

Successful Coach and Athletic Director



By Michael Austin, Senior Editor,
Coach & Athletic Director www.coachad.com

What Is Your Coaching Style?

Joe Paterno, Tom Osborne, Lavell Edwards, George Karl, Alvin Gentry, Tom Coughlin, Marvin Lewis, John Calipari, Gary Williams, Pat Summitt and Geno Auriemma all have one thing in common — they all have taken Dr. Benjamin Leibowitz's S.T.A.R. Coaching Style Inventory test.

Dr. Leibowitz, the president of Sports Psychology & Counseling, who also has worked as a consultant with the Buffalo Bills, N.Y. Giants, Cleveland Browns and N.Y. Rangers, has a test that provides coaches with a scientifically developed way to identify their coaching style, which then places them in a better position to utilize their style to get the most out of their team's performance. After speaking with Dr. Leibowitz a few times, I decided there was no better way to get a feel for what he is doing than to take the written exam myself.

After a careful tabulation, Dr. Leibowitz determined that my results were similar to Lavell Edwards, the retired BYU football coach, in that I skew toward the "Relator" style with the "Technician" as my secondary style. Does this mean I'm destined to win 257 college football games and a national championship like Edwards? Not at all. But, when I take to the sidelines someday, I now know how to get the most out of my psychological mindset and, possibly, how to pick assistant coaches that either mirror my thinking or balance it out by having a different profile.

According to Dr. Leibowitz, as a "Relator," I am adept at getting my team ready for the game. My strength is in taking a group of individuals and building them into a functioning team all while communicating on a personal level. My secondary coaching style fell under the term "Technician," which means I am prone to earn success by emphasizing techniques and execution.

I did not score as high in the "Searcher" or "Analyzer" styles. "Searchers" tend to be more imaginative and insightful. They are offensive-minded and love the "big play" versus sweating out the details. "Analyzers" are system makers. They build logical and objective systems for winning, says Dr. Leibowitz.

Too often, coaches possess tunnel-vision in wanting to get the most out of their athletes. The S.T.A.R. test allows you, the coach, to take a little time to explore your patterns and preferences. This is a valuable tool available to make you a better coach and I suggest you take advantage of it.

"Self-knowledge leads to greater creativity, a less distorted perception of reality and a greater control over one's behavior," says Dr. Leibowitz. "Self-understanding also helps you to better understand and relate to the diversity of the individuals you must influence to get the most out of their performance."

To learn more about this system or to take the test, contact Dr. Leibowitz at ben@coachpsych.net or call him at (732) 531-6868. Visit coachpsych.net for more information.

Read Dr. Leibowitz's entire article about the [S.T.A.R. Coaching Style Inventory](#).