

TOP TIP #1

The ART and SCIENCE of successful coaching is a delicate balance between intuition and intention.

Research has identified several imperative physical, psychosocial, and sport-related qualities of a successful coach. Successful coaches are often separated from others by their knowledge, ability to articulate and disseminate knowledge to others, and having various interpersonal relationship facilitating skills.

In addition to possessing the key qualities of a successful coach, successful coaches are also able to skillfully combine the ART and SCIENCE of coaching. Their coaching practices are rooted in creating a balance between intuition and intention, often deriving from both research AND successful and unsuccessful past experiences. While much of the technical/tactical and physical coaching is often rooted in intentional planning and execution, it is not uncommon for many of the psychological/social aspects of coaching (e.g., giving feedback, setting and evaluating goals) to be less structured and more rooted in intuition.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT:

“After studying sport psychology, I was able to understand the theoretical and empirical WHY and HOW behind what I do intuitively as a coach. As a result, I have become more intentional in my choice of words and actions, and it has made me a better coach.”

HELPFUL DEFINITIONS:

Intuition: An insight, perception, or ability to understand something immediately, without the need for conscious reasoning or reflection.

Intention: An action of directness in one's logical thoughts and behaviors is typically rooted in prior conscious decision to perform a behavior.

Critical Questions:

When considering the qualities of a successful coach, ask yourself:

1. Which of these qualities are my main strengths and why?
2. Which of these qualities I can improve on and why?
3. In which of these qualities do I rely more on intuition and why?
4. In which of these qualities do I rely more on intention and why?

Key qualities of a successful coach:



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UNDERSTANDING THE SPORT	Effective coaching is rooted in an in-depth understanding of the fundamental and advanced knowledge of the technical/tactical, physical/biological, and psychological/social aspects of the sport.
EAGERNESS TO LEARN	Successful coaches are lifelong learners who continue to learn and develop their craft across different sports domains.
SHARING KNOWLEDGE	The best coaches are effective in sharing their knowledge with athletes, their parents, and any other coaches they are mentoring.
MOTIVATIONAL SKILLS	A successful coach facilitates athletes' sense of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in a way that results in increased effort and intensity from their athletes.
KNOWING THE ATHLETE	A successful coach can tailor their approach by being aware of individual differences between athletes.
COMMUNICATION	A successful coach can communicate well and exude credibility, competence, respect, and authority. They recognize the importance of language in keeping the message simple and athlete-appropriate.
LISTENING SKILLS	A successful coach also understands the importance of effective listening and how to seek out information from athletes in a compassionate way.
LEADING BY EXAMPLE	A successful coach leads by example. They understand that consistency is key, and that behavior in itself is a language.
DISCIPLINE	A successful coach also creates a fair, reasonable, and consistent set of rules for their athletes. If these are ignored, a successful coach will also follow through on possible consequences consistently.
COMMITMENT AND PASSION	A successful coach is often successful because they love what they do. Their actions show commitment and passion in a way that exemplifies what they expect from their athletes.

Source: <https://olympics.com/athlete365/entourage/qualities-of-a-great-sports-coach/>

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