

Team Administration, Training and Risk Management for JKYSC Coaches - a guide.

Developing Your Coaching Philosophy

Any coaching action you take is preceded by a certain decision. Any decision you make is based on your philosophy. A person's philosophy encompasses your personal beliefs, motivation, experiences, and methods

To develop your own personal coaching philosophy, complete the questions within this framework. It will provide you a philosophical function as well as act as a sounding board before, during, and after the season.

Coaching is a profession and an ongoing process. This is the beginning of that exciting process. Answer the following questions to get started.

'Questionnaire'

Beliefs:

- A. Why do you want to be a youth coach?
- B. Why do we have youth soccer?
- C. What are your responsibilities? To each player, to the team, to yourself, and to the Community
- D. Define a successful season?

Motivations:

- A. I am interested in coaching because...
- B. What do you least like about coaching?

Experiences:

- A. Past – What are your own childhood experiences in sport? Was it enriching or inhibiting?
- B. Present self-evaluation. What are you doing now?
- C. Future – What experiences will I seek to improve in my coaching?

Methods:

- A. What is my coaching style?
- B. At what point will I involve the players in the decision making process? Pre-During-Post Practice?

JKYSC emphasizes:

1. Player Development
2. Fun and Purpose

Coaching Without Playing Experience

One major problem that typically faces the volunteer Coach of today is the lack of an extensive playing background. Most individuals who are beginner Coaches, feel that the absence of playing experience is a severe handicap when coaching a team. They often feel inadequate to handle the job at hand. The lack of playing experience is a liability when related to the coaching of highly competitive, mature players. In relation to young players (U10, U8, & U6), however, a playing background is not a necessity. The philosophy of this manual calls for patient, interested, fun-loving people who have time to spend assisting the overall development of youngsters.

A key to being a successful (and I don't mean winning) youth soccer Coach, is to draw upon your experience. If you grew up playing sports of any kind, you possess some knowledge of good and bad coaching techniques.

DON'T:

- Become frustrated,
- Yell and intimidate,
- Be afraid to adjust your training activities if the children are not enjoying them.

DO:

- Keep players active with a ball,
- Vary the activities based on attention span,
- Enjoy yourself,
- Spread positive reinforcement to all players, not just the stars.

Use the general education you received from school and life to help develop your player's minds, bodies, values, etc. Do not place yourself above your players or you will never be approached for assistance. Be organized, but be aware of the problem related to over-organization, (i.e. boredom). Follow general human nature concepts related to dealing with the attitudes and habits of your players. We must understand that every child has needs, which become apparent over a period of time during practice. The needs range from attention to the development of self-confidence. They include love, discipline, the desire to improve, friendship, etc. Try to determine each child's need, and then attempt to fill at least part of it. Your discipline problems will be greatly reduced as these needs are taken care of. The area of childrearing sheds a lot of light on proper youth coaching. Many of the general techniques used in guiding children into adulthood can be used successfully. Use what worked for you in this area and lose what did not work.

To get the most out of your soccer experience, utilize all of your assets. The characteristics that make you a success in relationships in business or with people are all useful.

If you are going to put some time into the development of young soccer players, you are also going to have to put some time into developing yourself. You will have to gain insight into teaching methods, dealing with children, coaching developments, etc. The following are some suggestions:

Attend Coaching Clinics: Learn from Coaches who you know how to teach, take part in the coaching courses that your State Association offers, or attend coaching clinics that occur in your area. There is no better learning experience than this. You learn to develop skills, improve fitness, organize, and handle players, and how to teach tactical aspects to various age groups.

Read Soccer Books: The more opinions and methods you come across, the better off you will be.

Watch Higher Levels of Play: Go see the best college games in your area, view U-19 and High School soccer, and take your players to see a professional team. The better the picture you provide to your players, the better they will be able to learn what you teach.

Ask and Take Advice of Experienced Coaches: Realize that we do not teach 19 year olds the same as a 16-year-old, but there are similar principles that can be applied.

We have talked about some of the areas where you need to improve as a Coach. Now, let's talk about some of the methods that will help improve your players over the years. It is very easy to let time go by and not accomplish our maximum in most areas of life. Related to player development, here are some suggestions to insure that your players are always moving forward.

Set goals for your players. All of us tend to stagnate unless we pursue both short and long term goals. Assist your players in setting soccer development goals. This idea will help them become better soccer players as well as more responsible people. Young players should be given specific attainable goals (e.g. Billy, I would like to see you win the ball five times today; Susan, I would like to see you get three shots on goal today). As the initiator of these goals, you must know when they have been achieved and when to go on to other goals. Keep track of the goals you have established in written form, and update them regularly. The goals you set for players should fall somewhere in the range between attainable and challenging. Be careful to match the difficulty of the goal to the ability of the individual. Also, be sure to give important feedback to small and large achievers alike.

A second area of concern is the giving of praise. Too much can be as harmful as nothing. At times, we tend to overdo the building up of superior players and give nothing to the less developed ones. Players who constantly hear, good shot, great move, etc. may lose the motivation to continue the hard training on their own. If they receive too much reinforcement, they might not have the need to reach their full potential. Ration praise. It can help, but it can also hurt.

Finally, and this may be the most important concept to grasp as a novice Coach, improve at what we practice. This is not a profound statement, but it is fact. Therefore, let's all accept that the game itself is the best teacher of all and when we rehearse the game in a fun filled environment, we will improve. If you have any doubts about being an effective Coach, you must realize that if you put a ball between a dozen youngsters and let them play, you will in fact develop many players. Consider the children that grow up in countries without a Coach until the age of twelve. Typically, they play in-groups of four, six, or ten, in backyards, on beaches, and any place near their home. They make their own rules and play until they fall over. This is where the love of the game begins. As they approach maturity, they have all of the tools necessary to go on to higher levels of play. In the back streets, these young players do not learn about positions, restarts, and systems, they learn about dribbling, shooting, passing, and Fun! Give these children the game, and you will be a fine Coach.

Then arrange:

Pre-Season Parent – Coach Meeting

1. Discuss coaching philosophy
2. Discuss team goals
3. Discuss what is expected of parents; i.e., transportation, communication, general program support, good sportsmanship
4. Ask for information; i.e., medical history, parent skills inventory
5. Consider Coach – player meetings on both an individual and group basis as appropriate

Equipment Needs

1. For Players – ball, shin guards, proper shoes, clothing appropriate for training and conditions, water bottles, sun-screen, and care for equipment
2. For Coach/Team – cones, bibs or vests, extra balls, air pump, nets, portable goals, first aid kit, ice, water, adequate playing surface

Know that:

Risk management and Coaching

Acceptance of a coaching position = Acceptance of an obligation of duty to the player

Concept of “In Loco Parentis” when the players are minor

1. Responsibilities owed to the players include:

- A. To provide proper instructions for the activity
- B. To provide proper equipment for the activity
- C. To make reasonable selection of player
- D. To provide proper supervision of practice and games
- E. To take proper precautions for practice and games

2. Element of Negligence:

- A. A “duty” exists

- B. A “breach of duty” occurred
- C. The “breach of duty” is the “proximate or legal cause” of the injury
- D. There was actual “damage” (defined differently in different states)

You are ready to start:

Training

Your primary objective as a recreational youth soccer coach is to provide players with the proper environment and training that will help them to become technically proficient by the time they reach the age of 12.

1. Teaching the correct techniques utilizing a ‘fun game’ environment.
2. Provide situations that promote self-learning and build players self-esteem.
3. Continued education on your part, and self-assessment throughout the season.
4. Follow the ‘Principles of Youth Coaching’ and the ‘Coaching Activity Checklist’

Principles of Youth Coaching

1. Developmentally Appropriate Activities
2. Clear, Concise, and Correct Information (Brevity – Clarity – Relevance)
3. Training sessions should build from Simple to Complex
4. Safe and Appropriate Training Area
5. Decision making by Players
6. Implications for the Game

Coaching Activity Checklist

1. Are the activities fun? Yes/No
2. Are the activities organized? Yes/No
3. Are the player’s involved in the activities? Yes/No
4. Is creativity and decision making being used? Yes/No
5. Are the spaces used appropriate? Yes/No

6. Is the coach's feedback appropriate? Yes/No

7. Are their implications for the game? Yes/No 35

DID YOU KNOW WE RETAIN

10% of what we read

20% of what we hear

30% of what we see

50% of what we see and hear

70% of what we discuss

80% of what we personally experience

95% of what we teach someone

Building a Training Session

DETERMINE YOUR TOPIC: Observe the previous game and decide what areas need the most improvement.

PREPARE FOR TRAINING: Teach your players to set up a soccer game before training starts. Often it will be prior to your arrival. This is their game - no coaching from you – let them play. Instruct them to set up goals to attack and defend and make two teams. The first two players to arrive at the field play 1v1. They add players to both teams as more players arrive. Let them decide how long the field is and do not worry about the width. Also, let them decide how you score (by hitting the goal, the ball must pass between two objects, etc.). Finally, as more players arrive, leave it to them to decide whether to lengthen the field, widen the goals, and so on.

BEGIN TRAINING: This is a very brief introduction and demonstration of what we are going to do today. If the players are inactive for more than one minute in this portion, it is too long!!

WARM-UP ACTIVITY: This should be a fun activity or game that relates to the topic of the training session. The purpose of the warm-up is to prepare the body and the mind for what is coming next. The warm-up also sets the tone for the ensuing session. Would you be all fired up for training knowing that you get to run five laps around the field first thing? Let's say that your topic is dribbling. Play a game that requires lots of dribbling! Hey, what a concept! Coaching is not necessary in the warm-up. Let's say that kicking on goal is your topic. Does standing in a circle doing calisthenics get those players enthused about playing soccer? Does it prepare them (physically or mentally) to control a soccer ball? How often do you stand still in a soccer game? Stretching can

be incorporated into your fun warm-up activity simply by stopping the game every couple of minutes and doing your stretches.

FUNDAMENTAL ACTIVITY: This stage requires specific demonstration of the technique that pertains to the topic. Keep it slow and break it down into small parts (the players can speed it up). The fundamental activity follows your explanation and demonstration. It allows each player to perform the technique with NO pressure from an active opponent. In other words, no one is trying to steal the ball, allowing the individual to execute. At this stage, each player that has a ball can learn the technique at his or her own pace. Distances between partners can be adjusted to promote success. The speed, in which a player executes a movement can be determined by that player. It also allows for experimentation. Once you see a lot of success.

GAME-RELATED ACTIVITY: This activity challenges the players to perform the technique with limited pressure, under slightly more game-like conditions. For example, players may be grouped into pairs, threes, or fours; opponents are limited to jogging; players attack one or several small goals. The fundamental activity did not really look like a soccer game. The game-related activity may look like several small-sided soccer games going on at the same time. Again, many soccer balls will be in use, though perhaps not one for each player. With success, then go to:

GAME-CONDITION ACTIVITY: The players are challenged fully now, with opponents at full speed and the activity looks even more like a soccer game. Special conditions, imposed by you, are typically still used to emphasize the top of the session. Also, the activity is still typically small-sided. However, it will be played between two or more goals with larger groups. Most likely, success at this stage will be limited.

CONTROLLED SCRIMMAGE: It is imperative that the players play “the game they will play on Saturday” (Under 5/6 – 3 a side and Under 7/8 – 4 a side) each training session. Specific conditions may be imposed (i.e., score with your left foot only) which relate to... your topic!! This is also a great time to teach the laws (or rules) of soccer. Stop the game to deliver coaching points and information about the laws as you see fit. After a few minutes, then go to:

FREE GAME: You have coached this entire session – now it is time for the players to play on their own, with only encouragement coming from you. You are observing the players to see if anything that you have worked on the past forty-five minute has sunk in! Can the players kick with their instep without you prodding them? Will the players try the dribbling move you worked on the entire session in the “real game?” More often than not, it is “well, we have got more work to do.” Hey, that is why they are paying you the big bucks, right? But, every so often, Suzy will use that left foot and score a great goal. That is why you are out there each practice!

COOL-DOWN: This should relieve physical and emotional tension. Players should not go and sit down in a hot car immediately following an hour of training. Light jogging and stretching are very appropriate here. Any announcements you need to make regarding the next training session or game can be done at this time. Encouraging statements should also be made to the team.

Coaches Code of Ethics

I hereby pledge to provide positive support, care and encouragement for each player participating in the Westlake Youth Soccer Association by following the following code of ethics:

- I will support the philosophy of the Club
- I will remember that sports is an opportunity to learn and have fun
- I will encourage good sportsmanship by demonstrating a positive attitude towards all players, parents and officials
- I will demand that the players play within the rules of the game
- I will remember that the game is for the players and not the adults
- I will place the emotional and physical well being of each individual players above my personal desire to win
- I will encourage all players that school is more important than any sport
- I will communicate the team goals to the players and parents
- I will minimize side-line coaching and set an example for the players and parents
- I will be reasonable in regard to appropriate practice time
- I will praise in public and criticize in private
- I will give equal attention to all players
- I will continue to educate myself in the knowledge of sound coaching principles involved in the game
- I will respect the referee
- I will refrain from improper language
- I will be consistent, fair and relevant in my use of discipline
- I will attend every game and practice that is reasonably possible and will notify those involved when I cannot
- I will provide a perspective on competition by stressing humble winning and graceful losing

Signature

Date