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Helping Student Athletes Succeed After Sports Through Workshops

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Section 1: Innovative Approach

Being a student athlete myself, I found this project would not only benefit me but would benefit my current teammates. What I have noticed is missing in the world of a student athlete is financial literacy programs and what to do after sports whether you make it professionally or not. Using my Capstone Project, I will be using an Innovative approach, emotional intelligence, and creative thinking broken down through workshops to help my fellow student athletes. I am going to meet with many professional contacts in the fields of finance and career-planning. This will go along with researching peer-reviewed sources in order to create workshop resources to help student-athletes succeed after sports. I will also be interviewing several contacts (retired NBA players) in which I have been coached and mentored by as another source.

Section 2: Emotional Intelligence

My project proposal benefited me by causing me to think about life after basketball for myself. Even though my ultimate goal is to continue playing basketball beyond college, I know it won't be forever. At some point, I'm going to have to make money through a normal means of either getting a job or starting my own business. That is something that I definitely have to prepare my mind for. This project proposal has really helped me think about how I can help myself prepare for life after sports just like so many of my colleagues should be doing. This isn't stressed enough with athletes, and is much needed. Even though there are 358 American colleges and universities classified as Division 1 for NCAA competition, the sports community is small. Many of us know each other or know of each other. I have many friends that I have

played sports with in the past that have already graduated and were unprepared once they stopped playing basketball. Many of them suffer from depression and feel very lost and unprepared for the real world. I would love to say that athletes are financially literate but from what we all know about athletes that make it to the pros, not many of them do great with their money unless they have great people around them helping them to invest and make wise money decisions. The money will not last unless you use it wisely. This is where financial literacy comes into play.

Section 3: Creative Thinking

What I'm hoping to do through my research, interviews, and with my sources is put together a workshop for athletes. I believe my approach is creative because although a lot of people have studied the transition out of college there aren't practical applications to take with you. Myself, being a student athlete, was never provided with the resources before this transition. The workshop will help educate athletes about financial literacy and help produce realistic goals after college. It will help with resumes and help narrow down job opportunities to lead them in the right direction. We will show them how to set realistic goals for themselves. Even if the athlete is expected to play beyond college, we can still help. The thing we can help the pro-athlete out with is financial literacy. When they get to the pros, they will need to have the knowledge of how to budget their money so it will last. We all know injuries happen so to prepare for them will definitely help any athlete. I want to provide them tools to increase their well-being and improve their decision-making. I'm thinking outside the box for athletes and preparing them and me for the real world. My approach is unique because this program is being created by an athlete for athletes which has never been done before. I will be the first athlete to

create a program that works with athletes even after they graduate and finish their athletic career. My goal is to motivate athletes to not only plan for professional careers, but also to prepare for life.

Section 4: Your Innovative Solution

I will be making a mockup of my after sports program for the Boise State men's basketball team. I will be presenting it to the team as well as the coaches. What I have learned from speaking with professionals in career planning and finance is that everything begins with a plan. Without a plan you are aimlessly aiming for nothing. Having a detailed plan or goals in place helps create what you want to do with your life. Knowing this helps you with what you expect out of life and the steps in which you need to take to get there. Your goals should be short term and long term. It's ok if goals aren't made or you don't achieve them. We will move them to your next mark because it is never too late to work towards those goals or go at it a little differently. As long as you are aiming for them and have a plan for progress that's our goal. As for financial literacy, from what I have gathered from other players, it is foreign. The excuse of being young is just an excuse. If you don't learn now how to balance your checkbook, or how to invest then when will you learn? If you aren't doing it on your own you should have people in your corner helping you, teaching you, or some type of advisor showing you how to do it along the way. The information I received from retired NBA players who are also my mentors/coaches is simply don't spend what you don't have. A lot of NBA players overspend when they make it to the league. They get into a lot of debt and end up having to pay for it. That is not securing a future in financial success. The advice they gave me was to be practical with your money and let

your money work for you by investing and saving. Another good piece of advice was to make sure to put away some money for taxes.

Section 5: Results

After conducting my workshop, I found that my team found a lot of the information helpful. Most of them knew how to create a resume, but still found it helpful to walk away with a completed one. Goal setting was another good topic as many of them did not really know how to set them as far as short and long term. The financial literacy part was probably the most helpful as this was new information for everyone. I know it was a lot of information, but it was important information. It was good that the team gained lots of knowledge regarding financial literacy and are more equipped with more sources for navigating through life. Through the workshop I myself was able to create a resume as well and signed everyone up for a university job site called “handshake.” Handshake is helpful because you can use it for networking opportunities and see different job postings that are available. The workshops will not stop here. We will periodically have them to see how everyone is doing. We will also have them after college to check up on players to see how everything is coming along. I have also come up with my short term and long-term goals for myself which I found helpful. This workshop will ultimately help my team and I prepare for life after college. It will help provide a little more information on financial literacy to help them initially make smart money decisions. And all of this put together will help all of us prepare for life after the ball stops bouncing.

Section 6: Conclusion

The method that I chose for my final capstone project was a research paper. What I've learned from doing this project is how passionate I am about helping other college athletes prepare for life after sports. Also, I've learned that most athletes are extremely unaware of how the real world operates outside of being a college athlete. We are so busy training through the season and even the off-season that thinking beyond is non-existent. Most athletes don't prepare for the real world while they're in college. It's always important to have a backup plan if you don't make it professionally in your sport. We were all able to benefit and take different things away from this workshop. I acquired many different skills from doing this project. One of these was organization because I had to organize everyone's responses as well as putting together the workshop. Another skill I acquired was multitasking, because I had to manage multiple different tasks like communication with the coaches and athletes on top of crafting a workshop. The third skill that I acquired was communication and public speaking because I had to communicate with my peers and stakeholders. I had to explain an idea from scratch and I had to listen to their thoughts and feedback.

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