

Improve your Coaching by NOT Coaching By Wayne Goldsmith

You read right - improve your coaching by **NOT** coaching.

Coaching improves performance.

But, too much coaching - **over coaching** - can have a negative influence on performance.

Who OVER coaches?

Typically five types of coaches **OVER coach**:

1. Young, inexperienced coaches who are trying too hard;
2. Coaches who lack real belief in themselves and who try to make up for it by giving too much information. These coaches will often want to be liked - and feel the more coaching they do, the more the athletes will like them;
3. Coaches who lack belief in their athletes and feel the need to control every element of preparation and performance;
4. Coaches who are being evaluated or assessed and aim to impress by being SEEN to control every element of the training session, i.e. they believe that great coaching is talking more;
5. EGO driven coaches who see athletes / players as a vehicle to promote themselves and their reputations.

There are many problems associated with **OVER coaching**. Here are just ten:

1. All sports require athletes / players to take responsibility for decision making and problem solving in competition. A coach who has not allowed athletes to make decisions in training is setting them up to fail.
2. All sports require athletes / players to drive their own performance in competition. A coach who does not allow athletes / players to take responsibility for their own performance in training has not prepared them to win in competition.
3. Over coaching assumes the athletes / players can not contribute anything to the performance. In reality most of what we learn as coaches is from working with, listening to and observing athletes.
4. Over coaching says "This is my team, my performance" - whereas most successful teams are ones where the coach leads but the athletes / players drive the performance: ownership of the performance is shared.
5. Giving too much information at inappropriate times can confuse athletes / players causing them to make errors and bad decisions.
6. Coaching is about creating independent athletes / players. Over coaching creates a dependence on the coach for decision making and problem solving which is performance suicide.
7. Over coaching stifles creativity and on field genius. Quality Coaching should provide opportunity for creativity and genius to be expressed through great performances.
8. Over coaching creates frustration in the athletes / players and assistant coaches, staff etc. Everyone in the performance team can contribute to the success of the group if given the right opportunity.
9. Over coaching can create anxiety and pressure - particularly when the over coaching comes in the final few days before a big competition. As a general rule, coach **LESS** as the competition gets closer.
10. Over coaching can send negative messages to the athletes / players of "panic" like "We have not done the preparation we need to be successful so I am going to keep coaching until the last minute".

So how can you avoid OVER COACHING?

- Believe in yourself - all great coaching flows from self confidence and self belief.
- Be SELFLESS - the opposite of selfish. Put the athletes / players first - and your own ego in your back pocket.
- Coaching is a performance partnership. The more faith and belief you place in your athletes / players, the more you can both grow and improve.
- Empower athletes / players to make decisions, make errors, solve problems, learn and grow in training. Provide them with a wide range of training experiences to teach better decision making.
- Accept that all coaches - regardless of their level of performance and experience are LEARNERS.
It does not matter if you have coached athletes to five gold medals at the Olympics or are a six times Premiership winning coach - coaching is life long learning and a career of ongoing development. Accept this - and the **humility** that comes with it.

Quality Coaching - Less is More