

Eagles owner says next coach after Chip Kelly needs to value 'emotional intelligence'

By *Jeanna Thomas* [2] @jeannathomas [3] on Dec 30, 2015, 2:56p

Brett Davis-USA TODAY Sports

The Eagles' new head coach and player personnel department will return to a collaborative approach to roster decisions.

Jeffrey Lurie, the owner of the Philadelphia Eagles, provided some insight into his decision to release head coach Chip Kelly on Wednesday after what Lurie called "one of the most disappointing seasons" he's ever experienced. Kelly's first season with expanded control over personnel decisions did not live up to the team's expectations, and Lurie made it clear that will influence the way they approach roster decisions in the immediate future.

1) Moving forward, personnel decisions in Philly will be a collaborative effort.

While Lurie believed at the time there was justification to give Kelly the opportunity to fulfill his vision for the Eagles with more personnel control, he said that a collaborative approach between the new head coach, the team's vice president of player personnel Howie Roseman and director of player personnel Tom Donahoe is the most appropriate way for the team to proceed.

"Going forward, a much more collaborative approach between player personnel and coaching is the way to go, and that's the

direction we would go," Lurie said.

2) Kelly was not offered the opportunity to retain his job.

Contrary to reports that surfaced after the announcement that Kelly's tenure with the Eagles had ended, Lurie said that he did not offer Kelly the opportunity to relinquish the personnel control he had been granted prior to the 2015 season and remain in place as Philadelphia's head coach. Lurie also said that Kelly didn't try to convince the organization to retain him.

"The atmosphere was such that I think he knew he was being let go, so in fairness, that decision was made before Chip met with myself and Don Smolenski," Lurie said.

3) DeMarco Murray was not a factor in the decision to fire Kelly.

Lurie said that he does not think that Kelly lost the Eagles' locker room. Much was made of the fact that running back **DeMarco Murray sat next to Lurie on the team's flight home from New England** [5], but Lurie said his conversation with Murray had "zero to do with" Kelly's termination.

4) Lurie harbors no ill will toward Kelly and wishes him the best.

Lurie said in his opening statement that he wishes Kelly the best. "I really just want to publicly thank Chip," Lurie said. "Nobody worked harder the last three years, and [he's a] smart guy, and it was a bold decision to hire him, and [he] had, certainly, some success, and I wish him the very best, as I did yesterday."

The timing of this move was a little surprising, and Lurie also provided some insight on the decision to part ways with Kelly

before the final game of the 2015 season, saying that it allows the Eagles to get a jump on their search and also gives Kelly more time to figure out where he'll land in 2016.

5) The team knew they were taking a risk by handing personnel control over to Kelly.

Lurie defended the team's decision to allow Kelly to assume full control over player personnel decisions, but acknowledged that it was a calculated risk.

"There [are] dangers in that, in terms of having two 10-6 seasons in a row, and ... making significant changes, you can easily achieve mediocrity," Lurie said. "I think it would be shame not to try, but the end result was mediocrity."

6) The next head coach of the Eagles will value "emotional intelligence."

Lurie listed some of the attributes the Eagles will look for in their next head coach. Philadelphia will need someone who is a "smart, strategic thinker," "interacts very well and communicates clearly" and who "understands the passion of our fans."

View video at: <http://www.sbnation.com/nfl/2015/12/30/10690100/eagles-owner-jeffrey-lurie-chip-kelly-emotional-intelligence-fired>

"You've got to open your heart to players ... I would call it a style of leadership that values information, all the resources that are provided and, at the same time, values emotional intelligence," Lurie said.

Kelly has said that he wants to remain in the NFL as a head coach, but the suggestion that he lacks the emotional intelligence to succeed in that role, **coupled with Eagles players speaking out about Kelly being unapproachable** [6], may give teams pause.

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