graphically and numerically.

Survey Data Summary — Aggregated scores for each of the eight areas allow for a quick overview of the overall results for the team.

Data Detail — The remaining pages in the Summary Report show individual question scores in each area allowing for a deeper understanding of the findings.

Item Tables — Item tables show frequencies, means, standard deviations, and valid Ns for each item (question).

Comments — Comments are presented as submitted without edits and without any individual-identifying indicators.

Scores

Respondents answer questions on a 1-5 scale: 1 = poor, 2 = fair, 3 = good, 4 = very good, and 5 = excellent.

Area scores and individual item scores are calculated as averages (means) and then broken down into the following four categories indicated by color and an icon on the right-hand side of the score:

Optimal performance: Maintain current focus and attention	Scores >= 4.5
Approaching optimal performance: Build on current focus and attention	Scores >= 3.75 and < 4.5
Area of opportunity: Intensify focus and attention	Scores >= 3 and < 3.75
Area of concern: Commit to intensive effort & focus on improvement	Scores < 3

Report Review At a Glance

The report provides insights into the coaches' and student-athletes' perspectives about their experiences of the Team Culture and of the Coaching Practices that shape these experiences, as well as whether the perspectives are aligned. The purpose of this assessment is to initiate specific, intentional, and calibrated team culture development steps.

In ***Part 1*** of the Team Culture Assessment, the analysis centers on the four areas of student-athlete performance based on the framework in the Excellence with Integrity Strengths of Culture and Character. The review of the results would look for evidence of (a) strength within each area (independent of the other three), and for (b) interdependent balance between all four areas (for example, a strong press for greatness needs an equal conterbalancing strength in self-awareness and team unity).

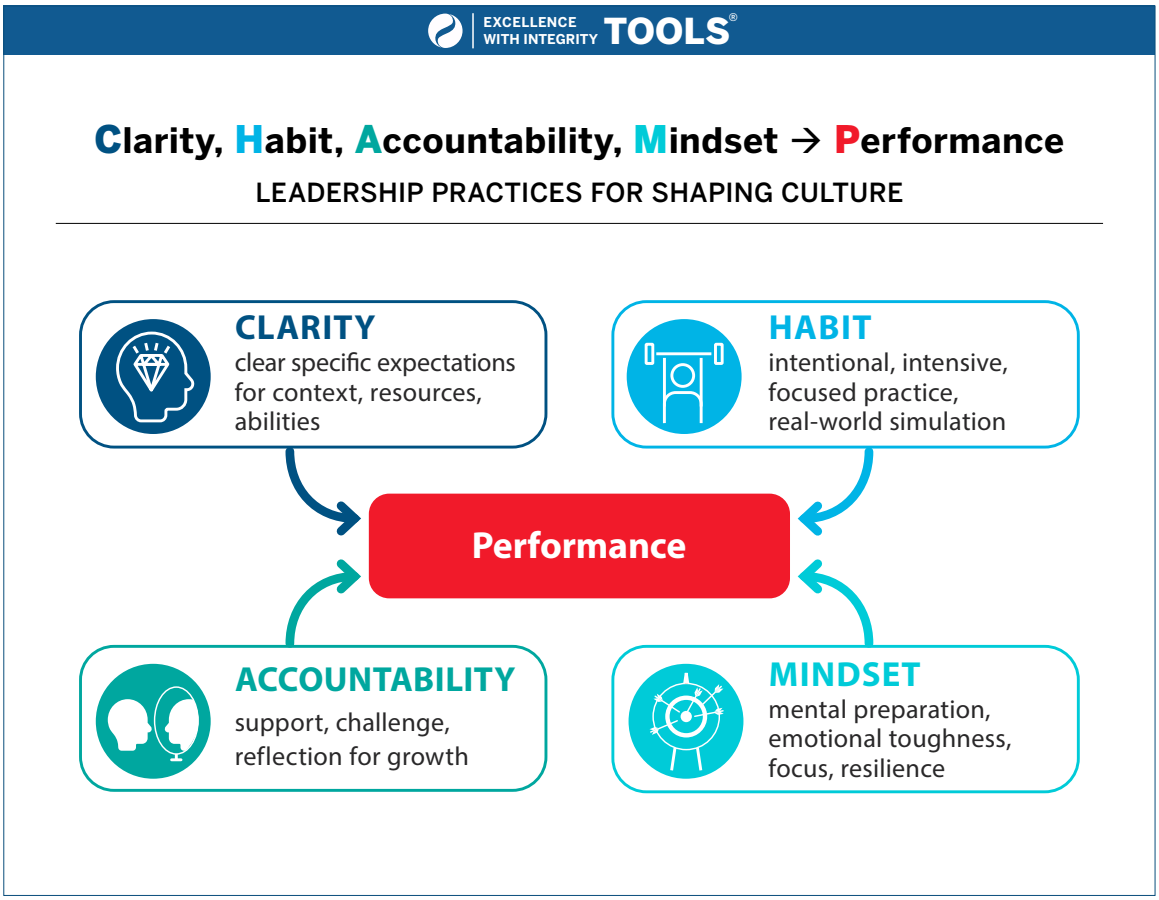
Student-Athletes Performance

A thriving team culture report would show evidence of:

- **Competitive Greatness/Excellence:** an optimal quest and press for greatness (not inflated, not heavy and oppressive), but optimal attitude, effort, and toughness;
- **Personal and Team Integrity:** fairness, trust, and genuine respect; strong communication, coachability, and the ability to engage in productive conflict (confrontation);
- **Selfless Teamwork:** safety and belonging, unity and strength, communication and teamwork, leadership;
- **Grounded Self-Awareness and Growth Mindset:** presence and poise, self-awareness and regulation, acceptance and adaptability, growth focus and mindset.

In ***Part 2*** of the Team Culture Assessment, the analysis centers on the four categories of culture-shaping coaching practices that lead to optimal performance. The review of these results would discover insights for coaches (looking to improve their culture-shaping practices) and for administrators to be used in coach mentoring and performance review conversations.

Culture-Shaping Coaching Practices



To improve a skill or behavior, coaches must do four things:

- Communicate **clear expectations** for each particular skill, behavior, or circumstance;
- Teach and provide real-world practice of the **habits** that develop the skill or behavior;
- Ensure **accountability** to the expectations for the skill or behavior;
- Teach and help practice the **mindset** needed to
  - » understand the "why" for a skill or habit,
  - » reframe and recover when expectations are not met.

Review Steps

First, we study the data reports looking for specific team culture development insights. Data review begins by looking at the team SUMMARY for trends and patterns, and then verifying them by reviewing additional detail in the TABLES and in COMMENTS.

From the Summary reports evidence is gathered about questions like:

a. Are the stakeholder perceptions positive or negative?

b. Are the stakeholders aligned in their perceptions?

c. Are there strengths within one area (competitive greatness, selfless teamwork, etc.)?

d. Is there balance (or imbalance) between areas (e.g., strong press for greatness with weak growth mindset or lack of selfless teamwork)?

e. Is there solidarity or division between subgroups (upper classmen vs underclassmen).

From the Tables we then look to see:

f. Is there a house divided (e.g., half of the team feels X, the other half feels Y) or is their consistency of perspective (e.g., most agree that X is a problem and Y is a strength)?

From the Comments we then look to see:

g. Are there specifics in the comments that may help to explain an overall trend or a trend within a subgroup (e.g., players on bench feel X, or upper classmen feel Y)?

h. Are there specific team experiences or coaching practices that are contributing to the developing culture or causing distress?

i. Do the comments indicate a pattern of simply missing the mark (e.g., too much or too little press for greatness; communication that is too harsh; lack of support around an issue or topic)? Or do the comments suggest unsafe, unhealthy, unfair experiences that are simply not okay?

The ***second*** major step is to integrate and interpret the results in order to determine the overall team culture trajectory and next steps for its development.

The process of thorough review of the team culture assessment results helps to benchmark each team's culture trajectory to assess whether it is on an upward or downward trend. A downward trend, clearly, represents a situation when team culture has become toxic, unbalanced, or ineffective, and therefore presents an acute risk. To distinguish between a team that hit a temporary tough patch and one that is on a downward spiral, longitudinal data might be necessary. Examining duration and intensity of the stress within the culture is needed to ultimately determine whether it is unsafe, unhealthy, or represents an overall brand threat to the department.

EXCELLENCE WITH INTEGRITY TOOLS®

TEAM CULTURE ESTIMATION GUIDE

Description: Most team culture trajectories can be primarily categorized into one of three categories: distressed, developing, or optimal. The guide below details the primary qualities of each culture trajectory category. However, sometimes a team culture will show signs of more than one category, often with the developing category showing some trends toward, or markers within, another category. For example, a developing culture with some signs of distress, or a developing culture that is trending toward optimal.

DISTRESSED Culture Zone	DEVELOPING Culture Zone	OPTIMAL Culture Zone
Diminished confidence; increased stress, fatigue, and breakdowns within the team	Emerging confidence in team's ability	Collective belief in ability to achieve performance goals
Relationships neglected; trust is undermined; feelings of disrespect, fear, or shame	Growing respect and camaraderie, fewer instances of fear-based relationships	High trust and emotional safety
Disempowered, demotivated, and/or demoralized	Learning to speak up, challenge the status quo in order to positively impact the culture	Empowered and motivated
Diminished appreciation for style and substance for coaching; fear or unwillingness to support and challenge	Becoming unified, fewer distractions	Sense of focus and unity; solidarity around goals and processes
Fractures and factions within team; excess focus on interpersonal issues	Emerging openness to coaching and feedback; growing willingness to support and challenge	Open to and appreciative of feedback; able to support and challenge one another

In sum, the second phase of data review and deliberation is informed by the various elements of the quantitative and qualitative data from the Team Culture survey, but is an **integrative interpretation** that seeks to pull many kinds of information together to create an informed assessment of the state of the culture and the best course of action for culture improvement and risk management.

Team Culture Assessment Value-Add

The Institute brings research expertise that helps extend your capacity:

1) Integrated approach to assessment based on psychological and sociological research insights (principals hold PhDs in respective fields).

2) Over 25 years of experience in applied human, organizational, and leadership research and development.

3) The Leadership Through Culture and Character™ theoretical framework and supporting field research across multiple collegiate athletics departments from NCAA Divisions I, II, and III.

1) Expert survey design:

a. Constructive: questions focus on team culture practices and experiences identified by research as essential for strengthening performance so that results help identify insights for continuous improvement in a positive and constructive manner.

b. Objective: all results are presented in full and without subjective interpretation, bias, or exclusion.

c. Efficient: surveys use as few questions as possible.

d. Psychometrically sound: e.g., scales are balanced in size with consistent response framework.

e. Consistent: constructs support implementation across multiple teams and/or departments.

2) Data management/analysis/reporting:

a. Human-run analysis: since survey responses are rarely fully complete, we extract raw data and manage it using situation-appropriate techniques to ensure data integrity and consistency from team to team and from year to year.

For example, we select only responses that meet the specific criteria for completeness that are determined based on the needs of the team or department; we only calculate scale scores when a specific threshold is met for items in the scale having responses so that each scale score is representative of complete responses.

b. Standardized interpretation: consistent data coding (and recoding when necessary) during data processing for all Likert-type questions and scales ensures that presentation of results is always the same: 1-5 response scale, 1 being least optimal (red), 5 being most optimal (green). Users do not need to learn new types of meaning behind different coding schemes when going from section to section, or from question to question.

c. Three levels of presentation: results are aggregated by scale for an easy overview of the overall trends, then shown by item graphically and numerically, and supplemented with detailed tables with frequencies, means, standard deviations, and valid Ns.

d. Graphical, numerical, and color/symbol-coded presentation of results, shown next to each other, matches different stakeholder needs and enhances identification of trends and insights.

3) Independent perspective and legitimacy of a Third Party Provider:

a. Confidentiality of all results is achieved in several ways: aggregation of data, suppressing results with too few responses from athletes, fully anonymous collection, etc.

b. Independent collection, data management, and analysis ensure the **atmosphere of safety and trust** which, in turn, empowers student-athletes to provide objective feedback that focuses on team improvement, rather than individual goals.

4) Non-profit pricing:

The Institute pricing for collegiate athletics teams and departments is discounted by 50-60%.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can you effectively measure culture in a competitive environment without getting data skewed by a few unhappy people or unfortunate situations? YES! We have real data from diverse teams and athletics departments to prove this. We ensure fairness and accuracy in two ways. 1) We measure team culture: not my perception of me, but my perception of all players on the team. 2) We gather student-athlete AND coach feedback on identical items. Our methodology has proven resilient, accurate, and informative in Division I, II, III and high school sport settings.

How is the EWI Culture Assessment different from others out there? Our approach is NOT designed like "Yelp for athletics"— quick, single-instance, thumbs-up-thumbs-down approach. We target the world of athletics where coaches exist to push players to new levels of excellence, integrity, teamwork, and self-awareness. The culture of a great team is characterized by a high level of respect and trust among teammates and coaches who intentionally make themselves and one another uncomfortable in pursuit of individual and collective greatness.

How is this type of culture assessment helps with risk assessment and management for coaches as well as departments? Since culture is ever-changing, if it's not measured, monitored, and adjusted, it may not live up to its potential. Sometimes team cultures are soft and selfish, missing the mark for excellence. Sometimes team cultures are rude, selfish, cliquey, and disrespectful to each other, missing the mark for integrity. Sometimes team cultures press too hard and become psychologically burdensome, missing the mark for optimal. Our assessment approach helps identify situations when team culture becomes unbalanced, ineffective, or potentially dangerous for both short-term and long-term results.

How does having an anonymous survey NOT work against coaches? Our assessment doesn't ask for an individual level self-rating (Athlete A: are you honest, hardworking, coachable?) which is often skewed by social desirability (i.e., "I know I'm supposed to be doing these things"). Instead, the questions focus on perceptions about all players on the team — our culture, our team, our habits.

Our experience collecting and reporting data in this approach clearly shows that responses are fair and balanced. Our data DO NOT show student-athletes simply giving themselves (as a team) a pass and being critical of coaches. In fact, we consistently find student-athletes reporting on players' weaknesses (as a team) and supporting coaches in their quest for excellence.

Analysis of the variation in the data within and between teams helped us validate our process. But the best validation comes from the vast majority of coaches who react to the results by saying, "That's my team."

How is this assessment fair and balanced for all stakeholders? In addition to focusing on all members of the team (their strengths and their weaknesses), the survey seeks out perceptions of specific coaching practices for shaping culture (clarity of expectations, habits, accountability, and mindset), and NOT on playing time, strategy, personality, etc.

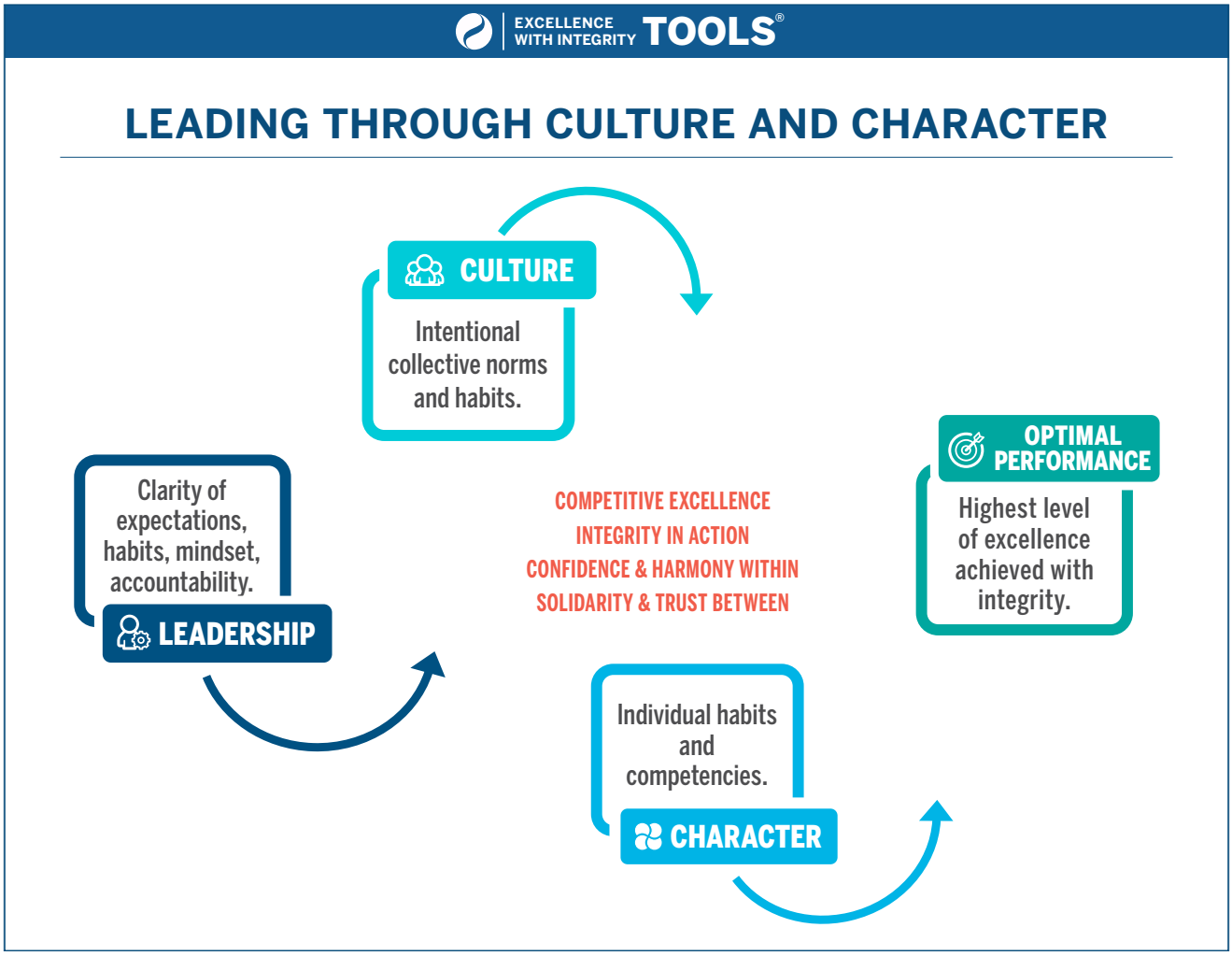
Coaches get valuable insights into student-athlete perspectives on themselves as a team (their commitment to excellence, integrity in action, teamwork, and self-awareness and mindset). They also get valuable feedback on their coaching practices that can be used to adapt, adopt, and abandon coaching practices that aren't having their intended impact.

Sport Team Administrators gain essential risk management data—that isn't skewed by an incident or an individual or a particular set of circumstances. Over time, the data can effectively differentiate between a tough patch in a team culture and a downward spiral or unsafe atmosphere. The data provides insights for mentoring and professional development needed to help coaches be successful, prevent coach turnover, and reduce team-to-team inconsistency.

How does this approach help with coach mentoring and performance reviews? The data from the team culture assessment provides coaches with critical insights into their team. It protects coaches from rogue student-athletes or parents who simply don't like the coach's style or strategy. It helps to reveal when "an opinion" or "an experience" isn't the norm. However, the data almost always reveal some areas for further growth, some adjustment in style, substance, intensity or strategy. Through a discussion of the data, sport team administrators and coaches can align coaches' understanding of their team culture with their plans for intentional culture development moving forward.

There are no perfect coaches and no perfect cultures. Team success requires openness to changing circumstances, personnel, and goals. Through the conversations informed by the culture data, coaches reveal their capacity for growth (resilience, flexibility, growth mindset, communication, motivation, accountability) or their immunity to change (fixed mindset, deficit focus, arrogance, inflexibility, unwillingness to change) which form the foundation for a constructive performance review.

Theory At a Glance



Our vision of Excellence with Integrity requires individuals who have self-awareness, perseverance, flexibility, and a relentless commitment to continuous improvement. It also requires the support and challenge of leaders. We like to think about people pulling themselves up by their own bootstraps, but most often human excellence occurs in the context of a supportive community, and under the guidance of qualified leaders.

Optimal performance requires athletes who are coachable, and leaders who embrace their role as coach or captain. Leading for optimal performance is so essential because the quest for achieving Excellence with Integrity is a never-ending, dynamic, and difficult process. In our experience even those with great natural ability and capacity require coaching to maximize their potential. They must be coached, and they must be committed to a process of continuous improvement. And while it is somewhat of an art to find the right approach for the circumstances and individuals, there is also a research-based best practice science to shaping optimal performance habits.

In short, great leaders intentionally shape their team culture and develop the individual competencies and habits of its members in order to achieve strong performance, pursue continuous improvement, and ensure long-term success.

Psychometrics At a Glance

The tables below summarize reliability and confirmatory factor analyses performed on the data from version 4.0 of the survey collected from student-athletes and coaches and coaching staff from a range of collegiate athletics teams and departments from NCAA Divisions I, II, and III.

Data from student-athletes: Cronbach's alphas range from 0.921 to 0.968 indicating 'excellent' reliability (internal consistency) observed in the data. Factor analyses explain between 64.5% and 81.7% of the variance in student-athlete data confirming the validity of the survey content.

Means, Reliability Alphas, and Variance Explained in Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Data from Athletes	Valid N	Cronbach's Alpha	% Variance Explained	N of Factors	N of Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
Performance: Competitive Greatness	719	0.931	68.0	1	8	3.79	0.824
Performance: Personal and Team Integrity	708	0.921	64.5	1	8	3.81	0.839
Performance: Selfless Teamwork	711	0.938	70.0	1	8	3.88	0.822
Performance: Grounded Self-Awareness and Growth Mindset	715	0.934	68.7	1	8	3.79	0.809
Coaching: Communication to Clarify and Reinforce Expectations	707	0.940	70.8	1	8	3.87	0.930
Coaching: Targeted Practice for Habit Development and Growth	696	0.954	76.0	1	8	3.87	0.976
Coaching: Accountability through Support and Challenge	695	0.940	70.9	1	8	3.86	0.957
Coaching: Mental Preparation and Mindset Formation	701	0.968	81.7	1	8	3.82	1.024

Data from Coaches

Cronbach's alphas range from 0.865 to 0.953 indicating 'very good' to 'excellent' reliability (internal consistency) observed in the data from coaches. Factor analyses explain between 60.0% and 75.3% of the variance confirming the validity of the survey content.

Means, Reliability Alphas, and Variance Explained in Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Data from Coaches	Valid N	Cronbach's Alpha	% Variance Explained	N of Factors	N of Items	Mean	Std. Deviation
Performance: Competitive Greatness	89	0.920	64.3	1	8	3.67	0.766
Performance: Personal and Team Integrity	86	0.865	67.2	2	8	3.87	0.586
Performance: Selfless Teamwork	88	0.904	60.0	1	8	3.89	0.638
Performance: Grounded Self-Awareness and Growth Mindset	88	0.911	63.0	1	8	3.70	0.676
Coaching: Communication to Clarify and Reinforce Expectations	88	0.932	67.9	1	8	4.10	0.662
Coaching: Targeted Practice for Habit Development and Growth	81	0.932	67.9	1	8	4.08	0.617
Coaching: Accountability through Support and Challenge	83	0.925	66.2	1	8	4.19	0.614
Coaching: Mental Preparation and Mindset Formation	84	0.953	75.3	1	8	4.02	0.672

Our Clients

Team Culture Assessment in Action

"The Excellence with Integrity Culture Development work has been transformational for our program, helping me shape our team culture with precision. The assessments provide clear insights into where our team stands, and working with the Institute has allowed me to turn that feedback into targeted actions that truly make a difference. ... the guidance I've received has not only optimized our team culture but has also made me a better coach."

Danielle Spencer, Paul A. Violich Head Lacrosse Coach, Stanford University

"The [EWI Culture Development work helped] our team shape the uncommon culture needed to win our first ever Men's Soccer National Championship in 2022. The Institute's Excellence with Integrity TOOLS and Assessments remain an essential part of building our team culture to achieve excellence with integrity."

Ian McIntyre, Head Men's Soccer Coach, Syracuse University

"With the responses from these surveys, it's right in front of your face. We know what we are doing well, and even when we are in the green, we can still look at the percentages, see where we have drifted a bit and attack it."

Scott Cassidy, Former Major League Baseball Player, Head Baseball Coach, Le Moyne College

"The EWI Culture Assessment is vital in our efforts to mentor coaches, monitor risk and develop team culture. We use the results as part of our performance review process with each coach and team. In addition, the Institute helped us customize our assessment to provide unique data on our Jesuit mission and values."

Dave Martin, Director of Athletics, University of Scranton

To put our culture assessment to work for you

call 315-692-8054 or email info@ewii.org

EXCELLENCE WITH INTEGRITY™ **ASSESSMENTS**

SPORT TEAM CULTURE SURVEY

Leaders shaping **Culture** and **Character**
for **Optimal Performance**

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