



BASKETBALL

NEW ZEALAND

Coach Mentoring Programme





Overview

Mentoring is a key component of Basketball New Zealand's coach development process and the organisation encourages coaches to actively participate in mentoring relationships both as a mentor and coach not only to contribute to development of the basketball coaching community in New Zealand but as importantly to develop their own coaching practice.

One outcome of progressing through the coach development framework will be coaches developing capacity as master/mentor coaches within a community of development (athlete age group; stage of development). It is also recognised that coaches at all stages of their development will benefit from participating in the mentoring process as both a mentor and coach.

Fundamental to Basketball New Zealand's programme is the philosophy that mentoring, like any learning or development experience, is most effective when 'individualised' to suit both the mentor and coach. Mentoring within basketball may involve a range of relationships both formal and informal, within and exterior to basketball, formal and informal; and involving peers or individuals with differing levels of experience.

Basketball New Zealand's mentoring programme has been developed to assist the mentoring process and help all participant's development however in recognition of individual learning styles and different methods of development the guidelines and resources that make-up the programme can be used in entirety, as general guidelines or in isolation.



Mentoring

What is mentoring?

“Mentoring is a formally structured, non-reporting relationship undertaken to enhance practice, personal knowledge and organisational development.”

(New Zealand Mentoring Centre)

"Mentoring involves primarily encouragement, listening with empathy, sharing experience and developing insight while acting as a sounding board; A Mentor assists in the personal and professional growth of an individual by sharing the knowledge and insights of their experience."

(New Zealand Institute of Management)

What can good Mentoring achieve?

- i. Improve the quality and confidence of the individual coaches
- ii. Improve the quality of coaching communities
- iii. Retain coaches in the game when they feel they are improving.
- iv. To provide follow up after formal training courses.

Key skills for mentors

Listener	Good Observer	Non Judgmental
Confidence builder	Imaginative	Questioner
Affirmation and	Feed back (PIP method)	

Qualities of a good mentor

Honesty	Empathy	Communicator
Patience	Objectivity	Time
Knowledge	Experience	

Reluctant and resistant coaches

A coach who does not want a mentor is going to use up a lot of your time with very little result. Some reasons that a coach would be reluctant to have mentoring may be that the coach has a lack of confidence in their ability, they perceive the mentor as a threat or are trying to ‘protect their patch’. Successful mentoring may require strategies to help the coach overcome these barriers to mentoring.



Mentoring Guidelines

1. Rationale

- i. Mentoring is a process to assist the development of both the mentor and the targeted coach; the process is not in place to evaluate or assess either coach.

2. Approach

- ii. Part of the mentor's role is to encourage the coach to take ownership for their own learning and development rather than 'assessing and reporting on' the coach. Utilising questioning, engaging in discussion and often an informal approach as may help achieve this.
- iii. Although some of the mentoring process should focus on 'what' the coach is delivering more-so mentors should aim to assist coaches develop 'how' they deliver sessions, manage games and develop programmes.
- iv. It is most effective when mentors encourage coaches to develop their own coaching philosophy and improve practice from a wide range of influences. Solely mirroring the mentor's philosophies and practice should be discouraged; to this end it is important to recognise that a coach and mentor may have some differences in their coaching philosophies and practice.

3. Activities

- i. Mentoring can involve any of the following activities:
 - *Modeling coaching practice*
 - *Assisting a coach during practice sessions/games*
 - *Discussing selected practice sessions/games with a coach*
 - *Providing coaches with resources to assist their development*
 - *Acting as a sounding board for coaches to discuss their practice*
 - *Conduct a debrief with a coach after a coaching session/game*
 - *Video a coach's session and provide feedback to a coach with the aid of the visual footage*
 - *Schedule regular meetings with the coach to discuss coaching practice (in person, phone or on line)*
 - *Informal discussions and conversations*
 - *Write out topical scenarios and discuss (appropriate to the stage of the season)*
 - *Observing other coaches and discussing their practice*
- ii. The mentor and the coach should agree on which learning experiences that best suit both parties and develop a schedule for these learning experiences.

4. Mentoring Session Hints

- i. The experience and knowledge of the mentor coach has been identified; the process of mentoring is not to demonstrate this to the coach but to assist them develop their coaching practice.

- ii. Essentially as a mentor you are 'coaching' the coach; when coaching sport an 'athlete' centred approach is most effective so it is prudent to take a 'coach' centred approach to mentoring.
- iii. When mentoring a coach it is important to provide constructive feedback offering suggestions for improved practice. It is not the mentor's role to highlight the coach's mistakes, i.e. offer strategies for improvement as opposed to highlighting deficiencies.
 - E.g. *"It may be better to use both ends of the court so more players are involved in the drills at once."*
 - Or *"One suggestion is to get the players not involved in the drill working on ball handling, or d-stance this will keep them active and focused."*

This will be more constructive than feedback like: "You had too many players standing around and let them muck about when they weren't involved in the drill."
- iv. Listen to the coach, draw out his thoughts.
- v. Ask astute questions which guide the coach towards their own solutions
- vi. If you have several problems identified, get the coach to select 3 that most urgently needs attention. Jointly work on some possible solutions.



Tips for coaches Receiving Feedback

(Courtesy of Coaching Association of Canada)

Great coaches are continually looking for ways to improve. In order to be able to tell if you are improving, you will need to ask yourself and others “How am I doing?”

A few words on receiving feedback from others...

- When you ask others their feedback, remember to listen attentively to their observations and comments without expressing defensiveness.
- You may not always agree with their observations, but you have asked for the input, so it deserves to be considered with an open mind.
- If possible, try to gather feedback from more than one person, and look for commonalities among their comments.
- It is your choice what you decide to implement and what comments you choose to ignore. The power to change your behaviours remains yours alone.

Source: **Community Sport — Initiation, Coach Toolbox**, Coaching Association of Canada, 2003.