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# THE COACH



The encouragement of players as active role models is a critical factor in reinforcing the positive image of the game, making cricket more attractive to players, parents and coaches as well as to the community generally. From both the club and national perspective, we need to ensure that we have as broad a base as possible and a well performed Australian team. This investment will mean that cricket will have a strong numerical base and a foundation for ensuring active commu-

nity interest and constantly improving standards for our elite teams.

This is a two way process. When our elite players (at every level) perform as positive role models, on and off the field, this too promotes the game's popularity, and standards.

Establishing and maintaining the balance between participation, competition and enjoyment is one of the prime responsibilities with which each coach is entrusted.



# ROLE OF THE COACH

The coach has the chance to be a positive influence on the lives of his team as players and as individuals.

*Coaches have many diverse roles which can vary in importance according to the age group of the team. During the year the coach may be called upon to fill a variety of roles. These can include:*

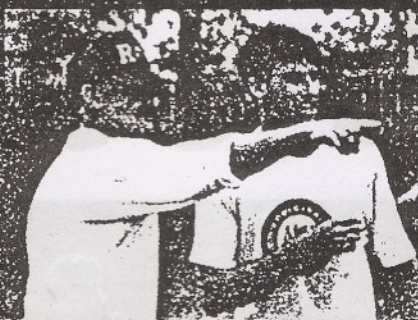
**1** Communicator providing clear instruction and feedback to the team and individual players

**2** Teacher developing skills and team tactics

**3** Motivator arousing, maintaining and controlling interest in players

**4** Leader organising training, match day activities

**5** Psychologist dealing with various individual's needs; individual and team morale



**6** Manager dealing with a wide range of players, officials and supporters

**7** Sports Trainer developing fitness programs, injury prevention, care and management

**8** Selector selecting the team to best represent the club

**9** Student seeking continually to upgrade his/her knowledge of the game

**10** Public Relations expert representing the club at official functions and community activities



"Club and junior cricketers are the lifeblood of the game. As a coach it is vital that we provide an environment that encourages players to enjoy and learn from their involvement.

If we can create and enhance the positive attitude, the player, the team, the club and the game will all benefit."

— BOB SIMPSON, former Australian captain, coach.



# COACHING STYLES

In a study of over 500 coaches, five distinct coaching styles were identified

## AUTHORITARIAN

- Strong disciplinarian
- Well organised
- Good team spirit when winning
- Dissension when losing
- May be feared or disliked

## BUSINESS LIKE

- Intelligent, logical approach
- Well planned and organised
- Up to date with new techniques
- Expects 100% effort all the time
- May set goals too high for some team members

## NICE GUY

- Well liked
- Players sometimes take advantage of this coach's co-operative nature
- Gets on well with players of similar temperament

## INTENSE

- Emphasises winning
- High anxiety often transmitted to players

## EASY GOING

- Gives impression of not taking the game seriously
- May not be prepared to drive the team at training
- Well liked but may seem to be inadequate in some situations

There is, however, no one perfect style that leads to success.

Most coaches possess certain characteristics of each coaching type. It is important to be aware of the advantages and disadvantages of the various coaching styles. Coaches should develop an ability to use the appropriate style for the various situations that may arise.



# QUALITY COACHING

**Principles apply to coaching, irrespective of the age of the players or the level of competition. The coaching principles that follow should form the foundation of your coaching style.**

## **1 RESPECT THE INDIVIDUAL**

As a person, as a player and the opinions he/she may hold. Developing self esteem is a prime objective. The coach must avoid the tendency to concentrate on the better players and ignore low achievers. All players need feedback.

## **2 PROFESSIONALISM**

The coach must be well presented, look the part and be in control at all times.

Develop a coaching style of your own. Trying to copy others can be counter-productive.

## **3 ORGANISATION**

The good coach is well organised, is enthusiastic and establishes through his attitude the correct work ethic within the team. Practice sessions, equipment and match arrangements are organised well in advance.

## **4 GOAL SETTING**

Goals must be set for individual players and the team. Goals must be realistic, flexible, achievable, measurable and compatible. Team and individual goals should be assessed regularly.

## **5 USE ASSISTANTS**

Surround yourself with competent people with whom you can work. Take time to appoint your assistant coach, team manager and chairman of

selectors. You must be comfortable with these appointments as you will rely on their advice during the season.

Ensure each has a clear job description outlining their role and responsibility. Communicate with your assistants regularly and listen to their opinions and suggestions. However, the ultimate responsibility for the management of the team is yours. You can delegate authority but not responsibility.

## **6 PLANNING**

Planning is the key to successful coaching. A yearly plan is essential for coaches if they wish to maximise the development of their players. Planning must occur within the coaching year specifically for the pre-season period, the competition period and the off-season. In particular, individual training sessions should be planned fully. The coach must evaluate the team's current standing and plan the session to achieve optimal benefit.

## **7 SAFETY & FITNESS**

It is the responsibility of the coach to provide an environment that does not expose players to potential injury. To be effective in this area the coach must be aware of:

- The importance of appropriate fitness programs
- Warm-up activities
- Rest and recovery
- Dietary intake and fluid replacement
- Protective equipment
- Safe playing and training facilities



## **8 COMMUNICATION**

The well prepared coach provides continual feedback to the team and individuals within the team.

Good communication is the essence of successful coaching. The coach must be able to deliver a message and at the same time listen to his players.

## **9 SET STANDARDS**

Outline your expectations to your players and assistants on all aspects of team management including:

**Practice Start times.**

**Dress required for training**

**Policy for late, or non arrival**

**Match Days**

**Travel**

**Social Functions**

A policy should also be adopted on recommended behaviour off the field. Team rules should involve input from players and include all aspects of player behaviour.

## **10 PLAYER DISCIPLINE**

Problems will occur during the course of a season. Whether it be a late arrival for a vital game or disregard for club property, it is advisable to be well prepared.

When problems arise they must be kept within the club and rectified quickly. A set of guidelines must be established early in the season to deal with a player breaching the rules.

It is preferable to allow player input into the rules, making them The Team's Rules rather than ones simply dictated by the coach.

If an infringement does occur, listen to the player's explanation, explain that team rules have been broken and take action immediately. This procedure should be firmly implemented.

## **11 DEVELOP CLUB SPIRIT**

On the ground, highlight team play efforts rather than individual efforts\_a team-lifting effort

should be strongly emphasised.

Encourage togetherness both on and off the ground; it is important to promote a harmonious club and attendance at club functions can be beneficial in team building.

While maintaining a high standard of behaviour the coach also must be able to relax and enjoy himself off the field.

Attempt to mix socially with all members of the club.

## **12 PLAYER RESPONSIBILITY**

Encourage more experienced players to take on extra responsibilities at practice and on match day. Generate involvement and support for your role by seeking their opinion on all aspects of team strategies.

## **13 BASIC SKILLS**

The basic skills must be continually taught, practised and reinforced. A team plan is of no value if players are unable to perform the basic skills. Be aware of individual differences. While observing basic principles, allow for the personal variations caused by build or other differences in players.

## **14 TEAM PLAN**

The coach must formulate a team plan. This plan is comprised of:

**Skill Development**

**Tactics** (these will vary from match to match depending on the weather, the opposition and the players at your disposal)

**Practice** (must contain a variety of drills yet at the same time reinforce the team plan)

## **15 KNOW AND CARE FOR THE GAME**

The serious coach will have a genuine love for the game. This involves an eagerness to learn and improve. The successful coach will be a student of the game striving to learn from other coaches, relevant texts and videos as well as coach education courses.



# SKILLS TEACHING

To become a better and more efficient coach some training sessions must be devoted to skill teaching. A simple formula for a coach to follow when teaching a new skill is **S P I R S**.

**S**how or demonstrate  
**P**practice  
**I**nstruct or correct  
**R**eward  
**S**ummarise

<b>S</b> for <b>SHOW</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Name the skill • Demonstrate the skill • Give your teaching points (no more than 3 points) • Ask if there are any questions • Demonstrate the skill again</li> </ul>
<b>P</b> for <b>PRACTICE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Send the players out to practice immediately</li> <li>• Use only small groups</li> </ul>
<b>I</b> for <b>INSTRUCT</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stand back and observe each performer</li> <li>• Offer advice • Keep repeating the key points about the skill</li> </ul>
<b>R</b> for <b>REWARD</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Praise players for good efforts.</li> </ul>
<b>S</b> for <b>SUMMARY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summarise key points learnt from the exercise and encourage further practice</li> </ul>

## COACHES' CODE OF CONDUCT

In a talk to the Australian team, Sir Donald Bradman suggested that "players are the trustees of the game". This applies equally to club coaches who provide a critical leadership role.

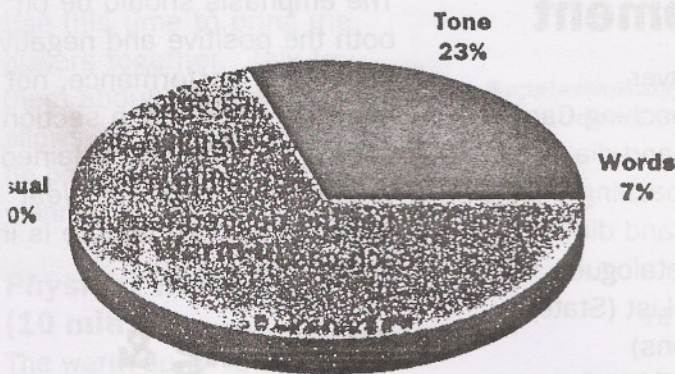
- Be reasonable in your demands on players' time, energy and enthusiasm.
- All players need and deserve equal time.
- Remember that for most players the prime motivation to participate is for fun and enjoyment.
- Develop team respect for the ability of opponents as well as the judgement of umpires.

- Follow the advice of a qualified sports trainer when determining when an injured player is ready to recommence training or competition.
- Keep yourself informed and up to date on sound coaching principles.
- Create opportunities to teach sportsmanship as well as the skills of the game.
- Ensure your players understand their responsibilities and the need to participate according to the rules.
- Demonstrate appropriate behaviour in your conduct both on and off the ground.



# MAXIMISING MESSAGE

**How we present our message as coaches influences the effectiveness of our coaching. Research suggests how a message is delivered will have more significant impact than the message. How a coach organises and prepares the work will have a great bearing on the success of the session.**



## KEY POINTS

- **Players learn through action and fun**
- **Select activities that provide variety**
- **Include challenges in each session**
- **Give lots of praise for improvement and effort**
- **Grade activities – early activities easy, later ones more difficult**

Cricket practices have traditionally been “have a bat”, “have a bowl”, “have a chat”, and go home. Clearly, this is only partly effective. There is a need for more purpose.

Club officials should plan practices at least three weeks before the competition starting date.

The following need to be undertaken:

- Check facilities: the availability, condition;

draw up general schedule.

- Check equipment, condition, quantify; small, but important details are often overlooked such as extra stumps, inner gloves, soft balls.
- Inform all players and officials in writing of the details of practice sessions and have a procedure to inform people of any emergency changes.

## PRACTICE SESSION CHECKLIST

### Punctuality

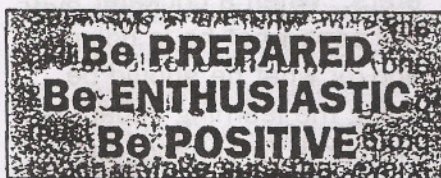
Arrive at the venue early to arrange the setting out of gear. Get help from the players but be sure to supervise carefully.

### Dress

Always dress appropriately and set a good example.

### Preparation

Ensure progress from the last



session and that there is a continual, challenging learning environment.

### Content

Every session must have an aim and the coach must see that

this is achieved. The success of this will depend on the session planned and the instruction given. The session must be challenging for all players.

Make maximum use of the time available, the equipment and venue space.

Select activities which have the players active. Tabloid activities and coaching videos are good ideas.



Make sure your session is fun and interesting and that it consists of varied activities which motivate the players.

### **Voice**

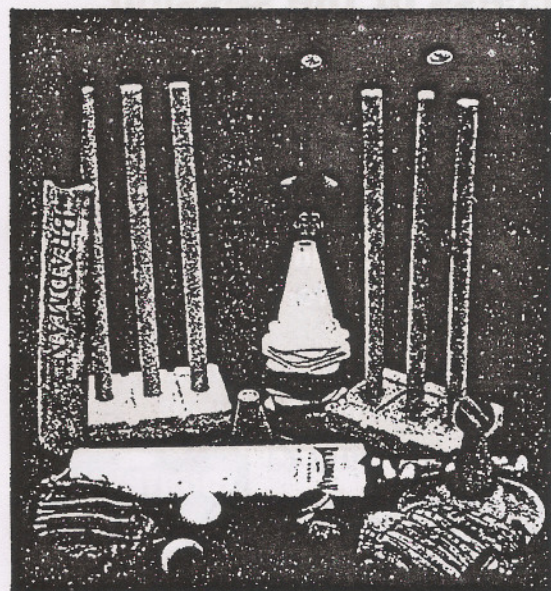
Use your voice to suit the situation. Don't talk too much and avoid shouting at and criticising players.

Avoid shouting over the group. If you need to get

application of these rules.

### **Coach's Movement**

As the coach, you should always be active and move freely around the venue and see that you are well positioned to observe all players. Use plenty of praise when observing techniques and be supportive of any player who is having difficulties.



their attention, set up some sort of routine such as two short whistles or a clap of the hands

### **Approach and Control**

Building up a relationship with players will depend upon how you approach and communicate with the players. This can be formal or informal. When asking the players to observe a demonstration ask them to look for specific items or movements that you want them to concentrate on. Maintain firm control over the group at all times. Let the players know what is expected with behaviour and be consistent in your

## **Resources & Equipment**

- Video/Over Heads/Coaching Cards (one liner and diagrams)/Coaching Shorts (one liner and diagrams)/Catalogue Resource List (State Associations)
- "Bag of Tricks"—Rubber hoses (tees)/Skipping ropes (long and short)/Markers (ice cream lids)/Inner soles (foot prints)/Bed sheet (target)/Hoops/Ice pack/Selection of different balls (tennis, golf, squash, swing).

Videos and video cameras are very valuable in assisting the development of cricketers. When a cricketer actually sees what he is doing and/or what he should be doing the learning impact is profound. To enhance the learning experience it is preferable for the player to perform a self-analysis first. The coach can then develop an assessment schedule with the player and formulate a plan. The player then develops responsibility for his own

progress, resulting in valuable learning and far greater long term commitment and improvement.

The player also gains a clearer understanding of personal strengths and weaknesses, developing a progressive profile of their game through successive video sessions.

Match play videos are also valuable and may be used for team development as well as individual assessment.

The emphasis should be on both the positive and negative aspects of performance, not just the faults. Each section should be carefully explained to players so that it is clear what the desired feature is in each case.

## **Planning & Organisation**

It is essential that the coach plans every session. It will make it more enjoyable and profitable for the players and coach as they will feel that they have achieved worthwhile goals. The ideal coaching session for young players will last between 60 and 90 minutes, depending on the age of the players. It is recommended that at least one-third of time be devoted to skill development.

Set goals so that players are practising with a specific purpose be it in the nets or in general sessions. Net practice provides an excellent opportunity to spend time on one on one coaching, so structure practice so that everyone is working and fully occupied.



# PREPARATION

**The following sample is based on a 90-minute session; the components can be varied according to your priorities and time available.**

## Group Organisation (5 mins)

Use this time to bring the players together. Talk to them about the session. It allows for latecomers to settle before beginning the planned activities

## Physical Warm-up (10 mins)

The warm-up is very important to avoid injuries. Start with a slow jog, do some simple exercises to stretch muscles and then play an active game such as tag.

## Speed Practices (10 mins)

Reinforce the key points as the players warm-up. Remember to use praise and lots of it!

## Skill Development (45 mins)

- Observe all players so that you can praise good techniques and spot basic errors. Redemonstrate if necessary.
- Coach the players who need correction. Be sure to be positive and supportive. Emphasise what to do rather than what not to do. Shouting and criticising won't achieve anything!

## Concluding Activity

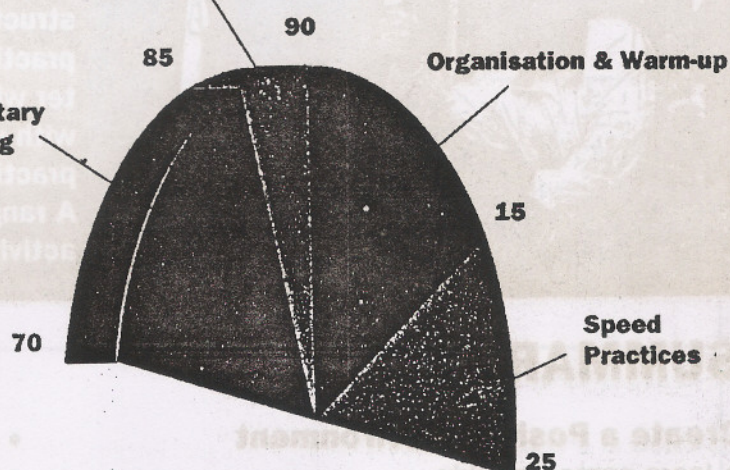
## Supplementary Conditioning

## Supplementary Conditioning (15 mins)

Set aside some time where skill can be practised in a game situation without too much instruction from the coach. Make sure that everybody is involved and not sitting out for long periods.

## Concluding Activity and Cool Down (5 mins)

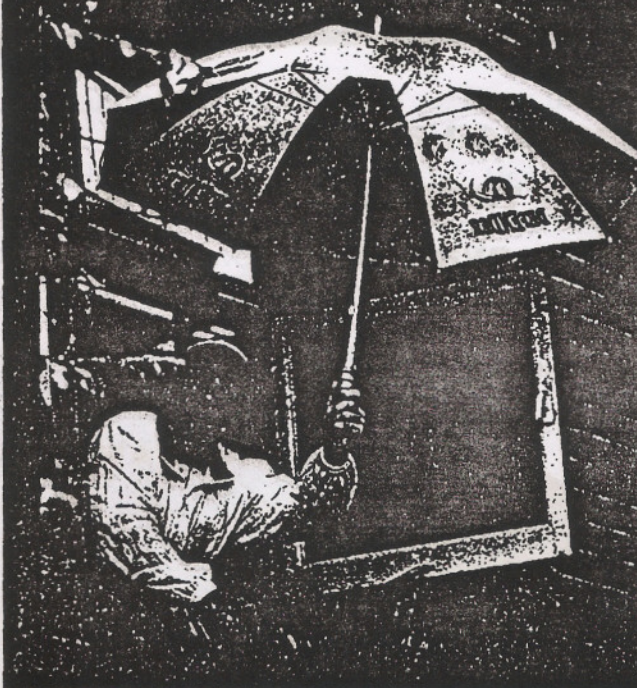
Use the time to emphasise the key points introduced in



session. This revision can be done whilst the players are doing some simple stretching exercises. Praise all the players and also use this time to talk about the next game venue and time and other organisational matters.



## "RAINY DAY" OPTIONS



The best laid plans will occasionally be thwarted by elements, in and out of your control – especially the weather. Part of proper planning is being prepared to cover all possibilities.

Coaches can provide and players will expect constructive and enjoyable practice sessions no matter what conditions apply with weather, ground, practice wickets.

A range of alternative activities could include:

- Discussions on:
  - Tactics
  - Leadership
  - Captaincy
- Video Analysis
- Quiz Nights – Trivia
- Indoor Fitness Activities
- Team Meetings
- Alternative Sport Skill Sessions
- Guest Speakers

## SUMMARY

### Create a Positive Environment

- learn names quickly
- smile, praise and encourage
- be patient and supportive
- be punctual
- dress appropriately
- be organised

### Set Achievable Goals

- keep the players' skill and age level in mind
- make sessions challenging
- ensure skill development is progressive

### Vary Your Sessions

- change format and activities regularly
- ensure equal opportunity for all players
- avoid eliminating games where players sit out
- include non-competitive team work
- include supervised activities with minimal guided instruction
- use different coaching methods (tabloids, cards)

### Teach Skills

- plan skills for sessions and introduce easiest ones first

- teach one skill, or one part at a time
- regularly revise skills from previous weeks

### Demonstrate

- remember 'a picture paints a thousand words'
- if you can't demonstrate the skill, choose someone who can
- demonstrate what to do, not what not to do
- make sure all the players can see the demonstration

### Involve All Players

- have ample equipment available
- use several small groups rather than one large group
- aim to have every player practising the skill each 30 seconds at least

### Provide Instant Feedback

- use lots of praise
- be supportive – shouting and criticising won't achieve anything

### Use Your Voice Well

- don't try to talk too much
- try to have as much one-to-one as possible



# PRACTICE SESSION PLANNER – SAMPLE

<b>DATE:</b>	<b>SESSION NUMBER:</b>
<b>Major Objectives of Practice</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparation for One Day game</li> </ul>	
<b>Organisation of Equipment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refer to practice layout page</li> </ul>	
<b>THE SESSION</b> <p><b>(a) Group Organisation (5 mins)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain importance of running between wickets, running singles, working the ball, bowling in corridor, aggressive fielding etc</li> </ul>	
<p><b>(b) Physical Warm-up (10 mins)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jog, stride throughs and stretching in pairs</li> </ul>	
<p><b>(c) Speed Practices (10 mins)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shuttle relay with bats</li> <li>• Ground fielding defence</li> </ul>	
<p><b>(d) Skill Development (45 mins)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Net session – starting an innings</li> </ul>	
<p><b>(e) Supplementary Conditioning (15 mins)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Steal a run</li> </ul>	
<p><b>(f) Concluding Activity (5 mins)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stretching</li> <li>• Emphasise team plan for game</li> </ul>	