



SPORTS
INNERZONE®

CASE STUDY: NCAA DIVISION I
Men's Basketball Results

ABOUT US

InnerZone® Sports is an application developed specifically for identifying an athlete's individual communication patterns, thereby allowing coaches to configure their team for optimum success. InnerZone® Sports uses predictive human analytics to identify the individual communication profiles of coaches, players, and other employees within an organization. These profiles allow the user of our product to affect positive change in a wide variety of areas, from mitigating organizational conflict to improving team performance.

Long seen as an intangible by coaches and athletes, team chemistry is often cited as a key factor in every team's success or failure. InnerZone® Sports uses proprietary psychometric algorithms that measure the natural connections that exist between people. InnerZone® Sports leverages proprietary assessments and human analytic technology to quickly and accurately identify the sources of friction and natural rapport between individuals and teams, thereby minimizing friction and producing more effective relationships. InnerZone® Sports assessment instruments offer a high degree of accuracy while remaining minimally invasive (the assessment takes only 2 to 4 minutes to complete with 85% self-reported accuracy).

InnerZone® Sports is the optimal solution for teams seeking to gain a competitive edge by improving team chemistry. InnerZone® Sports is a Software as a Service offered in both web and mobile platforms.

CASE STUDY

NCAA Division I Basketball Team Results

The following data was collected from an NCAA Division I men's basketball program. The coaching staff was in the second year of their tenure at this institution. During the first year, the team had a .500 record, finished in the middle of the league, and lost in the league tournament to finish their season.

Upon the initial collection of InnerZone® data at the beginning of the coaching staff's second season, it became evident that the team had recruited a number of athletes with similar communication profiles. However, some of the players identified as integral to the team's success had quite different profiles, leading to some difficulties in overall team communication and cohesion. In consultation with the team as the season progressed, InnerZone® suggestions regarding coaching and communication as well as personnel adjustments were made and implemented. Over the course of the season, the team's lineup changed significantly and performance surged when players with more compatible communication profiles played together.

The team finished much stronger than it began the season, winning their conference tournament and making it to the NCAA Tournament for the first time in ten years.

CLASSIFICATION OF PLAYERS

THINKER

Naturally analytical, they are not impulsive and tend to think and act with some process in mind.



BOTTOM LINER

Natural risk takers, they are undeterred by conflict and are assertive and decisive.



ENERGIZER

Enjoys interacting with and motivating others. Very creative and easily inspired.



BRIDGE BUILDER

Avoids conflict and values close relationships. Thrives on positive reinforcement.





■ RECRUITING

The returning players were comprised primarily of Bridge Builders and Energizers. (These profiles typically relate well with one another.) The coaches recruited five players: a junior college transfer (primarily a Bottom Liner) and four freshman (one Bottom Liner, one Bridge Builder, and two Energizers). The data suggested that the Bridge Builders and Energizers would blend successfully with the core of the team, but the junior college player's communication profile did not fit well with that core group. He was a Bottom Liner who preferred direct communication and was inclined to create or even enjoy conflict if he felt things were progressing too slowly or not in the proper direction. (Bridge Builders are far more inclined to avoid conflict and be uncomfortable with and around those they believe are creating conflict.)

We discussed our findings with the coaches, along with our reservations about this player and how he would work with the core of the team. Because of the dramatic differences in communication profiles, it was even suggested that if this data were available before or during the recruiting process the coaches may not have recruited this player.

However, the coaches felt that he had toughness and a unique skill set that the team lacked and thought he could help the team immediately. While the talent was undeniable, the inability to interact effectively with coaches and players was counterproductive to the team's objectives.



WHILE THE TALENT WAS UNDENIABLE, THE INABILITY TO INTERACT EFFECTIVELY WITH COACHES AND PLAYERS WAS COUNTERPRODUCTIVE TO THE TEAM'S OBJECTIVES.

■ PRESEASON

The assessments showed a fairly diversified team. There were several players that fit into each of the four primary communication paradigms. The main groups were Energizers and Bridge Builders, who typically work well together and enjoy team camaraderie and positive reinforcement. The less represented styles were Thinkers and Bottom Liners. Thinkers are generally quite deliberate, feeling most comfortable when they have a set process that they fully understand, unlike Bottom Liners who tend to act quickly and assertively when they have a goal.

■ INITIAL ROTATION

Because of the initial evaluation by the coaches, the junior college Bottom Liner player was given an opportunity to start several games early in the season. The team featured a ten player rotation. The starting players were two Bridge Builders, two Energizers, and one Bottom Liner. Of the initial ten player rotation, only the Bottom Liner was new to the program.

The Bridge Builders that made up the core of the team struggled with this disruption. The key returning player, who was expected to be a team leader, only averaged seven points a game in the first five games. After nine games, very little success, and a record of three wins and six losses, the Bottom Liner player was benched and did not play another minute that season. The coach admitted later that the Bottom Liner had been a poor fit with the rest of the team, but the coach felt his talent would more than compensate for the lack of chemistry. It did not.

■ MID-SEASON RESULTS

After the Bottom Liner was benched, the team began playing well together with a starting lineup of three Bridge Builders and two Energizers. These styles typically work well together. The remainder of the rotation, coming off the bench, was comprised of an Energizer, a Bridge Builder, and two Thinkers. Communication on the team improved, and the key players (an Energizer and two Bridge Builders) began to assert themselves. Earlier in the season,

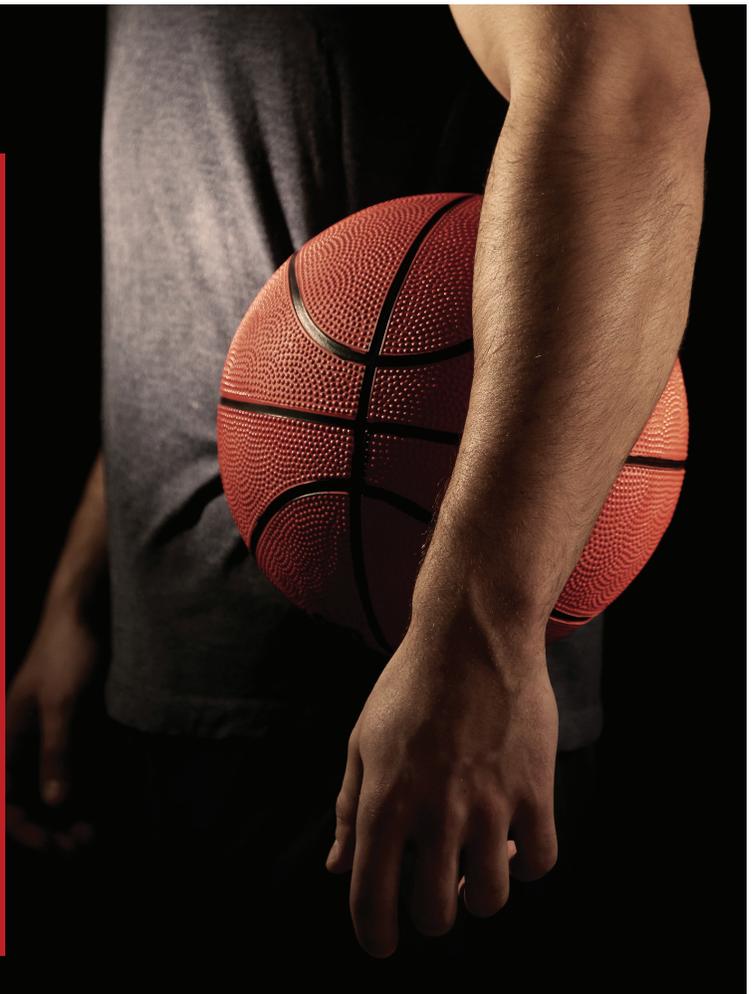
the Energizer and Bridge Builders would defer to the Bottom Liner's more direct style, and as a result their performance suffered. After the Bottom Liner was benched, the team had six wins and six losses in the next 12 games.

After about 20 games, one of the starting Energizers injured his leg and had to sit out for several games. Additionally, one of the Thinkers was dismissed from the team for non-athletic reasons.



TOURNAMENT BID

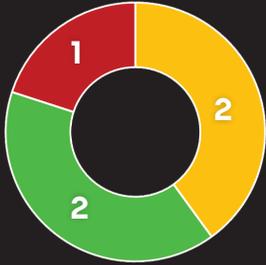
IN THE POST SEASON LEAGUE TOURNAMENT, THE TEAM STARTED THE SAME LINEUP WITH WHICH THEY FINISHED THE LEAGUE SEASON...THEY WON ALL THREE GAMES AND WON THE LEAGUE TOURNAMENT CHAMPIONSHIP EARNING AN AUTOMATIC BID TO THE NCAA TOURNAMENT.



EARLY SEASON

Starting Lineup:

- ▶ 2 Bridge Builders ●●
- ▶ 2 Energizers ●●
- ▶ 1 Bottom Liner ●

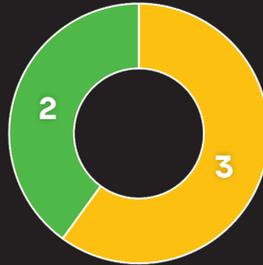


3 WINS | 6 LOSSES

MID SEASON

Starting Lineup:

- ▶ 3 Bridge Builders ●●●
- ▶ 2 Energizers ●●

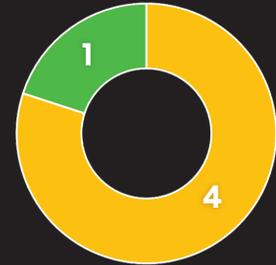


6 WINS | 6 LOSSES

CONFERENCE/POST SEASON

Starting Lineup:

- ▶ 4 Bridge Builders ●●●●
- ▶ 1 Energizer ●



12 WINS | 1 LOSS

LEAGUE RESULTS (LAST 10 GAMES)

After the injury to the starting Energizer and the removal of the Thinker, the team started four Bridge Builders and one Energizer and played very well during the last ten league games. The leading scorer began to play up to preseason expectations, leading the team in scoring and rebounding. The team finished the league part of their season with nine wins and one loss, tied for first place in the league.

POST SEASON TOURNAMENT

In the post season league tournament, the team started the same lineup with which they finished the league season – four Bridge Builders and one Energizer, with a Bridge Builder, an Energizer, and a Thinker coming off the bench, almost always in that order. They won all three games and won the league tournament championship earning an automatic bid to the NCAA Tournament. This was the first time in ten years the school had qualified for the NCAA Tournament. They were playing very well with the leading scorer averaging 23 points per game. The team received a low seed in the NCAA tournament and lost in the first round to a nationally ranked team that advanced to the Elite Eight.



BUILD FOR YOUR TEAM A FEELING OF ONENESS, OF DEPENDENCE ON ONE ANOTHER, AND OF STRENGTH TO BE DERIVED BY UNITY.

- VINCE LOMBARDI

InnerZone® Sports' past performance does not predict future success, as every team's circumstance is unique. However, the use of predictive human analytics to measure the previously intangible aspects of how coaches and players relate is valuable to every organization. In fact, it is integral to creating and maintaining the type of enjoyable and productive environment that is most conducive to success.

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