

WHAT MAKES A GOOD COACH?

#1) The very best coaches GET THEIR ATHLETES TO BELIEVE in themselves - good coaches inspire their players to do more than they think they can. Good coaches always build self-esteem rather than undermine it. He/she simply makes it a practice to catch his/her athletes doing things RIGHT.

#2) The really effective coaches DO NOT USE EMBARRASSMENT & HUMILIATION AS “TEACHING TOOLS”
– There is NOTHING educational or constructive about it. It tears down that athlete and grossly undermines his/her self-esteem and creates performance problems.**#3) Great coaches are GREAT LIFE TEACHERS** – a good coach understands that what he/she is teaching goes far beyond the X’s & O’s. Instead he/she looks for opportunities where the more important life lessons can be taught such as mastering hardship, handling and rebounding from failures, trusting your teammates, sacrificing individual needs for the benefit of the group, emotionally dealing with winning and losing, good sportsmanship, fair play, honesty, integrity, etc.

#4) The best coaches KEEP THE GAME IN PERSPECTIVE – they do not get distracted by how big any one game is. Similarly, they understand that sports are just games and are merely a vehicle to teach important life lessons.

#5) Great coaches DO NOT LET THEIR EGOS AND SELF-WORTH GET TIED UP IN THE OUTCOME - the best coaches are mentally healthy enough to know that they are NOT their performances, regardless of what others around them may say.

#6) Great coaches UNDERSTAND INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES IN THEIR ATHLETES – the best coaches have a basic understanding that each athlete on their team is different in attitude, personality, response-ability, sensitivity and how they handle criticism and adversity.

They take an interest in the athlete’s life off the field.. Coaches who take an interest in the athlete’s total life are more trusted and respected than those who don’t. As a result, coaches who really care about the athlete as a person find that their athletes are more motivated and work harder. You can’t ever separate the athlete as a performer from who he/she is as a person.

#7) The best coaches are FLEXIBLE –they approach their teaching by continuously looking for a better way to reach each athlete. Coaches who are rigid, who continually adopt the attitude that “it’s my way or the highway” are far less effective than those coaches who have mastered the fine art of being flexible.

Understand here that flexibility does NOT mean being wishy-washy. You can be flexible and strong at the same time.

#8) The great coaches are GREAT COMMUNICATORS - they understand that communication is a two-way street and involves a back and forth between coach and athlete. When your athletes talk you must BE QUIET INSIDE SO THAT YOU CAN LISTEN.

#9) Good coaches TAKE THE TIME TO LISTEN TO AND EDUCATE THEIR ATHLETES' PARENTS – they make it a regular practice to communicate with the parents. Your success as a coach often depends upon getting parents to work with you, not against you. The only way to make this happen is if you take the time to talk to your parents. This means that you must learn to listen to their concerns and questions. Let them know about their support role on the team. Help them understand that their job is NOT to motivate or coach their child. Educate them about the sport and what it takes to excel. Explain your philosophy about competition and playing time. Be open to feedback in a non-defensive manner.

#10) Great coaches CONTINUALLY CHALLENGE THEIR ATHLETES TO DO BETTER AND PUSH THEIR LIMITS – they inspire their athletes to believe in themselves is by continually putting them in situations which challenge their limiting beliefs. They don't allow their players to just get by with the status quo. They teach the “GET COMFORTABLE BEING UNCOMFORTABLE principle,” which states that the only way to grow physically and emotionally is to constantly challenge yourself to do things that aren't easy.

#11) The very best coaches are PASSIONATE ABOUT WHAT THEY DO – these coaches know that passion (love) is a high test fuel that will power you over obstacles, beyond setbacks and through frustration until you achieve success. Their passion is infectious, motivational and inspiring.

#12) The best coaches MAKE THE SPORT FUN FOR THEIR ATHLETES – they realize that sports are just games, and games are meant to be fun. They find creative ways to integrate this fun into what they do over the course of the season, on a daily basis in practice and during competitions. **When an athlete is enjoying herself, that athlete is loose and relaxed. Since loose and relaxed are two of the most crucial ingredients to peak performance,** it is in your best interests as a coach to find innovative ways to keep your athletes smiling.