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# An Athlete's Secret: Dedication

By Courtney Reyes

Everyone knows with a little dedication, anything can be accomplished. Sports are a great way to express an athlete's dedication. Dedication is a very important characteristic to have. Dedication is shown many different ways in sports. Dedication is the secret to success for many athletes. The most common ways athletes express their dedication to a sport are: showing up to every practice, practicing on their own, and keeping their grades up to be eligible to play. Not all great athletes have outstanding talent in the sport they play. It is the dedication that is shining through when they play that makes them so great.

We all know the expression, "practice makes perfect," but most people are too lazy to follow through with it. One example of dedication is shown by an athlete showing up to every practice. Whether it is a walk-through, cardio day, or a morning workout, every practice is important. An athlete schedules practice, plays, and has many other sport-related things that are always changing. Missing a day of practice is as crucial as missing a week of school; the information missed is going to be needed later on in a game. Dedication includes waking up every morning in summer and being ready to work out by 5:30. This is what breaks the average athlete and makes him or her great. Dedication is pushing ourselves past our limits every sprint during practice. Dedication in practice is the difference between winning and losing.

Another way to show dedication in sports is putting in extra work. Extra work is an athlete going to the gym every chance possible and spending countless hours improving his or her skills. To be an outstanding athlete, extra work is definitely needed. Michael Jordan spent countless hours after practice in the gym perfecting his already perfect shot, becoming the most advanced shooter of all time. The work put in when no one is watching will result in how an athlete plays when everyone is watching. Also, being alone in the gym while practicing, an athlete is given the chance to focus, learn, and improve. Whether it is staying after practice, coming early in the morning, or even coming way late at night, it is always essential to put in additional work. If athletes aren't willing to push themselves to become better at a

sport, then they are going to stay average. Leaders are willing to go the extra mile to be the prime competitor.

Last, but not least, athletes reveal their dedication to sports by keeping their grades up to be eligible to play. An athlete's commitment to a sport begins in the classroom. There is more to being an athlete than being talented in what we play. What is more important is being a smart, hardworking student. Most coaches will not play an athlete unless they have good grades. This is intelligent on the coach's part because a student-athlete should be eligible to play their sport. Being dedicated to schoolwork and making decent grades can actually pay for college with scholarships. Colleges look for athletes that are devoted to their schoolwork to better themselves and their school. Coaches also notice if a student-athlete has an impressive work ethic in the classroom, then they will also in the sport they play. Dedication in schoolwork determines an athlete's sport and life success.

In conclusion, athletes with the characteristic of dedication will overcome any obstacle thrown at them. They stand out from all other athletes, no matter the competition. Dedication will always overthrow talent when talent doesn't work hard. Most of all, the dedication of the athletes shows how much they care about a sport. Dedication is not something we are born with, but that we acquire over years of hard work to achieve what we love. An athlete's dedication to a sport results in incomparable success in the sport.

We cannot have success without dedication.

