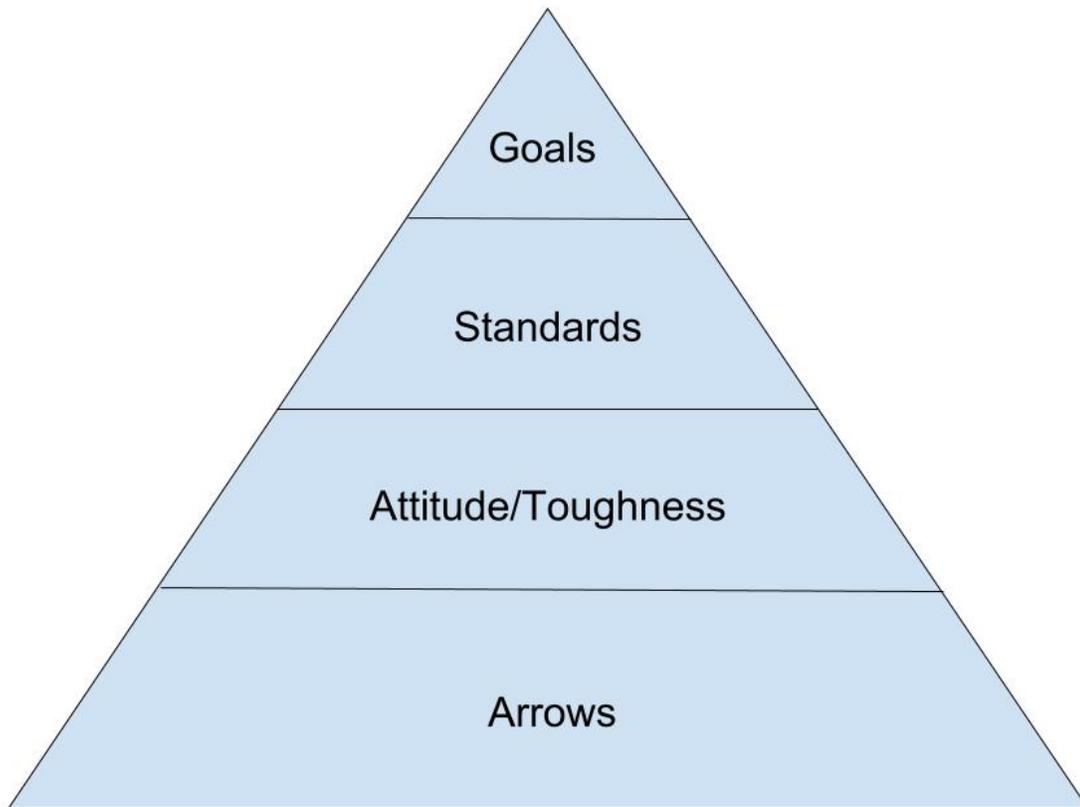


**“There are no large or small tasks, all are of equal importance”**



## **Arrows**

Your arrows are the foundation of success, the 9 things that athletes can actively work to improve on. They are:

- Technique
- Conditioning
- Strength
- Coachability
- Recovery
- Flexibility
- Relationships
- Habits
- Nutrition

Here is what is important to understand about arrows:

1. They are called arrows because they can either point in the right or wrong direction (signifying improvement or regression).
2. The biggest jumps athletes make and the core of real improvements are mental, but there is no way to directly engineer and or predict when an athlete is going to improve mentally.

3. **The most an athlete can hope for, and the best way to facilitate mental jumps is by trying to keep all 9 arrows pointed in the right direction at once.**
4. Athlete's arrows are heavily interrelated. If you are a liar (which falls under habits), your relationships suffer, so your coachability suffers, and therefore your technique is going to be worse. If you smoke a lot of pot, your strength, conditioning and flexibility are going to suffer for anatomical reasons (and likely nutrition), and you will be forced to lie about it because it's illegal, so you have to all the deleterious effects of being a liar on top of that.

So you can tell by the diagram that you facilitate improvements in attitude, toughness and mentality by taking care of your arrows. This is helpful for making kids understand why wrestling is a lifestyle even when they aren't cutting weight.

## Standards

Standards are the things you can ask of any athlete that will allow them to quickly maximize their potential. But just because anyone can do them it doesn't mean they are easy, which is why it takes mental improvements to commit to them.

My Standards are:

### No Easy Takedowns

Most takedowns in high school are given away when they are only about 75% complete. Only elite high school wrestlers fight till the end, and few high school wrestlers have the technique to finish on someone who doesn't give anything away. But you can't just say that, you have to make it tangible for the athletes. I emphasize:

- Never Give Up Your Hip Voluntarily - Basically always square your hips down and away if you have the chance. One of the most common symptoms of an under confident mind is forfeiting this opportunity.
- Don't Float Your Hips - Don't reach over the top for ankles or whatever in shot defense situations. Again, make sure you force your opponents to fight through the strength in your hips. Very similar to the first one.
- Don't Get Low Lifted - If you get low lifted, which should almost never happen, arch out of the position and get your head back up.
- No Easy Go Behinds - If you get taken down in a go-behind, front headlock, or butt drag situation, there is no reason to do it with your head on the mat.

Obviously this stresses straight defense, but it's not to say I don't encourage sparring and innovation and teach a lot of positions. **The crucial distinction is that any departure from these rules must come from an attitude of confidence, not insecurity.**

### Tough On Bottom

Again you can't just tell kids they should never get ridden, because that's not a reasonable expectation, but there are things you can ask of them that will build their confidence and facilitate improvement.

- Stay off your Belly

- Control Your Hands - If you think kids can almost always avoid hitting their belly, it follows that they can't be getting their hands controlled. It also helps teach them that "hand control" isn't what it sounds like.
- Keep Your Head Up - Attitude dictates body language, and body language can dictate attitude.
- Move Off the Whistle

### **Have a Go-To Takedown**

- Move Your Opponent - Work to lead the action with hand fighting, position, fakes or motion.
- Know Your Best Ties
- Have the Technique to Finish - Unlike bottom, it takes a pretty keen technical mind finish takedowns against elite wrestlers.

As the rest of the diagram plays out, if you commit to the standards, which is a reasonable expectation, you are giving yourself your best chance to reach your goals.