

Dear Mr. Shapiro ...

Written by {ga=pup}

Tuesday, September 26 2006 7:00 PM -

With the Indians most frustrating regular season in recent history winding to a close, Swerbs Blurbs Senior Antagonist fired off the following letter to Tribe GM Mark Shapiro about what he would like to see done with this team. I liked it so much, I asked him to let me slam it up on Da Blurbs.



To: Mark Shapiro, General Manager, Cleveland Indians

Cc: Larry Dolan, Owner, Cleveland Indians

Re: 2007

Mr. Shapiro,

Hello Mark, just wanted to get in touch with you and apprise you of a certain situation that falls under your control and how I think you should consider handling it. When you run your organization, I believe your goal is to acquire the best talent available, within the constraints of a budget that Mr. Dolan has set for you. I also believe you do a very good job of this, most of the time. For every Jason Johnson that makes fans shake their head, there is a Kevin Millwood to put smiles on those faces. I have long said that the players you have on this roster are good enough to win with and you have been able to do that while staying within the very tight budget set forth.

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However, what I do not understand is why you will continue to allow all that talent go to waste by keeping your buddy in charge of that talent. Eric Wedge has seemingly inspired that talent to be average. Why would someone with a great job, like you, allow all of his hard work to go to waste by having someone manage it like a buffoon? If I had worked the hours that you have and built something that is so close to being finished, I would never allow a friendship to get in the way of completing the task. If you were building a house, would you let your best friend to oversee the wiring because he once had success hooking up his car stereo? That is what Eric Wedge has done with his minor league success. Hooked up a car stereo. It is not easy to win at any level, but much like there are "AAAA" players, it would appear you have unearthed a "AAAA" manager.

There are skills that a manager requires to possess to win consistently at the major league level. These skills need to be sharpened a little more at each level as you climb the rankings within an organization. When your players have had their biggest successes, your manager has been an afterthought. When your team made that improbable run on 2005, the same lineup was used almost every day. The pitchers were called upon in the same manner most days. Starter get me through 7, Bob Howry in the in the 8th and Wicky to close the door. When that sequence was not used, we usually did not win. In 2006, there has been no imagination to Wedge's decisions. In 2007, if the players are spectacular, we will have a good year. If not, Wedge will allow them to spiral out of control until we call up a bunch of kids and play inspired ball for a month before everyone figures out it doesn't matter and goes back to chill mode.

I said at the beginning that I would offer a suggestion to help you out. There is a rumor in South Florida that the Florida Marlins will fire Joe Girardi. All that Mr. Girardi has done in his one year of tenure is lead the lowest payroll team, that employs a bunch of young talent, to one of the most remarkable runs in my lifetime. My suggestion is you get on the telephone and call Joe up. Check into his interest. You can even keep Eric Wedge in the organization, just not in the dugout.

Sincerely,

Cris Sykes

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