

Coaching Induction Module “Coach Development”

This resource will help you with:

- Creating a personal philosophy
- Self awareness and developing your understanding
- Time management
- Preparing a practice session
- Preparing your players for competition
- General management of your basketball programme
- Finding further coaching resources

Basketball specific skill areas covered in this section are;

- ✓ *Defensive rebounding.*
- ✓ *Shooting.*



CREATING A PERSONAL PHILOSOPHY

It is helpful to develop a vision of how you believe the game should be played. How fast is the game played, what offensive structure is best, how do we apply defensive pressure, what shots do we want to take, how many players get reasonable court time each game . . . ? There are many aspects of the game to reflect on.

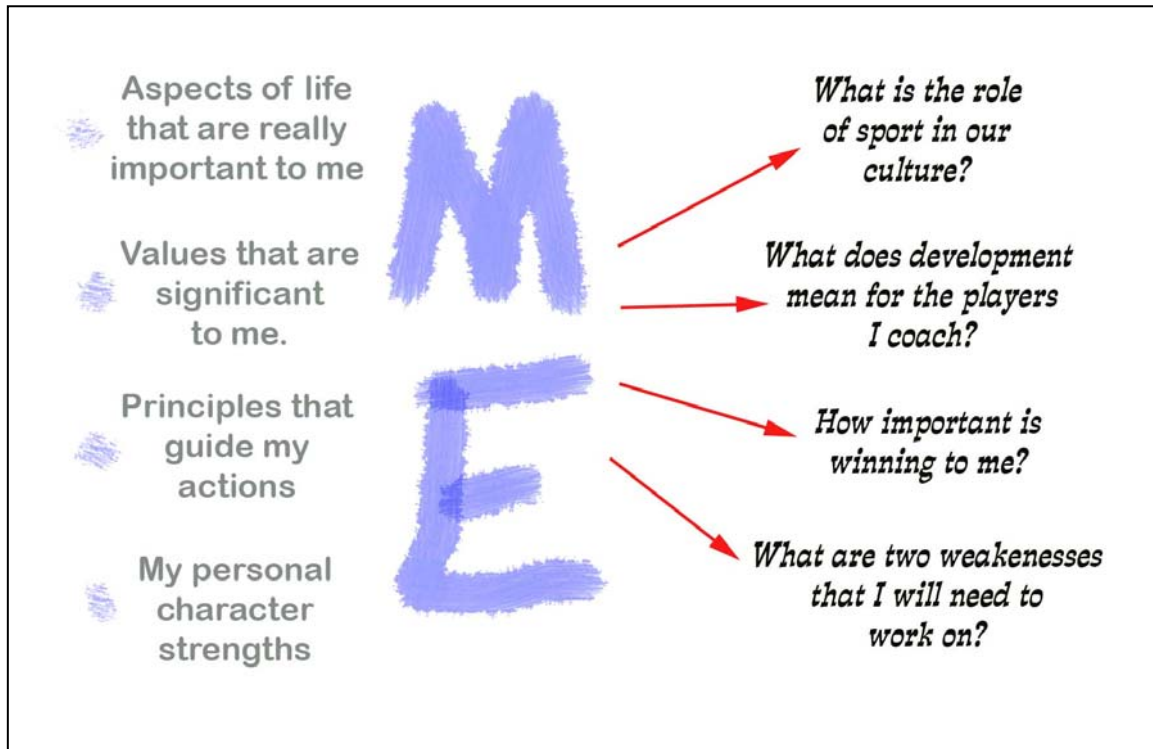
To some degree this vision will be influenced from the players the coach has available. For example, a philosophy based around playing an up tempo game, looking primarily for fastbreak offence, and playing a lot of extended defence, is unlikely to be successful - unless your team has speed and athleticism. A philosophy however, should be based more on ideals, which are modified to suit the makeup of a team, rather than a group of players totally influencing the philosophy adopted.

Philosophies should recognize the need of player development. Part of a philosophy might be, "our offensive structure is designed to create open looks at the basket, all players are expected to attempt a shot if their defender is not in a position to contest the shot". Now if this leads to the wrong players taking shots they can't make, help them to understand the offence better, so they can get themselves into a position they can score from.

For a philosophy to be of any use, the Coach must have a belief in what they have created. If the players play by this philosophy, they will succeed, they will win. Anything an opposing team does to try and stop us, our philosophy has the structure and answers to handle it. Probably the biggest challenge is then to sell the belief to the players. Coaching becomes a lot easier when the players believe that what they are doing will ultimately give them success.

When things go wrong, structural errors, not part of the team philosophy may be highlighted to focus on improved performance. However understand that developing a personal philosophy is a dynamic process. Areas may need modification along the way, views change as each season passes. Your philosophy is a belief in how to play the game, how you coach your athletes, and how you measure success at the end of the season.

SELF AWARENESS AND DEVELOPMENT



Take a moment to reflect on the comments down the left side of this diagram.

Now think about the questions on the right hand side, relative to the coaching situation you are currently in. Are these questions reflected within your coaching philosophy?

What's your community?

Personal philosophies are relevant to adopt within any coaching community. The detail and depth of an adopted philosophy will increase as you work with the performance and elite athletes.

Be aware of:

- Promoting a simple and concise philosophy when working with participation and development players.
- Summarising your philosophical approach in written form, as it becomes more complex.

This checklist is a tool for self-evaluating your practical coaching skills. The information gained by doing this, provides you feedback about what worked in your practice and what you would change next time. It should be completed as soon as possible following a coaching session. Photocopy this page and use it to review your progress regularly.

Name:

Date:

Strategy / Characteristic

Rating 1 (never) – 5 (all the time)

I planned and prepared well for the session

1 2 3 4 5

I listened to my players

1 2 3 4 5

I was positive

1 2 3 4 5

I gave effective feedback when needed

1 2 3 4 5

I was enthusiastic

1 2 3 4 5

I kept my cool

1 2 3 4 5

I provided quality learning experiences

1 2 3 4 5

I varied my tone of voice

1 2 3 4 5

I provided equal attention to all players

1 2 3 4 5

My demonstrations were understood

1 2 3 4 5

My explanations were clear and concise

1 2 3 4 5

I allowed player decision-making

1 2 3 4 5

The training session was well organised

1 2 3 4 5

I found the session enjoyable

1 2 3 4 5

The training environment was safe

1 2 3 4 5

I encouraged player self-awareness

1 2 3 4 5

I used coachable moments to enhance learning

1 2 3 4 5

My games had purpose

1 2 3 4 5

The players found the session enjoyable

1 2 3 4 5

A Coach at any level should be constantly developing and assessing their coaching abilities. Professional Coaches with high volume schedules, performance expectations and game exposure may instinctively follow this process. Those of you in the voluntary role may find occasional checklists and video assessment useful to assess your progress. Filming a practice session or game talks can be an eye opener if you haven't done it before. See how your body language comes across, how much time is being wasted, are your instructions clear?

Try reflecting on the following questions, every once in a while;

1. What worked well in this practice?
2. What should you improve in the next practice?
3. What would you change about the session if you could coach it again?
4. What did you learn about your coaching?
5. What effect did your coaching have on the players?

Working with a Mentor

Coaches can feel isolated. Players, parents and managers sometimes are too close to the situation and coaches may want to talk to someone who is not involved with the team. Working with a mentor can be valuable to a coach. Finding a good mentor is not always easy, chances are you will have to make an effort to find someone who can help.

A mentor can;

- Be a sounding board who allows the coach to think aloud and question own thoughts.
- Provide feedback about the coaches performance.
- Provide unbiased opinions.
- Be a good source of advise / expertise.
- Provide an empathetic person to listen to your challenges.
- Aim to ensure that the Coach is developing towards their potential.

Benefits of using a mentor;

- Gain in confidence.
- Increase in knowledge.
- Courage to tackle the challenges.
- Reassurance you are on the right track.
- Gain personal development.

Who to pick?

- A good friend.
- Someone who knows Basketball and has good communication skills.
- A Coach of a higher team.
- Someone who has been involved in another sport at a similar level.
- A teacher / sports co-ordinator.
- Someone who cares about your development.

Attending workshops and sharing information with other Coaches is a good way to develop. No matter how much experience you have, there is always something to learn. Just hearing somebody else's approach whether it is similar or totally different to your philosophy, can help to stimulate development. There is no need to keep secrets for fear of your opponents knowing how to beat you. If you truly believe in the structure you use, all you need to do is teach your players how to use it effectively and it won't matter what the opposition will do.



TIME MANAGEMENT

Do you have trouble saying "No" when people ask you to do something?

Do you work best under pressure?

Have you ever put something important off until later?

Do you start a new project before finishing the one you are working on?

Do you sometimes get frazzled and not know what to do first?

Do you feel as though you have a thousand jobs in front of you that need to be completed?

Being a coach adds another commitment with planning to do and times to keep. Poor time management is often caused by relying on a belief that you will have more time later, or underestimating demands on time.

Some strategies follow, that may help you improve your time management;

- Prioritise tasks.
- Delegate tasks where possible.
- Learn to say "no."
- Set aside time to plan.
- Encourage others not to waste your time, e.g. learn to close conversations.
- Make quick transitions between tasks.
- Develop systems for completing routine tasks.
- Manage stress – it will improve your use of time.
- Set limits – don't take on too much.
- Slow down and regroup when you feel overwhelmed.
- Find time for yourself.



PLANNING A PRACTICE

Every practice session should be planned in advance, this applies to all levels of coaching. The contents of the practice can be guided by the seasonal plan, but it also should be largely influenced by a review of prior training sessions and games. Creating a practice plan template will not only help you to plan the session, it will also provide an effective format to keep a record of what you have been doing.

Basic elements to the practice plan that should be included are;

1. Practice focus / Introduction
2. Warm up
3. Skill development
4. Tactical development
5. Cool down
6. Self reflection

Tips for selecting and designing training activities

- Plan activities that flow smoothly from one to the other.
- Develop routines so that players know what to do next.
- Read manuals and books to get new ideas for activities.
- Over plan rather than under plan, it is easier to omit activities than to add unplanned activities.
- Organise practices so that players are actively involved.
- Plan activities so that players have a good chance of success, it improves motivation.
- Remember, even younger players are capable of working independently in small groups and assuming leadership roles.
- Use learning opportunities to enhance performance (i.e. use coachable moments).
- Set up activities where players can solve problems.
- Adapt games and activities from other sports.
- Plan questions for the level of the players and to focus on the goals for the practice.

A sample practice plan follows. This one has a focus on boxing out, as the hypothetical team has lost their last two games, giving their opponents a lot of offensive rebounds.

Practice Plan *Seaview Premiers 2008*

- Key Objectives:**
- Boxing out technique
 - Commitment to go for the rebound
 - Communication

Review / Preview:

Last two games we have given away 19 offensive rebounds
Every player in the team has the responsibility of boxing out
Not just about technique, we need a commitment to get the ball

Activity Schedule:

3.30	Warm up	
	<i>Skipping, running, speed ladder</i>	
3.40	Dynamic stretching	
3.45	Circle tipping	
	<i>Tip ball against backboard, run to end of the line</i>	
3.50	Crossing the line war	
	<i>Explore how to legally box an opponent out</i>	
4.05	Short arm defenders, 4 vs 4	
	<i>Defenders have elbows tied to body, must get 3 rebounds</i>	
4.20	Four ball shooting	
	<i>Team aims for 70 made shots in 3 minutes</i>	
4.28	Drink break	
4.30	Gorilla	
	<i>3 in at a time, must make 3 baskets each, ball always live</i>	
4.40	Offensive rebound scrimmage, 5 vs 5	
	<i>One point for a basket, two points for an offensive rebound</i>	
5.00	Foul shots	
5.05	Static stretch & review	

Post Training Notes:

Struggled with short arm defenders.
Need more work on foot placements and foot speed.

Poor foul shooting when tired.

What's your community?

Components of a practice plan tend to be similar across the communities, but vary greatly with regards to detail and volume.

Be aware of:

- Trying to cover too much in the one session, especially within participation and development communities.
- Addressing key issues rather than complicating training sessions with excessive detail.



GAME PREPARATION

Scouting

Scouting can play a big part in game preparation, depending on the situation of the competition and the level that it is played. In its simplest form scouting could be an understanding of knowing your opponent is likely to play a zone defence for the entire game.

A more comprehensive form of scouting would involve the observation of the opposing team in competition;

- Where do they make most of their shots from?
- Who are the predominant scorers?
- What tempo do they like to play the game at?
- How do they play defence?
- What skills of the game do they struggle with?

From this observation, a coach can plan a strategy for playing this particular opponent;

- Who will defend who?
- What type of shot will we be looking for?
- How will we apply pressure to their scorers?
- What structures will we run?

Training time is the place where you prepare players for the competitive environment, regardless of the level they are playing at. If you are asking your players to compete against an opponent, help your team understand what they will be facing.

Warm up

The warm up is an essential part of game preparation, get your players familiarised with an appropriate pre-game warm up routine during trainings. The extent of the warm up procedure will vary greatly between the levels of performance, however they should all cover some basic principles;

1. Utilise available space, your team will be required to get ready on half a court with one basket.
2. Work within time restrictions. An elite game may have an hour of court space prior to a game, but often low level teams may only have a few minutes.
3. Physically warm the functions of the body, get the heart beating, the limbs moving.

4. Allow players to get a feel for the ball. They should all be getting plenty of opportunity to pass, dribble and shoot during the warm up.
5. Perform game specific movements, dynamic stretching can be used for this purpose.

In this chart, match the level of competition to an appropriate warm up routine.

Competition Level	Warm Up Routine
Beginners League (7&8 yr olds)	5 min team talk. Individual light cardio / stretch – off court. 3 min dribbling and defense 7 min passing and lay ups. 3 min dynamic stretches. 5 min shooting, high intensity.
Primary School (11&12 yr olds)	Run around the back field 3 min dynamic stretch. 3 min team passing and lay ups. 2 min team shooting.
Secondary School Tournament (15-18 yr olds)	20 min players own time (shots, ball skills). 10 min team shooting, low intensity. 10 min team passing & layups, moderate intensity. 10 min dynamic stretches. 3 min team talk. 7 min shooting & team play, high intensity.
Professional League (adult)	2 min running around the lines of the court. 1 min dynamic stretch (basic stance holds).

Nutrition

Nutrition is a complex area and it is hard to control the eating habits of others. The food a child eats is largely dependant on who buys the groceries and who prepares food for the family. There are some basic concepts that should be encouraged at an early age, as food is the fuel for the body and can have a huge impact on how a player performs;

1. Encourage your players to eat before practice and the game.
2. Players should eat approximately two hours before a game to allow food to start digesting. Younger players may handle food closer to the game than this.
3. Eat foods that provide a readily available source of energy, such as sandwich, cereal, filled roll, fruit.
4. Avoid high sugar foods prior to physical activity. They can provide an immediate boost of energy, however this is not lasting. High sugar foods can be useful straight after strenuous activity, to replace energy stores.

General healthy eating guidelines can be passed on to players that need some assistance with their daily nutritional habits;

- Eat a varied diet.
- Eat plenty of high carbohydrate foods, which is the main fuel required for basketball. These are foods like bread, cereal, rice, pasta, fruit and potatoes.
- Eat a moderate amount of protein foods like these at each meal; lean red meat, chicken, fish, eggs, cheese, milk, dairy products or legumes.
- Keep fat intake low by avoiding fried foods or using low fat options. Food like pies, chocolate, takeaways should be eaten only occasionally.
- Avoid adding extra sugar or salt to food.
- Try to eat regularly – three times a day with snacks in between.
- Keep fluid intake high. The best fluid is water. Try to drink at least two litres a day if playing basketball. Every player should have a drink bottle at training or at games.
- Eat and drink before practices and games.
- Eat and drink immediately after practices and games.

Hydration

Good hydration is necessary for optimal performance, encourage players to start well hydrated before they play (very pale or clear urine is an indication of being suitably hydrated).

If a player is thirsty, that indicates that they are already dehydrated. Encourage players to take on water during training and competition at regular intervals.



GENERAL MANAGEMENT

There are lots of general tasks a coach will face entering a team into competitions. Having a manager or parents alongside to help with such tasks will make coaching more enjoyable.

Uniforms may need purchasing or repair, after games they need to be washed, and collected in after the season ends. Transportation or travel issues may need to be organised. There may be competition responsibilities such as refereeing or scoring the game that follows yours. How is your team going to resource such requirements?

Find out what needs to be done over the course of the season, and figure out how those issues are going to be handled.



RESOURCES

Become a student of the game to improve “your performance”, alongside the developing abilities of the players you coach. Continuously seek out new information and keep an open mind about how to coach the game. Share

Coach Development

knowledge or look for advice from other coaches within your area. The websites below may assist you with further information or materials.

www.basketball.org.nz

www.sparc.org.nz