

## Focus

**Challenge:** Wolves are considered to be survivors. They thrive and survive in harsh locations and primarily hunt in packs. Because wolves travel in packs, they are often associated with family. They are mate with one partner for life and are a symbol of loyalty and compassion.

Why do you think most people or teams quit? People and teams quit on the plateau or when they are going through tough times. All too often they feel like all their hard work is not paying off, or the trouble they are experiencing isn't worth it enough to push through.

Plateaus and tough times are inevitable, even for those who are the best in the world at their craft. Therefore, it is even more important to fall in love with the process of becoming great rather than focusing on the current feeling of unmet goals and expectations.

**Conflict is inevitable, Deal with it:** The ups and downs of a season are part of being on a team. It's the teams who can keep focus on the mission are the teams who experience the most success. Not only will you have ups and downs through the season, but your team will experience some type of conflict. Whenever you get people together from different backgrounds, attitudes, and opinions, conflict is bound to occur. You will never be able to avoid conflict within a team. Too often conflict isn't addressed or if it is addressed it is destructive in nature. If you don't address various conflict situations because of your fear or uncomfortable feelings, you are basically saying your comfort level in not addressing the conflict is more important than they team's success and well-being. That's selfish, and not the mark of a true leader.

### Questions to consider:

What type of conflicts (external or internal) have you experienced individually or as a team?

Was the conflict addressed or avoided? What was the end result?

Do you naturally ask the question, "Why is this happening to me?" or "What can I learn from this and how can I make the situation better?"

**What's going on:** The Philippians were currently facing adversity, both externally (Philippians 1:27-30) and internally (Philippians 3:2). Paul wanted to make sure the adversity pulled them together rather than drive them apart. Paul realized that he himself had not arrived. He had to press on and avoid the outside distractions. It was his responsibility to pursue the "prize" a greater knowledge of Christ, intimacy with Christ, conformity to Christ, and personal holiness.

### Game Time: Philippians 3:12-16

1. What was Paul's ultimate goal?

2. Why was it so important for Paul to press on?
3. What kind of attitude and effort do you sense Paul had towards his mission?

**Key Verse:** "...let us keep living by that same *standard* to which we have attained." Philippians 3:16

**Anchor to remember:**

- Learn from the past; Live in the present; Prepare the future