

Coaching Process

Created by: Greg Hedgecoe, Vice-President (Technical), Eastern Ontario Rugby Union



A basic coaching process for training sessions, drills and games is "Plan...Do...Review..." This is a cyclical process whereby the review of performance leads to the development of plans for future performance.

An example of how to apply this process to coaching a drill is provided below.

Plan...

Coach concisely:

- Explains the drill (i.e. purpose and pattern)
- Demonstrates the drill
- Describes the desired outcome
(e.g. Your goal is to kick the ball through the posts)

- Identifies one or two keys to success in the form of "cue words"
(e.g. The keys to doing it right are to have your "head down" and to "follow through")

Do...

Coach observes, analyzes and:

- Recognizes excellent effort and performance with positive feedback
- Periodically says the cue words before and during the attempt, and encourages the athletes to do the same (e.g. "head down, follow through")

Review...

Once the coach has detected a gap between actual and desired performance, and has identified a potential cause of the gap, the coach gets everyone's attention and then:

- **Assesses** - quickly identifies one or two weak points in decision-making and/or execution
- **Corrects** - chooses an appropriate corrective strategy (see below)
- **Plans** - reiterates the key(s) to success with a memorable summary

Tips

- Repeat this "Plan...Do...Review..." process until the activity is complete.
- When running a drill, spend the LEAST amount of time in the "Plan" stage (e.g. 1 minute) and the MOST amount of time in the "Do" stage. Allow them to learn by participation, not presentation.
- During the "Do" stage, provide the athletes with adequate time to figure it out on their own. Again, allow them to learn by participation, not presentation. This will also provide you with time to identify and prioritize the potential cause(s) of the performance gap.
- When you have corrective feedback to provide, stop the drill and get everyone's attention. Providing corrective feedback during the performance of the drill will only distract the players, and you may end up teaching them to "tune you out."
- During the "Review" stage, select the corrective strategy that best fits the situation (e.g. the cause of the gap, the urgency, and the experience of the athletes):
 - **Asking** - ask questions to teach them how to think (i.e. to develop their problem-solving skills) or to provide them with an opportunity to voice their opinions and share their knowledge
 - **Telling** - provide advice or instruction. When in doubt, "pull, then push" (i.e. ask, then tell as required)
 - **Encouraging and Energizing** - foster belief
 - **Modifying** - adjust the plan(s) and/or participant(s)
 - **Demonstrating** - provide a model of correct performance
 - **Refocusing and Visualizing** - ask the athletes to repeat the cue words (internally) and visualize successful performance

- Once the training session or game has ended, have a brief “Conclude” discussion that answers the following questions:
 - Were the personal and team goals met?
 - What went well? What needs improvement?
 - What should our goals be for the next training session/game?

References:

Coaching Association of Canada (2006). “Analyzing Performance – What is your referent?”

Coaching Association of Canada (2003). Introduction to Competition (Part B): Reference Material