



Tips to successful Coaching

Coaches at all levels regularly look for new ideas to master the art of coaching, and fortunately there are several core building blocks that can prove to be invaluable to coaches along this pursuit. Of course, coaching styles will always vary depending on the age of the kids, skill levels, and coach personality, but the following basic ideas and strategies will almost always help with team chemistry, cohesion, and overall success on the field:

- **Defining player roles.** Successful coaches know that a key part of the job is to get players into roles that best suit their abilities, and to make sure those roles are very clearly defined. It is important to try and steer clear of vague roles (like telling a player to be an “enforcer” without defining what that specifically means), and to also make sure all players on the team know exactly what is expected of them (this helps avoid social loafing, a team dynamic problem where players don’t know what is expected of them).
- **Empower importance of roles.** Similar to players knowing their roles, it is important that the coach genuinely sell the importance of each role. Sure, it’s relatively easy to get the QB to realize his role is important, but what about the bench players who rarely see the field? Great coaches take the time to build relationships with those athletes, too, and find unique ways to identify the importance of those roles.
- **Consistency.** The great Joe Torre (former NY Yankees manager) once said it is important to get to know each player individually, but to apply the same rules and consequences to all. Doing “favors” for players who break rules might seem worthwhile in the present, but when you later find out how many other players clocked out seeing the favoritism it might not be a good move long-term.
- **Positive attitude.** You often hear that teams take on the image of their coach, and this is often very true. Coaches who make it a point to be positive, upbeat, and optimistic often witness a team that also takes on those traits. Similarly, teams will also mimic negative characteristics, so be sure to choose wisely!

TEN TOP COACHING TIPS ON WINNING

1. Player selection – intangibles (character, leadership, discipline, mental toughness) more important than talent (take “good kids”) – take a chance on nobody! Team players! No defensive liabilities!
2. Do not over coach – set priorities: play without the puck, defensive principles, defensive zone coverage, forecheck, breakout, attack, specialty teams. Let the players play!
3. There is a great HA support system in place – use it! Scouting, management, medical, equipment, video, sport psychology.
4. Preparation is key – leave no rock unturned! Do not become paranoid with the myriad of details involved or the magnitude of the event – go with what you know and are comfortable with.
5. Team building is critical!
6. After the evaluation camp, the team deficiencies will be apparent — use this knowledge to select and build the “best” team possible.
7. Use all players throughout the event. You don’t win the tournament the first game. The process is critical to success!
8. Respect all opponents
9. Take things 1 day at a time – don’t look back or ahead – in a short-term competition so much can change in 1 day! Play in the present or stay in the present, not the past or future.
10. Enjoy the experience!