

Standard Strategies

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A few ideas / strategies that should be considered in the presentation of your coaching session(s).

You will have your own “*coaching philosophy*”; you may make personal modifications; but, keep in mind:
everything you do,
everything you say,
will be dinner table conversation in each athlete’s home over the next few days.

Your perception of your performance as a coach or teacher is sometimes the least important consideration.

In each session

- **Speak / demonstrate clearly and confidently.** Athletes are seeking and appreciate leadership.
- Keep your approach **simple** and **consistent**. (Don’t complicate things; simplicity facilitates success; demand attention, (*Looking and Listening*), and do not proceed without it; praise endeavour; show confidence in the ability of athletes to achieve the standards **you** set.).
- **Review Skills** from the previous session; 10-20% of time allocated should be associated with this purpose. Do **not** prioritise “skill extension” ahead of “skill acquisition”.
- **Continually** and **consistently** reinforce expectations: equipment, punctuality; **do not compromise** standards.
- **Be prepared** .. *Why are we doing this?* Relate activities (drills) to the outcomes you are seeking to achieve.
- **Always** outline (in advance) to the athletes “*what’s in it (the session / the drill) for them*”; use incentives and rewards, e.g. cards, certificates, praise at some stage to **every** athlete, but, be sure to **expect the best they can offer** (*no more ... no less ... no excuses*).
- Positive, corrective feedback should prevail. Athletes should walk away from **every** session confident they have enhanced their knowledge and/or skills.
- **Be in control at all times**; e.g. allowing athletes to make decisions is just another way of you being in control. Keep the session moving .. a **minimum** of talk (demonstrate, explain .. but on a needs basis). Remember, you do not need 4 years of tertiary training to let kids do what they like ... parents are watching; be accountable (a term often used but less understood).
- Don’t be distracted.
- Have a **theme** for each session: e.g. **100% Right is 100% Right .. 99% Right is 100% Wrong;**
Good is not enough, where better is possible; **Be Your Best: No More; No less; No Excuses;**
You can never be better than you best; **It takes more courage to try than to win;** **It’s not how fast, it’s how well.**
- **Use care and common sense**, but, don’t be afraid to challenge the athletes. Young people love to acquire new skills and have those skills recognised; they enjoy being able to do things others cannot do.
- **Do something positive** and **personal** for **every athlete, every session**; e.g. praise; technique evaluation; special attention; a comment / a joke; personal comments to the athlete in view of the parent; have the athlete demonstrate to the group, lead a drill, or answer (correctly) a question(s).



There are many other issues and strategies; **every athlete is an experiment of one**; you will constantly add to your strategies ... it’s called, **experience** (you can’t buy it, only acquire it).

But, keep in mind that **teaching is fundamentally a simple process**:

YOU take a group of students / athletes into a classroom / on to a track;

show them, explain to them how to do something;

organise skill acquisition opportunities, providing appropriate feedback;

then, let them have a series of attempts; see how they perform;

reinforce, refine, replicate **the learning process never ends !**

**An Eyeful
is better
than
a Mouthful**

**Knowledge (only) accumulates
quickly in an open mind**