

BOWLER BEWARE

Lurking behind each lane staring forward, nodding once in awhile, more stationary than mobile, standing seemingly impervious to what is truly going on rests a well intentioned individual who really needs to get out more. Yes get out more.... That is. Get out on the lane coach don't just stand there and nod with the occasional putting in of 2 cents worth of knowledge.

Good Coaches – Don't Just Stand There!

It seems the end of the approach is like a giant magnet to instructors and coaches. Yet it is likely in and of itself the most unproductive option for coaches. Coaches can vastly improve the quality of their communication and effectiveness as instructors/coaches by simply moving around. Get on the lane, view, share insights, probe from all sorts of angles on the lane, off the lane, don't just stand there! Too many coaches (both in practice and tournament play) just stand there. This is the least effective method to use in communicating. IF this is you, may I suggest attaching a pair of inline skates to your feet.

Good Coaches – Mirror – Model

Model what you want an athlete to copy. – Simply showing the athlete what it looks like both in static form and in movement will add greatly to the clarity and efficiency of instruction.

Mirror – by literally going through the motions of the skill set with the athlete provides feedback instantly to progress.

Good Coaches – Probe

Every question is a good question but...some are simply better. Aim to inquire with open ended statements or questions. This involves the brain in thinking rather than simply barking out a quick yes/no response. Probing also encourages ownership and helps develop independent problem solving.

Good Coaches – Develop Independent Problem Solvers

The great coaches find that their athletes can solve many of their own problems simply from the development of reflective skills. Questioning is the key ingredient to developing independent problem solvers. BUT...developing independent problem solvers are not just about asking questions it is also about the coach affirming with genuine enthusiasm when the athlete is making progress.

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Good Coaches – Don't use cookie cutters

There is no one best way of instructing. There can be lots of common denominators but...the path to success as a coach is not by following one constant set of criteria. You need to take the player from where they are at intellectually, emotionally, and physically, all the while paying attention to their current skill set and interests. The great coaches give the athletes what they need, avoiding the temptation to mold them into how they do things.

Good Coaches – Develop their expertise

The great ones never stop learning. AND...they do not limit themselves to learning in conventional methods. Reading is one excellent form of developing knowledge but...read from a broad spectrum of interests.. For example books on leadership can be immensely important in developing a new insight. Great coaches are also good at transferring relevant knowledge from other sports into their sport. For example a baseball pitchers variety of grips can help bowlers with experimentation of different grips.