

Understanding and defining your club's coaching philosophy

One of the very powerful learning outcomes from completing either the ASC or your National Sporting Organisation coaching qualification is that each coach will develop their own personal coaching philosophy.

This is so important in developing coaches because a coaching philosophy provides the guidelines and framework of how a coach undertakes their role.

The accredited training programs not only teach the skills of the game and sport but also encourage the coaches to consider their:

- broader role in the club
- coaching principles and styles.
- planning for all aspects of the player experience in the club,
- communication style, including the resolution of conflicts and influencing others
- style of play for their team or club.

The courses encourage coaches to consider their role from a number of different perspectives, especially those of the players and helps coaches to consider the following about players:

- What are their reasons for playing? (They will be amazed to find out not everybody is playing to win for instance)
- What are their expectations for the season? (They want the opportunity to participate and develop as much as the next person regardless of their perceived skill level today)
- What are the personal qualities they wish to see in a coach?
- What is their preferred way of receiving information?
- What are their values and standards of behaviour?
Again, if we come at coaching from the club's perspective then the coach will be looking at their role differently again and confronted with questions such as:
- How do they want the club to be perceived within the competition?
- What values need to be maintained or developed?
- What is my role in maintaining or developing those perceptions and values?

Today's coaching is so much more than teaching the skills and tactics of the game but unfortunately unless coaches, including those who have been experienced players, undertake the accredited training they simply would not consider many of these very important coaching issues and philosophies.

Good coaches are good leaders. Netball Australia, for example, has developed a coaching blueprint, which highlights the importance of how coaches are influencers and role models in the netball community, identifying a set of trademark behaviours to bring to life the mantra "The only coach you need to be better than, is the one you were yesterday" through providing the following behaviours:

- Continuous improvement
- Inspirational Leadership
- Develop People
- Custodians of the Game

How does this match the coaching philosophy of your club? Do you have similar philosophies and ideals on behaviours to strengthen your coaches?

Aside from providing excellent coaching for your players, it is becoming more and more the responsibility of the coach to drive change and influence culture at clubs.

From Sports Community (www.sportscommunity.com.au)