

Eliza

# Coaches Handbook

## Introduction

This handbook has been developed to provide guidance for our coaches to learn how to teach, and not just what to teach. There are thousands of reference books on the subject of coaching, many of which purely include drills. We strongly encourage all coaches to source this information in addition to a level 1 and possibly a level 2 coaches course. Hopefully, we will provide sufficient information on better techniques to coaching.

## The goals of our coaches are to:

- Teach the skills and fundamentals of basketball.
- Ensure all players enjoy themselves and have fun playing.
- Put winning into perspective, it's only one goal among many
- Develop teamwork and cooperation.
- Develop positive attitudes, and respect of teammates, opponents, officials, and coaches.
- More importantly – Skills, Fun, and Values!

## Welcome to Coaching!

Coaching is an exciting way to be involved in sport. But it isn't easy. The responsibilities may overwhelm many people, as it involves preparing players physically and mentally to compete effectively, fairly, and safely in their sport and provide them with a positive role model. Remember an enjoyable, safe experience will enable them to develop many skills useful throughout their lives.

## Coaching Techniques

Coaching techniques will vary from one coach to another. All coaches have different views on how a team should be coached. No matter what these views may be, the main aim is to raise the standard of the team. Coaching technique must be a composite part of your own personality. You may wish to have an authoritative style; "do as I say, don't ask questions", a laissez faire; "let the players decide" or what I encourage is the cooperative style. This allows the input of the athletes and develops a good relationship with the players, but is the hardest coaching style to develop.

## **Philosophies & Goals**

Coaches develop their own coaching philosophies over time, and often the philosophies of the club are influenced onto coaches so that we are all striving for the same goal. These goals and objectives usually come from our head coaches who manage the programs, and though they may vary from age group and sexes, they are still part of the Clubs Philosophies.

## **What should you know about your athletes?**

Giving players a questionnaire to fill in at a training session can be very useful for a coach. It is often enjoyable to complete, as it is an unusual occurrence. The following questions may be asked, however they are not forced upon people.

What is your Motivation for playing basketball?

What is your Previous Experience? – Previous coach

Do you have any Medical conditions? – You must know your athlete

Do you have any Injuries? – History of injuries and current ones

What are your main Goals? – Wish to get out of the season

Also learn to understand an athlete's current performance, what training they are doing and their life out of sport. What is their occupation, personal best's and superstitions? Etc

If you don't wish to make questionnaires or go into this much depth, at the very minimum you must understand their medical conditions and injuries.

## **Coach / Player Relationship**

Coaching is an awesome responsibility. Through their athletic experiences, a child will find out things about himself or herself. This may be a good or bad experience; however, these things will likely be associated with you. The chances of coaching the next National Basketball League 'All Star' are unlikely; however every one of your players will become an adult, with the responsibility of a job and probably a family. The whole idea of youth sports is to provide valuable life lessons. I guarantee you that they will remember you for the rest of their lives; I know I remember all of my coaches. So how do you want to be remembered?

## **Skills of Coaching**

To be a good coach, many skills are required. A coach requires imparting knowledge of the sport. You need the respect and control of your players. Respect cannot be bought, nor can it be forced upon people. You must earn it! Once lost, it's very difficult to recover, so you must be able to treat them equally and develop their interest. A coach must be positive as well as express constructive criticism. Highlighting the methods of eradicating players' faults is far more important than finding faults alone. Competition using a scoring system is encouraged, as it will create excitement. Praise and effort is also important. Avoid long talks, as they lead to lack of concentration. Set short term and long term goals, and always plan every session and prepare for the game.

## **Communication**

Always be positive, honest, clear and simple, loud and consistent. Nonverbal messages may have an equally powerful impact as verbal, such as the facial expressions and body language used. Let's not forget about receiving messages and listening carefully. It is essential you receive player's verbal and nonverbal messages effectively in order to obtain their honest feedback as well as refining your own coaching techniques.

In a time out, it is important that you do not overload the players with too many sentences of information. Make three (maximum) clear points. Say the most important one three times, the second point twice and the third point once. When speaking to an individual player, the '**hamburger technique**' can be used. This entitles **good-bad-good**. "Your dribbling last time down the court was good; however you need to use your left hand more. I did like how you attacked the center of the court, keep that up."

Coaching also requires interacting with parents, supporters, game officials and opposing coaches. Parents need to be assured that their child is under direction of a knowledgeable coach who is concerned about their well being. Furthermore, how you communicate with officials will have a great influence on the way your players behave toward them. Therefore, you need to set a good example.

## **Prepare the Mind**

Players will need to prepare the body and mind if they are to reach their best potential. Encourage a checklist of form, for example, hands up, eye on the ball, and stay low. Mental rehearsal and imagery is a field of study proven to work and is accepted at the highest levels of sport. Tell players to picture themselves with great form stealing the ball and driving to the hoop. Other techniques include positive self-talk and centring.

## **S.P.I.R.S**

The SPIRS model of teaching a skill is valuable during training sessions. Firstly, begin with an introduction and a 'need to know.'

- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| <b>Show</b>      | Demonstrate skill, making sure the outcome is achieved. Present the action three times from different views, as players are limited to what they perceive and see things differently from different angles.                                       |
| <b>Practice</b>  | "See if you can do it"  |
| <b>Instruct</b>  | Bring them back in, verbally explain the major errors, and give another demonstration. Don't overload, however a 'magic V' is usually beneficial. For example, the 'C' shape in a basketball free-throw or the 'seal' when throwing a chest pass. |
| <b>Reinforce</b> | Reinforce the behaviour, using a wide vocabulary. " <b>It's not just good, what is good and what was good about it?</b> "   |

### **Whole vs Part Teaching**

Whole teaching is used with simple skills that require few parts. For example, jump stop, pivot. Complex skills that require many parts and more decisions such as shooting can be taught in parts. The more complex skill may be taught by using either **forward or backward chaining**. Forward chaining is a term used when a step by step lesson is presented in the correct order. For example, on the free throw, teach the stance first, then the knees, then the shooting arm and how to hold the ball and so on. Backward chaining is used in the same way, however reversed.

### **Massed vs Distributed Practice**

There is no strong evidence to prove which practice theory is the most suitable for basketball. It does however, suggest boredom and fatigue is more prevalent in massed practice. This practice provides little rest between trials and longer periods of practice. Distributed practice is practicing a skill for a short intense duration, and then changing skills frequently throughout training.

### **Blocked vs Random Practice**

#### **Variable vs Constant Practice**

Blocked practice involves the practice of one variation of a skill for a period of time, then another variation. Random practice enables contextual interference to occur, and the learner is required to think about each task. Teaching players how to make decisions is of vital importance. Variable practice outperforms constant practice

## **Coaching Process**

### **Observation**

Information may be collected on the specific data you require. For this purpose the coach may wish to keep records, videotape or notes on an individual athlete.

### **Diagnosis**

What is correct or incorrect about the way this athlete is shooting? What is the ideal model, and how do we compare it? How do you develop the ideal model? These questions are likely to be answered with a task analysis.

### **Plan of Action**

Determine a time frame; set realistic short term and long term goals. Outline a training plan on objectives. Generate the best possible solutions for problems, and attempt to periodise the athlete to peak at the desired time.

### **Implementation**

This is the time for instruction, teaching what is necessary. Use SPIR's model, however, don't make major changes to technique just before the finals.

### **Evaluation**

Measurements of improvement are required to evaluate the training phase. Feedback re the plan from the individual is usually a good assessment.

### **The Roux Principle**

Light training loads are useless, moderate loads are beneficial, and excessive loads are harmful

### **Transfer of Learning**

The transfer of learning refers to the skills learnt under one condition, and the transfer to this to another situation. In basketball, a free throw is taught and practiced at rest, while lining up. Does this correlate with players shooting while fatigued in a game? – No. Therefore, adapt this to your training sessions and include a drill that incorporates running before lining up to shoot.

### **Children in sport**

Children under approximately ten years of age are not miniature adults. They have limited concentration and comprehension. They are very impressionable, and fragile in self-concept. They have a great need for stimulation and excitement, therefore use competitions that are evenly matched and allow maximum participation. Also include variety and mix of friends every single week

#### Children's most important needs:

Basic needs – have fun, feel worthy.

Basic fears – failure, physical hurt

Basic satisfaction – skill mastery, maximum participation, extrinsic rewards, being with friends.

### **Health and Safety**

One of your players at a training session jumps to grab a rebound, gets a hard hit from behind, falls to the ground and you see that he or she is not getting up. What do you do?

Injury remains a reality of sport participation. As a coach, it is your primal duty to provide a safe environment by ensuring all equipment is out of harms way, and checking the surface for any wet or dusty areas. An adequate warm up, proper supervision and record keeping, and matching athletes by physical maturity are some small prevention's of injury.

It is essential to carry a first aid kit and an icepack in the case of an emergency. A coach should have all relevant phone numbers and a basic understanding of first aid. A suitable course is strongly encouraged for all coaches.

### **The Warm Up**

The Warm up is essential to increase muscle and body temperature. Stretching is essential to increase compliance in muscle and tendon tissue and to increase range of joint movement. The warm up prepares the body for optimal performance and assists in reducing the risk of injury.

### **The Cool Down**

Every session should be followed by an adequate cool down, essential to allow the body to recover from exercise and reduce the effects of fatigue, including muscle soreness. Cooling down is important as it prevents pooling of the blood in the limbs, which can lead to fainting or dizziness.

### **What should I teach?**

There are no copyrights in basketball; you can take home anything you see – don't overdo it. There's no need to copy another coach's system just because she/he's having a great season or two.

Never put tactics ahead of fundamentals, and never let any player regard himself as such a specialist that he is excused from mastering every fundamental. For example, that tall, clumsy kid who rebounds so well can hurt you with a crucial turnover if you let him ignore his dribbling deficiencies.

Keep rules at training few and simple, and do not make threats you are not prepared to back – and then apply them with no exceptions or favoritism.

### **Some last pointers**

Never sit down during drills

Always learn the names of players on court immediately if you do not know them  
Never ask 'yes / no' questions. Always ask questions that make children put up their hands. For example, if you ask the question "Do you know what a screen is?" you may have only a couple of players yell out and this is not a good indication of how many players actually know what a screen is. Whereas if you say "Hands up if you know what a screen is" then you will have more indication of the answer you are actually looking for.

Whistles and stop watches are fantastic tools to have on you at training

### **The final word**

To coach is both a privilege and a responsibility. Children are our greatest natural resource and to coach them is to be given the opportunity to aid in their development, and to give something back to the community.

It's not just the players that learn, good coaches never stop learning!