

## How to evaluate the previous season:

One of the most crucial skills an athlete can develop is the ability to ask the right questions at the right time. This will immediately direct their focus to learning the things that will matter most for their growth and success. Questions drive your focus and reflect your mindset. This article has been written for coaches and parents to help their wrestlers learn as much as they can from the previous season. These questions will help wrestlers develop a blueprint for the upcoming season so that they can learn faster and perform better.

So now that the season is over, here are four important questions that your athletes should be asking:



### 1. Did I accomplish what I set out to accomplish? Why or why not?

If the answer to this question is, “I don’t know!” then your athlete’s purpose for this last season was not clear enough. What they want to accomplish should be so clearly stated that at the end of the season they should know exactly if they accomplished it or not.

This question helps them to evaluate their previous goals, to break down the path they took, and if it ultimately got them to where they wanted to be. When they answer the “Why or why not?” question, they have to be extremely specific. “I didn’t work hard enough” is not a good enough answer:

I didn't ever stay after practice.  
I didn't pick the toughest partners in the room.  
I didn't ever do extra workouts outside of practice.  
I didn't rest/recover well enough.  
I didn't take control of my diet.  
I didn't rehab my injuries correctly.  
I didn't train my mind.  
I didn't sleep well.  
I got too distracted with friends.  
I didn't deal with bad calls well.

These are the kinds of answers that can help guide them into the next season as things that they can actually do and follow through on. Make sure their answers are focused on the things they can control. **Every ounce of energy spent trying to control things outside of our control is just wasted energy. Help them focus only on what they can control.**

Once they have dissected the things that lead them to either accomplish their goal or that lead them to fall short, then they have a blueprint for next season. All they will need to do is to make small adjustments and take more control where they fell short. The next few questions will help them with that!

## 2. What went well this season?

Wrestlers rarely take the time to stop and look back at the work they have put in. So, have your wrestlers look back and ask themselves what went well this season. Have them look for all the highlights and the enjoyable times, the things they are grateful for and the moments they were proud of their work. Have them look for the key moments of growth and the investment they made into themselves and their careers. As they write down the things they did, have them look deeper at the actions they took and the things they said to themselves that

lead them to do well throughout the season. As they answer this question they will continue to add to that blueprint for this upcoming season.

### 3. What could I have done better?

This list may belong because we are usually our toughest critic, but have your wrestlers only pick three things. Ask them to think of the three biggest gaps in their wrestling, the three things that, if they had learned at the beginning of the season, would have made their season drastically different. It could be learning how to re-shoot, learning how to get off their back or get off bottom, it could be learning how to finish that single leg, or even learning how to set up your double leg. Have them find the three things that will have the biggest impact moving forward and make a plan for each one! How are they going to improve these things? Are they going to watch Jordan Burroughs to learn about his re-shoot and double leg attacks? Are they going to watch technique videos? They need to make a plan and take their first step within the next 24 hours.

### 4. What obstacles/distractions do I need to prepare for this next season?

Your performance is a combination of the way you train and the way you deal with distractions. Jeff Eure, one of the best wrestling coaches I've ever met, constantly tells his wrestlers, "All distractions are created equal." Anything that takes your wrestler's mind away from where it is supposed to be is a distraction, big or small, person, object or event, they are all created equal. As they try to answer this question, these three steps will help them to be incredibly specific and more prepared:

1. Have them create a list of distractions and obstacles that held them back from reaching their potential, the distractions and obstacles that held them back from achieving their goals this past season. This list might look similar to the list from question 1.
2. After they create that list, they need to create a specific plan for each distraction/obstacle for this upcoming season. What are they going to do if they face those distractions or obstacles again? If cutting weight was a distraction last season, what is your specific plan to make sure it isn't a distraction this upcoming season? Make sure the plan is extremely specific.
3. Lastly, they need to consider additional distractions and obstacles that they might face this upcoming season and then continue to make plans for each additional distraction and obstacle.

Too many athletes across the world do not learn the lessons they need to learn from season to season. They go through the motions, arrive



and leave workouts, compete, and then never think about the lessons they could have learned, which sets these athletes up for extreme levels of frustration and disappointment. Asking the right questions at the right time is an incredibly important ability to develop, and even more important is the commitment to follow through with the answers. This is

what separates good wrestlers from champion wrestlers. These four questions will guide your wrestlers down the right path to learn as much

as they can and get them prepared for the upcoming season. Their best performance depends on their preparation and these questions will prepare them to level up.

*\*Note To Reader\** These same four questions can be asked after any tournament, training camp, or practice. It is a blueprint that any athlete can use anytime, but is particularly helpful between seasons.

Coaches, I suggest you ask these questions after tough losses or tough practices because it will help guide your wrestlers focus and mindset.

Parents, if your wrestlers do not respond well to you guiding this mental training activity, I would suggest finding a good third party (a coach, a teammate, or even me) to help them ask these incredibly important questions.

Both parents and coaches, if you are guiding this process, there is a 5th question you should be asking: How can I help you? If the answer is reasonable, do your best to help your wrestlers how they want to be helped!

Nothing works unless you do. <http://frostcg.com/usawrestlingnewsletter>  
*(paste this link in your browser)*

#### *About the author:*

Clay Frost is a mental training expert. His mission is to help elite athletes that are looking to level up to make their minds into their greatest weapon so that they can perform at their best. He grew up wrestling in Utah but unfortunately spent 14 of his 16-year wrestling career dealing with one injury after another. He thought that his injuries derailed a promising career. Instead, they helped him find the path to an extremely rewarding career in



mental training. He is excited to give back to the USA Wrestling community through the newsletter. If you'd like to contact Clay or have any questions, his email is [clay@frostcg.com](mailto:clay@frostcg.com) or you can text him at 801-860-2267.