

How To Coordinate A Great 2007

Everyone in business needs people with perspective to help coach the team

By Bryan Rader ■ *DirecPath*

Check out the head coach next time you are watching a football game. You'll see him standing on the sidelines, intensely watching his team's performance during the game, with a head-set on and a mouthpiece in front of him. After all the holiday bowl games and playoffs, I am sure you've noticed this.

But to whom is he talking? Why before every critical play is he speaking with someone up in the coaches' box, getting advice or suggestions on what to do next? What is it that the guy up in the box knows or sees that the head coach doesn't from the field?

Every great football coach these days, no matter how long he has played or coached the game, wears a headset and listens to the advice of someone in the booth a couple hundred feet away, up high in the stands. And the reason is "perspective."

One great college football coach once said "the advice I receive from my offensive and defensive coordinators up in the booth is most important during the critical points in the game."

Why? "Because they may see something that I miss out on the field. They might spot a pattern in the offense, a strategy taking hold, or a weakness in the defense. And I want to exploit that."

Is he talking about football...or business?

It's a great analogy to think about for all of us in the cable business, especially at the beginning of a new year. I encourage you to do it too, just as I have.

Getting Perspective

Imagine yourself with a headset on at the start of your week. Think about yourself as the head coach of your company, your department, your marketing team

or your field support staff. Who are you talking with to get advice or perspective during the game?

Who are your offensive and your defensive coordinators? Do you have a coordinator in your business, your career, or in your life? Can you pull the headset on and ask them questions that might give you the perspective you lack because you are on the field (or knee-deep in daily crises, deadlines, and paperwork)? Have you even thought about how important it is to have a coordinator to speak with about which play to call, which defensive scheme to use?

Every great football coach these days, no matter how long he has played or coached the game – wears a headset and listens to the advice of someone in the booth a couple hundred feet away, up high in the stands. And the reason is "perspective."

Finding the Help

I'd like you to think about it as you launch into 2007. Is there someone in your life that can be your offensive coordinator? You know, a person who can give you suggestions and advice to attack the business plan, the sales goals, or the need to drive great efficiency in your field operation? How about someone who can give you guidance or perspective from up above the playing field with strong knowledge about the game, or our industry?

Do you have someone who can be your defensive coordinator too? This may be a person who has advice on how to defend your turf, your properties, your

staff or your cable systems. Who can you speak with that sees the offensive strategies of your competitors coming at you, and knows how to stop them from taking away business, or customers, or clients?

When I asked this question to several associates recently, I got a variety of responses. Some of the better offensive coordinators seem to be former bosses, mentors or entrepreneurs that they have met or worked with. Others have identified partners, board members or someone outside the industry altogether who has a strong sense of marketing, or strategy, or business development.

Best defensive coordinators? I've heard some great ones – many people I talk to include their attorney, or accountant, or an engineer who understands and knows how to defend one's turf from the competition.

Personally, I have several offensive and defensive coordinators I lean on for perspective during the game. And I am sure I will put on the headset in 2007 and call on them several times in the coming months.

Sometimes my coordinator is my wife (I'm not talking about coordinating my clothes). Someone outside of your day-to-day business can offer you great perspective on a daily basis. And she continually does.

I hope you find your offensive and defensive coordinator for 2007 and connect with them a lot this year. And I hope you have a great, successful game in 2007. **BBP**

About the Author

Bryan Rader is now Executive Vice President, Business Development and Marketing, for DirecPath, Dallas, TX. He remains president of the IMCC. He can be reached at brader@direcpath.com or at 678-230-8402.