

Quality Coaching Practices Which Enhance Learning Outcomes

PEACH Workshop 2010

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Many coaches have a particular style of coaching that seems to be most effective for them. Your coaching style will determine the interactions you have with your players. This session will focus on the types of communication needed to get the most out of your players. We will use a variety of learning tools to ensure that the highest quality practices will translate to the highest learning outcomes.

MOTIVATION AND DISPOSITION:

The first thing you have to ask yourself is: what do the players want to do the most in your sport? Use that as your motivating factor to get players excited about practice. The excitement you bring to the table will set the tone for the whole practice. Try your best not to have the same thing happen every practice. I am all for routines and fundamentals at every level but I am not a fan of the same thing every day. I like the same concepts provided in a different manner. This builds curiosity in your practices and will have your players excited about getting to practice. Remember, practice should be way more fun than the game itself. The game is an opportunity to put all your hard work to the test. After the game, it is back to the fun practices to enhance the skills. So mix it up as much as possible.

We have to remember that, as coaches, we are there to enhance each player as an individual as well as to unite all players as a team. The way you set up your practices will be the determining factor in accomplishing this.

SKILLS AND DRILLS:

Many times we participate in drills that enhance a particular skill. When you perform these drills you have to ask yourself; how does this enhance the quality of game play? Some of the old drills we used to engage in as kids are no longer facets of quality practices. Take stretching for example and think of the stretches you were asked to do as a kid. As a physical educator you now know that many of those are not only unproductive but may be detrimental. Yet we tend to see these stretches repeated at all levels of play simply because we "forget" and coach the way we were coached.

Use drills to enhance a skill. Try them in a variety of ways and keep it short and interesting. Once you have practiced the skill, put the skill to the test by playing a game of some sort to test their skills. Make the game short, fun, and competitive for the individual player.

DON'T FORGET TO VAK IT

When teaching a skill remember VAK! VAK stands for Visual, Auditory, and Kinesthetic. These are the three ways we must coach/teach for learning outcomes to be reached by all learners. If you are missing one of these elements, chances are most of your players will not learn the material as quickly. When presenting something visually, present it in a variety of ways. Use pictures, video, books, or demonstrate. As you provide a clear picture of what you are looking for, provide the audio for them and explain why this technique is so important. If you can prove it, they will listen. Finally, have them try to perform it themselves. Provide positive corrective feedback as they go through the motions. If the player still is having difficulty, break down the skill even more. The more they try, the more they can learn through trial and error.

CLOSURE:

This is without a doubt the most important piece of the practice or lesson. The closure allows you to reflect with your players to find out if the objectives of the practice/ lesson were met. If your objectives were met, learning outcomes will be enhanced.

Closures can be done in many ways. The most common is through question and answer. A coach will ask a question and have the players answer. I have some issues with the way this is typically done. I have seen time and time again where a question is asked, several players raise their hand, a coach picks on one player, and gets an answer. The following are several ideas to ensure a quality closure to your lesson. Most of these ideas were researched from Project Adventure and Dr. Don Moss.

How to Get the Most Out of Your Closure:

The format ideas come from a Project Adventure Handout I received many years ago with my own ideas added to the document.

Processing Skills

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| Ask open ended questions | How was that for you? How did you feel? How was that experience? What just happened? What did we learn from this experience? Where do you think we were going with that? |
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| Focus on Feelings | <p>How did you feel?</p> <p>What is everyone feeling right now?</p> <p>Provide one word to describe your feelings.</p> <p>Show me with an expression what you thought of the</p> <p>How did you make someone else feel?</p> <p>Draw in the air a face that describes your feelings</p> |
| Repeat Feelings | <p>You must have felt relieved!</p> <p>I recognize that you are nervous; etc.</p> <p>When someone feels like that how can we support t</p> |
| Draw out learning | <p>What can we learn from that?</p> <p>What do you think will happen next?</p> <p>What can you take from this experience?</p> |
| Focus on one issue at a time | <p>We want to move on to that.</p> <p>Let's see what else there is on this topic.</p> <p>What just happened?</p> |
| Monitor verbal and non-verbal behavior constantly | <p>Look for signs of confusion, boredom, anger, etc.</p> <p>Look for people talking, writing, not writing, etc.</p> <p>Look for off task behaviors then change activity</p> |
| Test out perceptions | <p>What do other people feel?</p> <p>If you were a fly on the wall, what did you see?</p> |
| Appropriate self-disclosure | <p>I am confused. How do other people feel?</p> <p>I am excited about what I just saw. What did you see that made you feel the same way?</p> <p>I'm really sad about something. How else could we deal with this issue?</p> |
| Ask the group to summarize | <p>Where have we got to so far?</p> <p>Let's press rewind and show/inform me of what just occurred.</p> <p>Describe what happened in one sentence.</p> |
| Review | <p>We seem to have covered so and so.</p> <p>Does that sound right? Anything to add?</p> <p>Have I missed anything?</p> |

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| Focus on behavior | <p>What were they doing to make you think that?</p> <p>If you could do it over what would you change?</p> <p>Provide three examples of how you could have done differently.</p> |
| To explore more deeply | <p>Will you say more about that?</p> <p>What would be an example?</p> <p>What else could you have done?</p> <p>Can you think of another way?</p> |
| Ask group to diagnose itself | <p>What is happening here right now?</p> <p>Call 911 - describe the scene</p> <p>Police blotter - describe how this went down</p> <p>Call the Doctor - we need a clear diagnosis</p> |
| Diagnosing | <p>Does the large amount of joking going on suggest avoidance of an important issue?</p> <p>Where are we going with this?</p> <p>How does this help the situation?</p> |
| What else can we add to the list? | |

Assessment: Ways to find out from all

Turn to a neighbor

Find an elbow partner

Think, Pair, Share.

Draw on white board

Body Movement/ Provide the answer using your whole body

Choral response from all

Fingers/ 1-5, 1-10 ratings

Heads Together (Cooperative Learning/ Sharing)

Thumbs/ up, down, side

Call on one student and have others agree or disagree

Do It/ Demonstrate

Facial Expressions

Any more????