

Effective Coaching Practice

1. Whole – part – whole teaching

Show athletes the end product, the 'whole', then break this down into the parts and work on tooling the players with the various technical and tactical skills to execute the 'whole'.

2. How, when and why

To get athlete ownership and understanding they need to know how to execute and skill or concept, change or technique or learn a new skill; when to execute it and most importantly why.

3. Build-up sequences

Sequence drills so that they logically build up to the desired skill. For example if the goal is to develop players perimeter offensive scoring ability start with foot work and ball handling, progress to shooting, and finally drill the individual offensive skills.

Within this sequence drills should progress from simple to complex, low tempo to game tempo and undefended to defended.

4. Coach on the run – keep time on task

Time on task is vital, look to coach on the run working with individual athletes, subs and small groups. Only the head coach should stop a drill and then with short & direct intervention.

5. Use of coaching cues

Develop key coaching cues and teach the athletes what those cues mean so that in practice and game situations one word triggers a number of teaching points.

For example at the defensive end using the coaching cue 'Stance' can trigger in players the following meaning: Hips below knees, head over toes, active feet outside shoulders, lead hand carried trail hand digging.

6. Use of questioning

Questioning athletes at practice is an effective teaching tool as well as an immediate way for coaches to assess players understanding. The use of questioning also encourages self evaluation.

7. Show them

Avoid using the word 'don't' this merely highlights a mistake, instead show athletes how to correct a mistake.

Eg. Highlighting a mistake – 'Don't cross your feet on defence'; Showing how to correct it – 'Move your feet wide to wider when defensive sliding.'

8. 'Execute' the skill or concept – competition & games approach

The Indian proverb: Tell me, and I'll forget. Show me, and I may not remember. Involve me, and I'll understand – is poignant when coaching, telling or even showing athletes is not enough to understand, execute and make something part of their game they have to 'do' it.

9. Brief & Debrief

Prior to an activity brief athletes on the expectations and points of emphasis, after an activity debrief through encouraging self evaluation and revisiting points of emphasis