



The Carolina Way: Leadership Lessons from a Life in Coaching

Dean Smith , Gerald D. Bell , John Kilgo , Roy Williams (Preface)

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For forty years, Dean Smith coached the University of North Carolina basketball team with unsurpassed success. Now, in **The Carolina Way**, he explains his coaching philosophy and shows readers how to apply it to the leadership and team-building challenges they face in their own lives. In his wry, sensible, wise way, Coach Smith takes us through every aspect of his program, illustrating his insights with vivid stories. Accompanying each of Coach Smith's major points is a "Player Perspective" from a former North Carolina basketball star and an in-depth "Business Perspective" from Gerald D. Bell, a world-renowned leadership consultant and a professor at UNC's Kenan-Flagler Business School. The keystones of Coach Smith's coaching philosophy are widely applicable and centrally relevant to building successful teams of any kind.

The Carolina Way: Leadership Lessons from a Life in Coaching Details

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From Reader Review The Carolina Way: Leadership Lessons from a Life in Coaching for online ebook

Brian says

A former Topeka resident and KU grad, Dean Smith has always been one of my favorite coaches and is highly successful. This book really has good advice and coaching qualities that I think are very important if you want to establish and maintain a long career

richert says

Must if you are a real Carolina Fan! Dean Smith is awesome!

Brian O'Leary says

I was surprised at how average this book was. There is so much storied history in that program and so much success, but there is way too much comparing running a college basketball team to running a business.

J.T. says

A worthwhile coaching book, I've read better and I've read worse. I skipped the business application sections and I think my experience was better for it.

Justin Tapp says

Every chapter in the book features an historical snippet or principle from Smith (read by Smith himself), then a recollection by a former player, and then an application of the principle to business by a guy with a doctorate in business administration.

Up until now, I've always hated Carolina basketball and Dean Smith. I disliked that he broke Adolph Rupp's all-time winning record. I thought he was overrated, all of those years but only 2 NCAA Championships to his name. My parents told me the stories of how he would beat the old UK teams with his "4-corners" offense. "Stall ball," and how all of Memorial Coliseum would boo him for just dribbling out the clock.

Perhaps I'd also always been a little jealous of Carolina. They have much a much more star-studded alumni list than Kentucky...

1995 was the most crucial year in my memory. Rasheed Wallace threw Andre Riddick against a goal post, and all the world remembers is the choke hold that Riddick put on Wallace a couple plays later (Carolina came back and won an ugly game in the 2nd half). From what I understood, Smith had told the players to

play rough, because Kentucky was intimidated by rough play. “Dirty,” I thought.

What I didn’t know until I read this book was that Wallace and the entire UNC team ran laps in practice because of his technical fouls. That was Smith’s rule that he kept all through his tenure: If someone gets a technical foul, the whole team runs in practice. No exceptions.

If someone simply cursed in practice, the whole team ran. Dean Smith has morals, no exceptions.

Dean Smith was very driven to win, but also was innovative. He recruited guys that respected their coaches and families. He graduated over 90% of his players, with something like 50%+ going on to graduate school. He never had an NCAA investigation or infraction.

His teams beat Duke (they seem to be having a hard time doing that these days).

He explains in the book how he designed the “4-Corners” offense and why many people remember it only as “stall ball” or cheating. He and his players preferred to run, and press. He found the 4-corners the best way to keep the lead late in the game, and teams definitely weren’t able to stop it. The shot clock stopped it, when it was introduced, and he preferred that because he preferred to run and score quickly.

Charles Scott, the first black ACC player, tells a story of how UNC came to Lexington in '68 and beat a hostile UK team, not by the 4-corners, but by stopping UK's offense. Rupp ran the same play over and over, and wouldn't change his plan. UNC had already scouted and prepared for it, and thus stifled UK's offense.

Smith was a pioneer in recruiting Scott. On his recruiting visit to Chapel Hill, Smith took Scott to his own all-white church. This meant a lot to him as a black athlete. He adapted his methods with each team, and often changed strategies to fit each team.

Former Carolina players come back and contribute to the program. They help run summer scrimmages, and many have become coaches themselves. They don’t get into scandals.

The faculty highly praised and gave Dean Smith awards themselves. Many are quoted as saying he was one of the best teachers on campus. They liked the positive attention he brought the school, and the fact that the students were had such a high graduate and post-graduate success rate. You don’t see that mutual admiration from coaches and professors at many colleges today.

The Carolina Way of coaching and practicing has influenced a lot of teams. The continuity of Smith’s program carries over to the style they play today, and his players have become some of the best coaches in basketball. Guys like Felton, May, & McCants stuck around because they wanted to get UNC back on top and keep the tradition alive.

The book changed a lot of my thinking about Smith, and definitely increased my respect for him and his program. I misjudged him.

Bob Deangelo says

I really liked this book. Every leader can learn from a man like Dean Smith, and this book provides excellent leadership principles as well as concrete examples of how Coach Smith implemented these ideas into his

basketball program at the University of North Carolina. Each chapter is divided into three sections: 1 - Coach Smith's discussion of the principle and how it played out in his basketball program, 2 - A player perspective, echoing the principle and how the player recalled it from his time at Carolina, 3 - A business perspective (I wasn't as crazy about these sections as I was about the other 2). This was an easy book to read, very enjoyable. I learned some things and new ideas, and I benefitted from reading it.

Ben Campopiano says

In teaching our players, I tried to concentrate on the process rather than the result. If think that's the best way to teach. If a coach starts out on the first day of practice talking about winning, that approach can actually get in the way of winning.

Thorough preparation does wonders for one's confidence. We tried to put our players through every situation in practice that they might encounter in a game.

During the season, everything for the team; out of season, everything for the individual.

We believed in following a process instead of dwelling on winning or worrying about the consequences.

The best leaders in any profession care about the people they lead, and the people they lead know when the caring is genuine, faked, or absent.

Play hard, play smart, play together

Alisa says

The Carolina Way isn't the only way, that's for certain. But playing hard, playing smart, playing together certainly worked well for us. Our trophy case is full, but far more important, our Museum of Good Memories runneth over. Page 323

Margaret says

A book that inspires you to take charge, work hard, and set goals in your life. Does a great job of relating sports team lessons to real life business/work lessons. A bit repetitive, but a quick read.

Leah Wescott says

I was worried when I started The Carolina Way that Coach Smith's not-so-dynamic reading style might kill my interest. I'm thrilled that I was wrong. The book's format of Smith philosophy => Player reflection => Business tie-in hooked me. Dean Smith inspires me want to be a better leader and person and the CEO metaphors gave me a lot of practical ideas for implementing the ideas as a teacher and administrator.

Maggielb says

I don't coach basketball (or really know anything about it), but I found Dean Smith's style, attitude, and advice to be content neutral. The weakness of this book was the "business application" sections — they were often obvious and not nearly as illuminating as Coach Smith's sections.

Jeff says

Enjoyed the book and the application of Dean Smith's basketball coaching principles to business. Not a book I would have picked up myself, but appreciated that I got it from a good friend. Took me awhile to get through it, but was generally interesting. Dean Smith really emphasized the team over the individual, which paid dividends throughout his coaching career.

Cathy Allen says

I read the leadership books of three of the world's greatest basketball coaches this summer and this one might be my favorite. Both John Wooden and Mike Krzyzewski wrote fantastic books, both of which I heartily recommend to others, but Smith worked in conjunction with a business professor who put what Smith had to say about coaching into a business context. The chapter on team building for example, includes philosophy from Smith and some illustrative basketball stories, then ends with an essay by North Carolina Business Professor Gerald Bell who describes common business applications for team building, including stories from his experience in business consulting. Each chapter is constructed this way, tying each idea up nicely. This was a brilliant idea for a book executed with wisdom and care.

Temoca says

Obviously Coach Smith had one of the most solid programs in college basketball so he has a lot to offer in insight and wisdom. There were many points I took away from his knowledge and I always love that learning piece.

I didn't care for the application to the business perspective; I felt people are smart enough to transfer the points across situations. Also, most people know Smith's program was a top-notch, winning program, so please don't remind me repeatedly in every chapter. I get the point.

Kellen Stewart says

This book was great! The theme has to be that you won't get anywhere in life without a good work ethic!

