**Hoop Lab Blog**

Skill vs Will

Let’s start by understanding the definitions of skill and will

Skill-the ability to do something with expertise, difficult work, an outstanding ability, strength or mastery.

Will- The faculty by which a person decides on and initiates action (drive, effort, resolve, dedication)

I am going to talk about two facets of both topics. There is a learned version and a natural version.

Natural vs Learned Skill

Natural skill is when you are good at something without effort. You are able to obtain the knowledge of the subject easily or a fast learner. Lebron James is a naturally skilled player meaning he does not have to work as hard as others to pick something up. Lebron would be the epitome of natural skill.

Learned skill is when you have to work diligently at something, create muscle memory, and constantly touch on it. A great example for this subject would be JJ Reddick, the sharp shooter from the LA Clippers. JJ had to work at his craft in a tedious manner in order to be able to do what he does and survive in this league. He could not naturally just walk out on the court and be relevant, he has to constantly work at it.

Natural vs Learned Will

Natural Will is the deep rooted and motivated player who the coach doesn’t have to drive to get maximum effort from. This player has a rare innate mechanism within, that created the strive for excellence which is quite rare with most players.

Learned Will is more common for basketball players rooted from a situation positive or negative causing a learned reaction toward their attitudes in the game. It’s what triggers the motivators within that player. A player with confidence plays hard due to the encouragement of their coach or a player plays soft due to the lack of confidence instilled by whoever is in direct contact with the player. It is all learned from experiences.

My question is whether learned or natural, how do you get the maximum of both? A naturally skilled player usually tends to be less motivated, taking the game for granted and not reaching their potential. A learned skill player usually doesn’t have the attributes necessary to make it to the next level do to their lack of natural ability. So how would we balance it where a player naturally skilled or learned, is motivated to take whatever their attributes and apply them appropriately? The Coaches Debacle!