

the Coaches' Office



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Basketball4ALL Roundtable

Monthly Features:

- **Locker Room** - Philosophy & Team Culture
- **Pre-Game** - Preparation & Scouting
- **Half Time** - Motivation & Quotes
- **Between the Lines** - Execution, Strategy & Technique

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Developing Your Coaching Philosophy

Many times *we think* we know what our coaching philosophy is - but may not have taken the time to examine what is really important to us. Spend some time to complete this 5-step exercise and it will help you develop an authentic philosophy to share.

1. What's most important to you?

List 3-5 guiding principles of your coaching. Examples may be: to ensure that all players have fun, to encourage effort above all else, to teach technical skills, prepare players for the next level, or to win league, section, region, or state, titles. You choose- it's your philosophy.

2. Clarifying your coaching values.

Please consider each of the standards on this coaching values continuum. Grade yourself 1<>5 based on what best reflects your values.

- Emphasis on winning<>Emphasis on effort;
- Earned playing time<>Equal playing time;
- Benevolent Dictator<>Democracy;
- Winning now<>Developing athletes as successful adults;
- Break them down then build them up<>Build them up to build them up more;
- Constant chattering<>Picking your spots to talk ;
- Control the flow of play<>Prepare and allow them to play

3. Your Coaching Legacy:

When I retire as a coach, what I hope to be remembered for is ...

4. The seeds of your philosophy:

In light of your answers to prompts 1-3, list the key words and phrases you'd like to include in your coaching philosophy.

5. Now write a concise coaching philosophy.

This will serve as your "mission statement" during this stage of your coaching career. This statement will provide you with a "compass" for all your decisions. Always ask yourself, "Is this consistent with my philosophy?"

Generally shorter mission statements are more effective than longer ones. Your philosophy is no different, and should be stated clearly so that it is understood by all. It can serve as a useful

framework to evaluate your coaching practices, defines what your program is, as well as what it aspires to be...and maybe how it intends to get there.

Recently at a coaching clinic Pete Carroll, USC Head Football Coach asked the coaches if any of them had a coaching philosophy, and everyone raised their hand. Then he asked them if they could tell him in one minute... most people put their hand down. His was simple..."Win Forever". Carroll explains, "Of course we want to win every game, but winning forever is simply realizing your potential and making yourself as good as you can be." Other recent and simple examples have been, "Get Better" and "Ask as if..." How much can you simplify your philosophy into something short and concise. Could you text it to someone in a single message? *Try to "tweet" it to me in 140 characters or less at <http://www.twitter.com/CoachLok>*

In The Bleachers

by Steve Moore



"OK, you all have a stimulus check. Now get out there and win!"

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In developing "team chemistry," one of the most important things is for your players to understand the team's goals and their own individual role on the team. Players need to know who the leaders are, the scorers, defensive stoppers, starters and substitutes. As these roles become clear, the team begins to develop its own identity, and can function more effectively in working towards

Every off-season it is a good idea to have a "Roles and Goals" talk with your new team. We usually have ours on a road trip at a summer tournament, and meet for an hour or so for everyone to talk openly. Each player will state what their goals are, team and individual. Other players are encouraged to comment and discuss roles. Quite often, players in this setting will "under-evaluate" their abilities, and teammates will reinforce that players importance to the team. Team goals are emphasized, that way when we leave the room, everyone is on the same page. We refer back to the talk several times during the year to remind players of their intentions. This cuts down on problems during the year regarding playing time, position, shot distribution, etc., and is a very valuable team building exercise.

Players need to accept the teams philosophy and must be willing to blend their talents with those of their teammates in order to win. This means thinking of others. It means losing oneself in the group - for the good of the group. It means being not just willing but eager to sacrifice personal interest or glory for the welfare of all. Team spirit means you are willing to sacrifice personal considerations for the welfare of all. That defines a team player.

Pre-Game

As often as possible, make practices competitive. Games are played to be won and lost, so the more competition you can have in practice, the more used to competition your players will be. Winning then becomes a habit.

When running drills, break your team into groups and spend no more than five minutes on a drill. You want to keep practices fast-paced and this will help. By breaking down into smaller groups, you keep everyone active and give them several repetitions in the exercise. By keeping the drill time short, you keep their interest.

Have an idea on how you want your basketball practices to flow. There should be a natural progression to what you do. Practices should start slow, for warm-up purposes and gradually get more intense. You might want to insert fun and enjoyable drills immediately after more strenuous activities. It's a good idea to work on shooting when the team is tired. Try developing a chart or checklist to make sure that you cover skills and strategies as often as you'd like

You might want to try doing your teaching of new plays during a pre-practice walk thru before the team is stretched and loosened up. Their minds will be more focused on learning. If they stand and listen too long after warming up, they will get tight and it might be hard to get them going again.

What does it take for a player to "coachable?"

- Knowing you don't know everything
- Willingness to do what your coach says
- Being more interested in learning than looking good
- Willing to listen
- Accepting constructive criticism as part of the package
- Not getting "defensive" every time someone suggests something different
- Being patient with yourself as to achieving results
- Being in it for the long haul, and not expecting or demanding quick results.
- Surrender to the teacher, or coach, and let go of the need to be in control of every situation.
- Surrender your will so someone else can instruct or coach you and entering the gym with the mindset, "Teach me coach – I want to learn!"



Winning is **FUN!!**

Playbook

It's nice to have a standard Sideline Out-Of-Bounds play (SLOB) that the players can run at any time – but is versatile enough to give your team different options. There have been games where we've scored more than a half-dozen different ways out of the same play. Down the stretch in close games with so many stoppages of play, there are often several opportunities to take the ball out on the side. If you can come out of a time out or give the same look – yet attack in a completely different way it gives you a tremendous offensive advantage. The play easily flows into a 3-out/2-in set or works if a team is better suited to a single-post set. Finally, by having a lone multi-purpose play it saves your team practice time to work on other things that are necessary and allows the coach to Keep it Simple-Stupid (K I S S)



“Never underestimate the Heart of a Champion”

--Rudy Tomjanovich



TEACHING is rewarding!!!

When people and coaches talk about the "Heart of a Champion", what are they really talking about? Is it really something that comes from the heart? Maybe figuratively speaking, but certainly not in a literal sense. Aren't they really just talking about qualities exhibited in their players like confidence, conviction, focus, poise, dedication, determination, courage, sacrifice, selflessness, and perseverance? Especially under pressure or trying circumstances?

Aren't those all just character traits that stem from tremendous *mental toughness*? Isn't mental toughness simply being "more consistent and better than your opponents while remaining determined, focused, confident, resilient, and in control under pressure . Wouldn't we also describe those types of players as having the "Heart of a Champion"?

If those are qualities derived from **mental** toughness, aren't we really talking about something that comes from "the mind" and not the heart?

Shouldn't it then be "Play with the MIND of a champion"?



Video Room

Click the video on the left to view a great shooting drill using "The Gun" by Shoot-a-way. Be sure to see related videos that show another dozen drills for a variety of uses. Now, we don't all have access to "The Gun", but you can insert a passer and a rebounder in place of the gun and still get the same result – plus you'd engage a couple more players and get extra passing practice.

Between the Lines

CONTINUITY OFFENSE - ON THE RIGHT TRACK

Many coaches call their "patterned" offense a "Continuity" Offense. In a Continuity Offense, players continue running the same pattern as the ball continuously reverses sides of the floor. The team is always "in offense" and should not have to "reset" to their original positions. Unlike a freelance motion offense, there is a structure requiring precise court spacing and cutting. Every player must know each position on the floor. Most coaches feel that one of the problems with continuity offenses is that they can be a little predictable. This may enable some defenses to deny certain passes and make the pattern difficult to stay in.

There are certain types of Continuity Offenses that I like to call "Track Offenses". Track Offenses have a continuous pattern to them, but react to defensive strategies by changing the pattern in mid-stream. This allows players some freedom of choice within a framework. In a track offense, players must stay on one "track" until the need for a counter to the defense switches "tracks"(much like a train on a track) and sends the play into a different set.

I think that these are the best types of pattern offenses, as they enable the offense to "read and react" to how the defense is playing. The offense can then make a variety of cuts to "counter" the defensive overplays. Offensive teammates need to be aware of their teammates moves and have an understanding of "relative motion". This can best be described as realizing how one player fits into the space on the floor, given the relative positioning of the other players, both offensive and defensive and then moving appropriately within that space. A track offense may ensure that this proper spacing occurs. Then, you'll be on the RIGHT TRACK!

Most importantly players need to know where to look for their teammates. The offense should be synchronized or timed so that players potentially get open in a sequence. The player with the ball then needs to know the proper sequence to look at.

This is no different than a football quarterback looking for his potential receivers. As the player with the ball goes through his options (in order!) he knows what his next move should be.

Basketball4ALL

Basketball for Athletes
Looking to Learn



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EVEN TWEET AT:

[www.twitter.com/
CoachLok](http://www.twitter.com/CoachLok)

EVALUATE YOUR BASKETBALL PROGRAM

In between seasons, it is a good time to reflect on the past year and evaluate your basketball program. Some questions to ask yourself: What worked well for you this year? Why? What wasn't as effective as you had hoped? Do you need to adjust it? Your roster and your opponents will change. Some new rules in your area may be instituted. Is what you are doing suited to the type of players that you have? Are you preparing to play against the "best" teams around?

Always remain open to change. If you find that your philosophy or style is proving increasingly less effective, refusing to adapt will only cause you and your team further frustration. Go to clinics, read books, research online attend other teams practices, and talk to coaches about different styles and methods. You obviously subscribe to newsletters already !:?)

After this research you may find that your methods need some fine-tuning to better fit your present personnel and competition. If you make that discovery - Act on it !

Don't change just for the sake of change. "If it isn't broke, don't fix it!" But if you can find a way to "build a better mousetrap," by all means, go for it!

Coaches' Catalogue

180 Shooter's Shot Tracker transforms a standard shot chart into a dynamic shot-tracking tool to measure and evaluate your team throughout the season. After keeping a shot chart during a game (or practice), input the data into Shot Tracker and use the program to sort the data by game, by opponent, by player or more. It allows a coach to: Identify trends ie: a player who shoots better off a right-hand dribble than a left-hand dribble or a player who shoots great from the corner but not from the wing, Find players' strengths and weaknesses and tailor plays and practice time accordingly, Build a team's system around player's strengths, and Individualize shooting practice for players based on game performance.

<http://www.180shooter.com>



About Basketball4ALL

Ray Lokar is the Southern California Area Coordinator and Lead Trainer for the Positive Coaching Alliance. Coach "Lok" has coached basketball, baseball, softball, volleyball, football, swimming and track in the San Gabriel Valley for over 25 years at the youth, high school, and college levels and has worked countless camps and clinics during that time for ages 8-18. Ray has been involved in the business development and marketing of the ACE Intelli-Gym(tm) for Applied Cognitive Engineering. The IntelliGym(tm) is a revolutionary training tool that enables basketball players to dramatically improve their game-intelligence skills using computer software.

Coach Lokar was the Head Basketball Coach of the 2002 CIF Champions while at Bishop Amat High School and is a Past-President of the Southern California Interscholastic Basketball Coaches Association He is now the Director of The Basketball4all Foundation that provides a variety of lessons, camps, clinics, competitions, and events for the benefit of the Southern California basketball community. Ray's book "[101 Basketball Tips](#)", published by Lifetips as part of their Lifetips Book Series, is available at Amazon.com and his second "[101 Basketball Coaching Tips](#)" is scheduled for a Spring 2009 release.

Road Trip

In this space we'll highlight some of my very favorite places to visit...on the web.

<http://www.coachtoon.com>

CoachToon.com is a blog about everything in coaching BUT technique and X's & O's. Coach Toon talks about all the stuff that drives coaches crazy – team building, leadership, excellence on and off the playing field, organization, time management, rules, culture and so on. This blog is dedicated to sharing best practices and helping all coaches develop their art. Subscribe early and visit often.

And One

Recently I've been thinking about "mindcasting". Not the "Lifecasting" like the many "Facebook-ers" who let you know every time they switch from watching the Duke game to the UCLA game, or get up to get something from the 'fridge" - but rather just sharing thoughts. "Here's What I'm Thinking. What are you thinking?"

I think that Twitter just might be the way to go to when it comes to quick, simple ideas that might make you go, "hmmmm". Not necessarily long enough to be a blog topic at <http://www.basketball4all.blogspot.net>, although they may evolve into that. I might use it from my phone as a "note to self" (and other "twitters") to share a quote, and when I'm at my son's youth league games it serves as a "self-control routine" or a "mistake ritual" when I see some of the coaching tactics used with young kids. You can share on Twitter starting at <http://www.twitter.com/coachlok>