

The difference is YOU By Wayne Goldsmith



OK. It's 5:00 a.m. It's still dark. You would probably rather be home in bed asleep. Your coach has come in as enthusiastic and motivated as ever, and has written up this workout on the whiteboard:

The question is now, **what do you do next?**

The obvious answer is 400 Freestyle, 6 x 50 breaststroke drills, etc. **Everyone** one in your team will be doing that.

The question really is, what will you do that is better, faster and smarter than everyone else to give you the winning edge? What will you do in this session that will make you a better athlete?

If you want to be the best swimmer in your club, your state, Australia or the World, ... you **must** be the best swimmer in your **lane, first.**



You must set yourself a higher standard than anyone else in your lane is prepared to. You must set a higher standard and more challenging goals than even your coach thinks possible.

Successful swimmers set themselves tougher goals than anyone else could possibly set for them.

The difference between good swimmers, very good swimmers and great swimmers is very often their approach to their training.

While **the workout itself is important, the real secret to success is in how you do the workout.**

The benefit you gain from the workout is totally dependent on your attitude and approach to the your training program.

How would three swimmers (a good, a very good and a great swimmer) approach our workout?

The **good swimmer** does the training program: does what the coach has asked.

The **very good swimmer** also does the training program, does what the coach asked AND sets a few personal goals along the way to get a little more out of the workout.

The **Great Swimmer** does the same program, does what the coach asks, and then demands an uncompromising level of excellence from themselves to get the maximum benefit from the workout. The great swimmer sees the workout as an opportunity to improve and to get the most out of their efforts.

| Workout Activity | Good Swimmer | Very Good Swimmer | Great Swimmer |
|---|--|--|--|
| Kick 10 x 50 on 1:15 | Do the kick set | Do the kick set fast and hard with strong, powerful kicks | Do the kick set fast and hard with strong, powerful kicks, trying to kick each 50 as close as possible to their 50 metre PB swim time with as few kicks as possible. |
| 16 x 100 on 1:40 holding PB plus 15 seconds | Do 16 x 100 on 1:40 holding PB plus 15 seconds | Do 16 x 100 on 1:40 holding PB plus 15 seconds, trying to streamline out of each turn. | Do 16 x 100 on 1:40 holding PB plus 15 seconds, aiming to hold an exact pace, or experimenting with pacing strategies like negative splitting. They may also consider trying to minimise strokes and breaths, whilst holding an exact pace and streamlining a minimum of 10 metres off every turn. |
| Swim Down 6 x 100 IM | Swim down 600 metres | Swim down 600 metres aiming to do good turns | Swim down 600 metres aiming to do good turns and practicing to improve on any areas of weakness in their worst stroke. |

One of the biggest steps a swimmer must make in their development is the step from age-group swimming to open level competition. One of the biggest changes that a swimmer needs to make in order to take this step is in the mental approach to their workouts.

Most coaches set their workouts for the average level of swimmer in their team. The **great swimmers** understand this and set a personal standard that is well above average.

“Little kids” see workouts very simply. How do I do the minimum amount of work I can get away with?

“**Big kids**” (those who are trying to take the step from age to open level competition) see the workout activities and then aim to **set themselves a standard well in excess of the level of the workout.**

They do more than the coach asks.
They do the little things well.
They aim for maximum distance per stroke,
minimum number of breaths, excellent turns
and **outstanding skills.**



Ask yourself, am I a **big kid** or a **little kid in a big kid’s body?**

Size and age has little to do with being a senior swimmer. Being a senior swimmer means training and racing with a senior swimmer’s attitude. You can be 12 years of age and think like a senior swimmer, or 22 years of age and think like a junior swimmer.

You must **train your brain** in the same way that you train your body. You train your body for speed, for power, for strength and for technical excellence to help you achieve your best. Train your brain to do the same.

This is the difference. The difference is you.



After a difficult IM sessions, coach Bowman turned to his young swimmer: *“That was tough .. You must be tired”*

The reply (Michael Phelps): *“I don’t get tired”*

Very few young athletes have the elite skills of a Michael Phelps, but, many can adopt similar attitudes and set expectation standards that will enable them to produce the best of which they are capable. Trying your best on the day .. Great .. but, anyone can do that. Being **the best of which you are capable** .. that’s different that’s a challenge

OK .. Here’s a **simple** session .. make what you will of it.

approx. 90 mins.

Warm-Up: Stretch + in-the-water **400** (choice) .. 15-20 mins.

400

Main Sets

10 x 50 on 50, 1:00, or 1:15

500

200 Fly Kick with fins ... build each 50

200

Stroke Drills .. coach directed (10 mins.)

Specific Practice: Starts / Turns / Finishes (10-15 mins.)

Dryland .. coach directed (10 mins.)

8 x 50IM (4FIY►8B/K►4B/R►F/S to 50m) **on 1:00, 1:15 or 1:30** (no fins)

200

2 x 200 F/S on 3:00 or 3:15 (Technique .. “work” all turns)

400

Warm Down: in-the-water **400** (choice) + stretch

400

Set your own standards .. Strive for **YOUR** goals

2100 + Drills-Skills-Dryland