

Positive Attitude Trumps All

Having been blessed to work NCAA baseball since 1994, the ACC for the last 8 years, and Division I Post Season since 2005, I can tell you one thing for sure; we have outstanding umpires throughout the country and I have had the pleasure of working with many of them. One of the gifts of my experience is the input of very capable and sharing peers, and having a positive attitude to accept constructive criticism and suggestions incorporate them when appropriate and share those lessons with everyone who is open to learning. When you get good info share it!

For me it's all about POSITIVE ATTITUDE --both on and off the field. We work for the most part with two or three different partners every weekend. If you're the Crew Chief or Crew Member, a positive attitude on the field and in the locker room can be the difference between a great experience and one not to remember. A positive attitude can be contagious especially when you or the crew is under duress due to a call, a game outcome, or the ignorance of fans, administrators and the press. Things happen on a baseball field and we are scrutinized more than ever these days with TV coverage, so each member of the crew needs to stay positive and help keep positive crew perspective. Every game is a new day and we need to approach it with the right positive attitude regardless what happened yesterday.

This is the responsibility of us all: leave the ego in the car, on the plane or in the hotel and go get the job done with a positive attitude, as a team. Here are some thoughts:

1. Pull for one another on the field and cover each other. We don't all have to be best friends however we all need to work together.
2. Make another umpire on the crew's day better with positives. If a partner is struggling, (which happens to us all), offer words of encouragement. Constructively identify the issue(s) and try to figure out why the issue(s) arose and discuss ways to improve. Most importantly, make them feel you have their back.
3. A smile and a polite, positive attitude with game personnel and both teams can be invaluable. "Please" and "Thank you", "Yes sir" and "No Sir" is overlooked by many, but goes a long way to being perceived as a gentleman and professional umpire. Trust me; this will help you when handling situations. It's hard for most to disrespect an official who treats them in a positive, professional manner. They will disagree but for the most part in a respectful way.
4. Be genuine with everyone, especially your crew. Most see through an imposter. Remember, we all reap what we sow!
5. In my opinion, the best compliment you can receive as an umpire is a crew member referring to you as a great partner who treated them positively and with respect regardless of where they or you are in your career.

In closing, when you have good crew karma on and off the field, it leads to good games, weekends, and tournaments. In my experience this is attained by respecting one and other, having fun, enjoying the experience, and **staying POSITIVE... It Trumps All!**

All the best in 2016!