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# Above The Line: Lessons In Leadership And Life From A Championship Season

URBAN  
MEYER



WITH WAYNE COFFEY



ABOVE THE LINE

LESSONS IN LEADERSHIP AND LIFE  
FROM A CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON

READ BY JASON CULP • UNABRIDGED



## Synopsis

Lessons on leadership and team building from Ohio State's head football coach, drawing heavily on the 2014 season and his team's remarkable run to the championship in the face of adversity. Since he took over at Bowling Green 14 years ago, Urban Frank Meyer III has established himself as one of the elite coaches in the annals of college football. With three national championships and a record of 142-26, he has achieved remarkable results with many teams. But it is Meyer's recent work at The Ohio State University that has elevated him into the realm of such iconic coaching names as Paul (Bear) Bryant, Knute Rockne, and OSU's own Woody Hayes. Never was that work more successful than in the 2014 season, which ended with Meyer's Buckeyes capturing the inaugural College Football Playoff Championship with a 42-20 victory over Oregon. That the triumph came with a third-string quarterback at the helm - and after OSU had suffered a brutal early season loss and endured the tragic loss of a teammate - only made the achievement that much more extraordinary. How did Ohio State, a school many thought did not even deserve to be in the playoffs, end up at the summit of college football? In *Above the Line*, Urban Meyer answers this question and many more. Pulling back the curtain on the high-profile, high-pressure world he operates in, he offers listeners a groundbreaking game plan for creating a culture of success that engages and inspires the people around them - the very game plan he followed every day in the Buckeyes' historic 2014 season. A student of psychology long before he became a coach, Meyer believes that trust is the bedrock of great achievements and healthy relationships and explains how to build it, step by step - whether in a team, a family, or a Fortune 500 company.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

When it comes to bleeding scarlet and grey (and - apparently and begrudgingly - predominantly black now for one game per year!), there's no one who lives for the Buckeye games more than my husband. Believe it or not, PRIOR to our grandsons' first birthdays, he had trained them - at the conclusion of our singing the Ohio State fight song - to say "Go Bucks!" So given the expectation (with the football program's #1 ranking at the beginning of the season) that they'd be able to head back to a National Championship game this year, the fact that the OH-SO-CLOSE loss to Michigan State not only lost them the Big Ten title, but also has them headed to the Fiesta Bowl instead has made this one of those "ouch" years for him (a "double ouch" since our niece is a Michigan State alum, which prompted an immediate post-game call to said niece, reminding her of her treasonous college choice!) He really lives and breathes this stuff, with his "man-cave" reflecting those loyalties, so I knew I'd have to tread lightly this year when it came to Christmas purchases. I've lost track of the number of Ohio State football-related books on his shelves - a million, give or take! - so I thought maybe, just maybe he'd want to dive into one of the other half dozen sports bios I'd had under the tree for him this year first. HA! This book - focused on last year's championship season (and all of the great memories it holds for my husband) headed to bed with us Christmas night (I'm thinking about instituting a "no reading past 11pm" rule), and each night since I've been "treated" to a summary of the latest insights, situations, etc. from yet another OSU book he's devouring like it was a steak dinner in front of a man who hadn't eaten for a month.

I don't play team sports. I don't enjoy watching team sports on TV. But I truly enjoyed Coach Urban Meyer's book and found it to be insightful, direct, and highly motivating. "Above the Line: Lessons in Leadership and Life from a Championship Season" contains a number of valuable lessons illustrated by how Coach Meyer and the Ohio State University football team learned to work together through some serious setbacks and difficulties to ultimately win the 2014 College Football Playoff Championship. The integrated system of leadership that Meyer proposes has, as its foundation, the model of "Above the Line" behaviors as opposed to "Below the Line" behaviors. Meyer asserts that, "The simple truth is that getting and staying Above the Line is the foundation of success in anything you do --- work, school, football, and life. The harder truth is that getting and staying Above the Line is not easy." (p. 27) No, I'm not going to tell you, in this reading report, what the Above the Line behaviors are, you'll have to buy and read the book for

yourself. However, I will tell you that Chapter 2 delineates The R Factor. It is described in a deceptively simple, but elegant, equation.  $E + R = O$ . Event + Response = Outcome. Meyer asserts that we can't control E, but we can choose what R will be, thus significantly affecting the O, and he helps the reader consider various ways that this can be done. The book suggests ways that leaders can create an Above the Line culture resulting in productive responses to events and, in turn, to positive, and even exceptional, outcomes. Chapter 6, entitled "Power of the Unit," is a must read for leaders who have more direct reports than they can work with effectively.

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