

“THE COACHES GUIDE TO TEACHING”

By Doug Lemov

CHAPTER 1-The Ability to Decide

There is no 100% solution, only one hundred 1% solutions

If you can get 1% better each day for one year, you'll end up 37 times better by the time you're done

People can outperform what is 'expected'-individually and in groups-via better teaching

How do you manage time, give feedback, build relationships and assess how much everyone is learning?

Scientists and researchers had discovered more about the brain and how it learns in the last twenty years than they had in the last 300 years.

The genetic fitness of humans is as much a consequence of group selection as individual selection

Sports make us more human because they echo the process of our evolution

How do I give feedback to help athletes learn better and faster?

How do I teach decision making?

How can I help players become self-driven learners?

How can I instill a growth mindset?

Planning units of learning (four to six weeks) is far less common than planning single sessions, but at least as important because long-term memory can only be built over time.

The science of working memory and attention will play a key role.

“We're really disciplined as coaches to always talk about what we want to see, the desired outcome, not about what went wrong or what the mistake was. We have to be disciplined and always use our language to talk about the next stuff you can do right. It's always about what we want to happen, not about the other stuff.”

At the highest levels, players don't run faster; they think faster

Part of being fast is making better decisions and making them a little quicker than the player standing a few feet away.

This raises some questions: Can certain people see better than others-faster, even?- Can people be taught to see better?

This might seem like a good thing, but haphazard, ill-informed decisions accrue into habit just as readily as good ones, and unlearning poor habits is a far more difficult task than learning better ones in the first place. This explains why some of the players we teach the worst are those who dominate at an early age. They win games by doing what no one else is physically able to do, not necessarily what will succeed in five years or in an environment where athleticism, so coaches allow or encourage them to make a habit of decisions that are unsustainable or counterproductive in the long run.

Skill at a tactical game is hard to spot and rarely rewarded unless others are playing the same game

The brain is the ultimate source of competitive advantage

Decision making is generally fast, while problem solving is usually slow

Veterans can look at less but see more

If you have to think consciously about something, it keeps you from thinking about other things- and from perceiving the world around you accurately, as we will discover.

Getting the system to work seamlessly into a “system” takes a lot of work, both individually and a team. To react unconsciously requires a tremendous amount of repetition, and greatness comes from that repetition. It happens almost accidentally; you act before you even received the cue.

Cognitive scientists call this “desirable difficulty”. Perversely, one of the best ways to help players think quickly in the game is probably to use more deliberate thinking- at the right times and in the right ways- during training.

The gaze of an expert is very different from the gaze of a novice

-Chess

-Jeff Wageman at Creighton game

Have athletes stay off their phones on the day of competition

It is, in a sense, a set of team agreements. *When pressing, we will seek to prevent the ball from crossing the field left to right or right to left across the midline. When attacking through the midfield, we will seek to attract pressure and play back and out quickly.*

Skills need to be encoded into long term memory and have a clear and concise name attached to these skills so players and coaches can recall and refer to it precisely and quickly

We cannot teach critical thinking, problem solving or decision making in the abstract, cognitive science tells us. We can only do those things in the context of specific situations and relevant knowledge.

“Doing simple things at speed makes them seem complex.”

Creativity is practice that is camouflaging hard work.

The ideal training environment should not be a monoculture in terms of methods, no matter how effective a given method is for some purposes.

Instead of coaching the way you want to coach, you have to coach in the way kids learn

If players are struggling with decisions at a specific moment in games, one response might be to further automate skills commonly required in that moment. Being able to execute while thinking about something else is the hallmark of champions.

Automatism: An example is a left footed player who, when opponents or situations force the ball onto their right foot, has an extremely difficult time finding the solution because their technique with that foot is inadequate. As a result, the player does not have the confidence to consider a range of solutions, which affects their options in the game.

Standing in line in drills is extremely counterproductive. Games based practices help because they:

- break into smaller groups
- distort the game to make certain events occur
- be structured so that everyone is actively perceiving and reacting the whole time
- emphasize the most important foundational concepts
 - You can put constraints to help help with working on specific skills

Start drills in chaos instead of neatly created situations.

Make a list of problem statements/ weaknesses that we need to work on as the season progresses. After the season, collect all of these thoughts and come up with a common list of attributes that can be corrected.

A player can only press effectively if she knows what actions to take and when and why to take them, as well as how to adjust her actions based on what the opposition does in response, but a team can only press effectively if everyone knows their specific roles and the cues that tell them when to press and how to adjust. Coordination is life and death.

You can't use, refer to, or expand upon a concept as a coach unless you know confidently that all players understand it already. This is ironic because most clubs have curriculums. They just aren't very good and rarely get used.

A program that "spirals" causes topics to appear and then reappear over the course of a year or even multiple years. It's a productive idea because mastery is rarely achieved in one interaction, and even if it was, the forgetting would begin as soon as you stopped practicing.

Of the 100 things you might teach players, there are probably 20 that are important enough to obsess on. Another hour focused on that 20% of the most important things probably yields more benefit than introducing something from the remaining 80%.

Video is an outstanding way to ensure knowledge and understanding outside of and in synergy with what happens in practice.

Coaches interact with a curriculum: players interact with principles of play, or in more advanced cases a "game model".

It's critical that the principles must contain a manageable amount of information in simple, direct language because they will form the basis of much of a coach's questioning

The key is that principles of play make questioning productive and efficient because they reduce guessing.

Sometimes it is best to not explain everything right away.

If you start with a clear vision-a very good mental representation- the problem-solving is much more effective because everyone knows what they're trying to accomplish.

If players know their principles cold, coaches can consistently reference them during practice, and they can question more efficiently and therefore more frequently if they so desire.

“Vocabulary streamlines communication and expresses the technical aspects of who we are as a team.”

The more you use the same terms and phrases, the easier it is for the players to associate experiences with that idea.

Before you can communicate, you all have to speak the same language. Consistent vocabulary is necessary to consistent execution.

-It is better to have 12 technical terms that every single person has memorized than 45 words that only some people really get.

Another way to build perception is to put players in situations that replicate what they will perceive during the game as often as possible.

The net on this is that a good coach should recognize the need for a variety of exercises to build perception, and perhaps how it will build perception is a question that should be asked of any training exercise.

What if you gave “observation tasks” to the players in the team that was off?

The girls improved their play, not just their understanding, and their critical eye became their own teacher.

Video tape segments of practice for immediate feedback, both as a team and individually

CHAPTER 2-Planning and Design

Learning is a constant battle against forgetting

If I’ve seen you do it, you must know it. Therefore, you will remember to do it. If you do not, it must be because you lack concentration or motivation.

Performance is what you know or can do while being taught; learning is what you know or can do later on.

Ease of retrieval determines whether athletes can use what they know quickly when they need it

If you only cover something once in a week, only 22% of players will retain it. If we cover it four times in a week, 65% of players will retain it.

As soon as you learn something, you begin forgetting it almost immediately

-After a few hours of learning something new, people routinely remember only a small fraction of it.

There are also individual differences and factors in the learning environment, like how much attention people are paying and how hard they are willing to work to remember.

If you spread your studying out over a series of sessions, ideally with a good night's sleep in between, you will be far more likely to remember a few months later.

-If you were to study for 15 minutes for a test each day for three days, for a total of 45 minutes, using carefully designed retrieval practice, you'd likely do better than if you studied for 60 minutes all at once a night or two before an exam

Experts are far more likely to be able to learn from mistakes because they understand them better and because they see fundamental principles at work rather than superficial details.

Switching topics during training accelerates forgetting of the original topic and thus allows a coach to create the same effect as spacing- making remembering more difficult- in less time.

Blocked Practice: Practicing a topic in a steady, unbroken fashion

Serial Practice: Practicing multiple activities during training

Randomized Practice: Practicing and learning in an unpredictable and ideally context driven state (scrimmaging)

-Scrimmages can have "controlled randomization"

Feedback should be precise and technical

Coming back to an activity for five minutes on three different occasions might be more efficient than 20 minutes on one occasion (Shell Drill)

One of the most consistent findings of cognitive psychology is that frequent, low-stakes assessment is one of the most productive learning tools there is.

In such cases, quizzes might be scored, but there is no consequence and no recording of the grade other than the consequence of each learner understanding how well they were learning.

Coaches who want durable mastery and long term development will have to plan across longer intervals of time. It's probably best to plan one week at a time.

Changes in performance can help us win in the short term, and depending on how important winning a given match is, that's not irrelevant. But it's still a short-run game.

The science of memory suggests that what appear to be improvements after a week of training are likely to fade quickly unless athletes retrieve and apply the concepts involved periodically over the coming weeks.

The cards are heavily stacked in favor of short-run coaching, and it's possible that the majority of athletes at most levels of the game spend the majority of their time learning in environments that are heavily weighted towards short-run incentives

What's the right planning interval if we want to build long term memory then? Something in the order of six weeks, I'd guess.

-For younger players, things might have to be divided into three week units

Two offensive emphasis on offense, two on defense, one in offensive transition, one in defensive transition, plus individual skill development.

During the first few days, perhaps you'd want to introduce concepts using a more "blocked" approach, paying attention to cognitive load and phasing in information so players successfully begin transferring to long-term memory.

Not only does it cause players to have to suddenly struggle to remember their roles when they press or build but when you are done with it and come back to crossing, their learning of those roles too will benefit from interleaving

Just because a unit is done does not mean forgetting has stopped, so once players have mastered an idea, there's no reason to leave their retention of it to chance. It must still be touched on!

Skipping haphazardly from one thing to another will likely lead to distraction and attention residue more than carefully encoded long-term memory.

Tracking what you retrieve and how often you do it will cause you to become more aware of it and you'll rapidly gain insights about what works and what doesn't.

As they start to execute more fluidly and with less strain on working memory, a new challenger or a new idea can be added. Learning should go faster if we add one concept at a time.

Once students are more knowledgeable, that guidance is unnecessary and should be faded in and out and replaced with problem solving exercises.

Have a targeted goal: As a coach, this helps me decide what focus to bring to the individual rounds of practice within the activity

Practice in rounds: As they show progress, stop them and add another teaching point, or, if they struggle, explain a key misconception and send them back to try again. It seems slower but in the end it's far faster than front loading all of your teaching points at once.

Isolate then integrate: Simple to complex. Easy to hard. Order to disorder.

Mix in mix ins: The sudden inclusion of a previously mastered idea helps encode in long-term memory, and short retrieval periods are often as effective as longer ones.

Manage extrinsic load and adapt to the level of expertise: If players struggle-either to master or because they seem under challenged- it may make sense to consider whether you've read their level of expertise correctly.

CHAPTER 3-Getting More Out of Feedback and Questioning

Feedback is everywhere. What's more, feedback is so familiar, it can feel too mundane to be worth sustained attention.

Feedback is the guidance provided to athletes after an initial effort at execution.

Most coaches give feedback in two situations; during stoppages and during live play.

- When you give too much feedback, especially during live play, the player will practice ignoring you, learning that only half-listening to your words is how to respond to your coaching

- When giving feedback, you have to have the players full attention or else the feedback is useless

Feedback Level 101: Describes fundamentals; the core things to get right

Feedback Level 201: Focuses on what happens after you give your athletes feedback, specifically whether and how they apply the guidance you've given. A coach must build a culture where athletes not only attend to feedback but also use it in seeking to learn.

Feedback Level 301: Focuses on using feedback to foster decision making and therefore providing feedback through questions or by creating situations that cause players to problem-solve.

Baseball example: Changing their swing might get them closer to the majors eventually, but it will for sure make them hit .220 for the next six weeks. Players have to believe in and trust the relationship to embrace taking the risk to walk through the valley of the shortened swing

Trust is an outcome of feedback as much as a prerequisite

Quick, specific feedback in short, understandable bursts (7 Second Corrections)

-Don't overload their feedback memory

Since nobody can focus on five things at once, the best-case scenario is that each player chooses something, the single most useful thing for her, to focus on.

-If we have them try to master too many things at once, they will do nothing with sufficient focus to achieve mastery

-When you chase five rabbits, you capture none

“Girls, pause. One of the most important things for us to do is to pass the ball strongly. We're trying to reverse the ball quickly to get our opponents behind the ball. For the next few minutes, I want to see strong, crisp passing! (*Demonstrate*) Work together as a team. Okay go!”

-Suddenly the task for players is clear and observing their execution is a manageable task for the coach

In any learning environment, some people develop faster and some develop slower than others.

The key to winning this race is the ability to sustain states of unbroken attention and deep concentration. Those who can focus best for longest separate themselves from the crowd.

“Attention residue”: When you switch from one task to another, your mind remains partially focused on the previous task.

-Researchers have found that most working environments encourage people to operate in constant states of low-level distraction

If we concentrate our efforts on small, manageable goals, we regain the feeling of control so crucial to performance

“Internal Locus of Control”: When people believe that they have control over what happens to them.

“The Zorro Circle”: Refers to the results of focusing on precise, manageable goals which you can see yourself accomplish.

-Players are happy when they see themselves succeed. Happy athletes work harder and are more motivated. Over time this influences their mindset. It becomes self-belief.

One of the most important factors in the effectiveness of feedback is how quickly they get a chance to use it. Correct quickly using “economy of language” and have them DO it!

One perverse thing about feedback: the value recipients get out of it often decreases with each additional second we spend giving it.

Help yourself with the “economy of language” by writing down in advance of practice the most important things you want your players to execute.

- Record yourself coaching, then transcribe everything you’ve said, then go through and cross out everything unnecessary that you said.

Look for causes, not symptoms, like a doctor

- Causes: Fundamental passing and not playing low (lack of exercise and bad diet)

- Symptom: Turnovers (heart issues)

The more competitive the environment, the greater the likelihood that the coach will describe the problem or shout statements that are true but useless.

- In high stress situations, only use language encoded during training to describe something you’ve taught before

The best coaches that I’ve been around create a shared language that’s instrumental in their teaching. The phrases stick with players and staff. We spend hours, sometimes, thinking about our words. If you haven’t planned the words/language, then what you actually do in a session will be diminished.

“Positive framing”

Praise is powerful and valuable but it is also a bit like currency within your team. Too much of it causes inflation.

Learners want to know how to get better. When we fail to show them how to do that, we fail them.

A simple way to add challenge in your feedback might be to add the phrase, “See if you can.” As in, “Now see if you can do it in one touch.”

Each correction is also a sort of investment in relationships with players.

Presumed well-intentioned errors can help you see more of the positive thinking that already exists.

You can argue that relationships with players are like a bank account. Making regular small deposits over a sustained period of time is the way to prosperity.

Ideally you will build a culture when players are comfortable having their mistakes discussed in front of the team.

Great coaches are careful not to judge everything to be “awesome”.

Athletes can absorb more information from a picture with a few carefully placed words than just words.

Being fast and focused with verbal feedback, we learned, is critical to managing the limitations placed on learning by working memory and attention.

Taking feedback is different from using feedback, which I am terrible at. I do not change my behavior.

Develop a habit of sustained focus.

Have a notebook in which you write down things you observe during training and want to talk to your team about.

Breaking a habit = telling someone “no”, but you must stay with it!

Getting the feedback closer to the event that causes it when players can still study the perceptive event is important. Recreating the original situation visually allows your athletes to look at the problem and make connections between perception and action.

“Find a win” when correcting.

Success, especially in its first instances, is an important coaching opportunity: by calling it out, helping players themselves to see it and understand it, you’ve increased the likelihood that it will happen again.

Being simple, fast and direct with feedback in one situation might buy you more time to ask open-ended questions the next time.

Experts process more quickly and in chunks, so their working memory is less easily overloaded.

We assume sometimes that if athletes get something right one time, it will suddenly become part of their repertoire, but really, they have to do it over and over again for that to happen.

Nothing wastes time and saps momentum like a poor question for which there is no clear answer.

Surprisingly, experts look at fewer things during performance than novices. In many ways, the definition of their expertise is that they know where to look.

What do you see? What should you look at?

The important thing that must be present to help players problem-solve is the problem itself.

“If I have to rebuild it, I make the players do it.”

If the great majority of players listening carefully to a question think actively about the answer with the expectation that they might answer and are willing to answer out loud, and this happens throughout the training, then you have a high participation ratio. Everyone is actively thinking all through the session. If players barely offer only a few halfhearted answers, or if just two or three players answer all the questions, if questions hang in the air unanswered, the session has a low participation ratio. Participation ratio is represented by the X-axis in the diagram above.

“Turn and talk with your partner. I’ll give you 30 seconds and then I’m going to be looking for answers.”

Coaches who want to emphasize thinking in their teaching should be able to use wait time, so players share the best answer, not the first one. They should be able to cold call; asking any player to answer at any time and steering questions to relevant players.

“I’m going to be asking you questions throughout just to check for understanding. Don’t shout out the answer . . . Sometimes I might call on you guys even if your hand isn’t raised, OK, because the game requires you to be switched on at all times, so I am going to be calling on guys at times to make sure the focus is still there so we’re locked in from the first minute to the last minute.”

Coaches who want players to communicate during competition and to work together effectively should ask them to practice it during training.

“Warm Call”: Tyler, I’m going to call on you on this next play, so get ready . . .

A question is a means, not an end.

Avoiding the yes/no framing is a good first step.

-Where do we want to play this situation?

- What tells us where we should play?
- What principle of play can tell us what to do here?

Presenting athletes with a data set collected as they play is powerful

CHAPTER 4-Checking for Understanding

Teaching is not eliminating the gap, it is understanding it

He had taught it, but they had not learned it

A coach asks players to do something, athletes fail to do it, right then and there, and the coach fails to see it.

Science tells us that we see only a fraction of what's right before our eyes. The human brain struggles to remember a seven digit phone number

Think through the problem first, and then prepare yourself for the questions that might be asked

Efficiency is not a sexy word and TED talkers and philosophers of educators rarely rhapsodize about it. But it's a big deal. Without it, only a few students would be individualized feedback, and the player would only gather data on a subject of the class.

If everyone agrees on what "right" looks like, it can reduce variability in execution while preserving autonomy.

One is that you practice anticipating what players will struggle with. You are far less likely to see struggles as signs of laziness or some flaw in the group- they're soft- than reminders that learning is hard. You're more likely to see a problem-solving challenge.

The gap between "I taught it" and "They learned it" is ten times easier to find and understand if athletes are not trying to hide their mistakes from you- even more so if they willingly share them.

"Waiting on one," he says, to remind students that he needs their attention but without saying the individual's name so as to not divert their attention away from his task.

"I'm glad I saw that mistake. It teaches us something we have to fix before Saturday."

"I like that your first instinct was to look for space and to go wide, but in this situation, we don't want space. We have the advantage and we want to go directly at goal."

“What I am asking you to do is difficult. Even professional players struggle with it. But you can do it. So let’s take a look at what went wrong.”

It turns out it’s surprisingly hard to simply tell players they were wrong without making it a big deal and getting on with it.

I want to gather all the evidence before making a decision about what route we’re going to take

Your demeanor is a critical part of the learning environment. Your demeanor should be intentional and mindful, and to be emotionally constant, both in practice and especially in games.

“Snowballs” take time.

Have your players model what they should do after they make a mistake so that they can “feel” the correction.

“The key is not the will to win. Everybody has that. It is the will to prepare to win that is important.” → Bobby Knight

Step One: Write out your training objectives for the session. Precise goals mean rapid progress. Vague goals mean slower progress because we’re less focused.

-Goal: Handle the ball better versus full court pressure

Step Two: Then narrow that down to specific goals.

-Goal: Work on our cutting off the ball

-Goal: Execution of our pressbreak after first option is taken away

Step Three: Anticipate at least two errors or areas of struggle

-Error One: We struggle understanding what a good 45 degree angle cut is

-Error Two: We struggle hitting our teammates on time and on target

Step Four: Plan your response

-Response: Find markers in the gym to understand our cutting angles

-Response: Ball handlers have to be strong with the ball so they can see cutters

CHAPTER 5-Building Culture

“The great majority of coaches spend the great majority of their time on the offensive side of the ball.”

“He knows he missed, and me pointing it out adds insult to injury.”

“Mindfulness”: Teaching oneself to make intentional decisions about what to pay attention to, particularly in moments of intensity and importance.

“You have to *respond* instead of *reacting*.”

“When you make a mistake, I will stand by you, so play fearlessly. It is not when you make a mistake, I will seek to establish blame.”

Think about the importance of things that **should not** be said. It is almost more important at times to not correct rather than to correct.

- “Early in my career, I was abysmal at this. I’m not sure I was even conscious of this. I coached everything. Imagine your boss was looking over your shoulder and correcting every error. Not fun, not sure how much I’d learn, pretty sure I’d become resentful.”

-Chris Apple, Empire FC (NY)

Culture eats strategy for breakfast.

We all want a strong culture. We all know that it works. We just don’t know quite *how* it works.

Culture is, first and foremost, a set of habits. It is what you do, not what you say.

Culture is built, sustained and transmitted across an organization indirectly, communicated in a series of small amounts, many of which occur when you’re most distracted by other things.

Culture is built in how groups of people do the familiar, the mundane, the every day.

“We can’t convince our players to do something that we don’t believe in.”

“Next Play!”

“Aggressive Mistakes!”

If you aren’t making mistakes, you are playing it safe and not making impactful plays, and consequently not stretching yourself to be better.

You know you’re getting old when you no longer understand how the younger group talks.

Language is the most important habit!

The third principle is that culture not only must be unique to each particular group but also needs a bit of a wall around it.

Ironically, the less aware you are of a habit, the more it influences you.

No one had to be told, "You matter to this club. We are a family." They felt it.

What does _____ mean to you?

Develop your own phrases:

-Empty the tank

-Muhammad Ali (swagger)

Watch for visual signals from your players.

Speaking of ending practice, do players pick up their trash and stray tape and take pride in their facilities?

Everything that is distinctive about a culture that the group knows sets it apart from others has this effect. It says, 'That's how we're going to do things' or 'We do things differently.'

The key to culture is building habits. Here you need what Coyle calls "steady signals" to communicate what the culture is about. It's what you do every day, often when you don't realize you're doing it, that expresses what you believe.

"Attitude Points": Highlights of intangible plays → hustle board type of stuff.

Do your relationship building in advance; books, discussions, themes for the season

The quality of our lives depends on the quality of our habits.

Sticker charts

Discipline: Teaching people the right way to do things.

-If you take the time to teach your kids early in the season how to do things properly, it will cost you time early but it will pay off with a lot of extra time down the line.

-If you save a minute ten times a day for 180 school days, you will gain 30 extra hours of instructional time over the course of the school year.

When designing and implementing procedures in your training sessions, be sure not to overlook the importance of language.

A Positive Culture Characteristics

1. A culture of error or psychological safety
2. Inclusion and belonging
3. Attentiveness
4. Excellence
5. Character and candor

Fear to fail= Failure

LOSS= Learning Opportunity, Stay Strong

Remind players that struggle is normal

It's worth noting that a culture of error where people willingly expose their struggles and mistakes because doing so will make them better is not relevant merely for athletes. It is critical for adults too.

When people feel like they belong, their behavior changes.

Everyone talks and listens in relatively equal measure, keeping contributions short
Members maintain high levels of eye contact. Conversations and gestures are energetic
Members communicate directly with one another, not just the group leader.

The best solution is to have taught people the right way to do things.

Nonverbal communication and corrections allow you to keep talking.

Excellence is about taking the risk of giving one's best and finding out what one is truly capable of.

Competing can go wrong if it's not also humane and athlete-focused and if the challenges are not framed properly for athletes.

CHARACTER MUST ALWAYS BE AT THE SOUL OF THE CULTURES WE BUILD.

CHAPTER 6-Issues in Growth and Development

The great majority of youth coaches spend the majority of their time coaching the players on and nearest to the ball.

In spreading the developmental tools the club had across a wide array of players.

It's easy to coach the best player.

At every level, players are constantly asking

- Am I important here?
- Do I matter?
- Is this coach vested in me?
- Does he see what I do?
- Does he care if I succeed?

If you were Denarius's student and did poorly on a test, you still knew that Denarius wanted you to succeed.

-He doesn't give a damn about me. I'm not on his list. I'm not one of his favorites.

Ignoring players is often where resentment starts.

4/25 players on the English U16 team on now on the senior national team.

-Just because you are good young doesn't mean that you're going to be good when you're older

You must select wisely; you must coach everybody, and you must believe in their potential no matter where they are in the hierarchy

The second rule is to group for performance, not for potential

-The next step is to coach everyone as if they will be your best player on your team in three years. The problem is not A teams and B teams, it's B teams that are an afterthought where players aren't taken seriously and where there is no clear pathway up.

"Fail Fast" is common advice for projects in technology and entrepreneurial sectors of the economy. If you know you don't know the right answer when you start, design your organization not to avoid mistakes but to learn from them quickly.

There should always be players moving up to the first team from the second team.

A year in the mind of a kid is a very long time, and besides, if you presume you were inevitably wrong on your selections, you'd want to constantly see how the ones you didn't pick stacked up (or how the ones who were struggling did at a lower level).

-What athletes do depends on their setting; you will never know who can do what until you give players new challenges

You could tell them, "Everybody's going to go up and down this year. I want you to show them how it's done from a leadership and attitude standpoint."

"You're in the club and you'll be on the team that best suits you within it at any given time. Either way, work hard and learn as much as you can."

The only thing worse than telling a kid "You're a B team player" is telling them "You're an A team player." You are a player. Give your best, love the game and learn it. We will endeavor to teach you as much as we can no matter which.

If you really believe in the potential of all players to succeed, shouldn't they be learning the same ideas and the same language to talk about them?

In fact, moving players frequently is a great way to hold coaches accountable for being consistent in what they teach at each level.

-In practice, have our players switch around and play with players from the "other team" at least once a practice

Winning matters, but not when we lose sight of its place.

And who has not heard the same parents (or coach) rant about the opposition, who are not merely playing just as fiercely as their own children but who are in fact *playing dirty* and have been *coached to play that way*, as their whole club is taught to do, which pretty much everybody knows? How do the people in charge not see the cynical machinations-*Look how they're wasting their time on the throw-in!*- and dirty play of every single team we have never played against (except the ones that we beat 5-0)? And speaking of the people in charge, where is our trophy for selflessly holding the moral high ground when everyone else is using their elbows?

If we win every game, it would only tell me that we weren't playing good enough competition.

But for the great majority of coaches in the great majority of interactions, the goal is to develop players; to teach them the game and teach it right.

At the outset, you want to emphasize learning, even above avoiding mistakes.

You win at the end of the season because you learn more at the beginning of the season.

Sometimes, to do right for your athletes, you have to do things that will make it less likely that you will win now.

All touches are not of equal value in basketball. If you play the entire game, out of 32 minutes, you may have the ball in your hands for a little over three minutes!

There's a big difference in basketball in how much the team learns if the player brings the ball up the court launches a shot before anyone else has touched the ball.

“Building from the back”: Teaching skills and concepts that will take some time to learn and will probably mean that they will drop a game or two in the short term, but it will help them in the long run.

A coach who is committed to teaching for the long term must teach that player not to rely on physical prowess in unsustainable ways now, even when it causes the team to win; even when it makes the coach himself look good.

Many parents are not aware that the coach who makes their child a star at 14 is not necessarily the coach that is prepared her to succeed at 16 or 18.

Saying “great decision, better execution” to Carlos helps him understand both parts- to see the difference in himself.

-Steph Curry and Steve Kerr video discussing his importance

To be successful in the long run, players must embrace risk. They cannot grow if they live in fear of being wrong.

A theme of Munro's practices was that fear was the enemy of success, specifically the fear of making mistakes.

-Do it properly.

“They're so pressured to be successful that they are afraid to fail.”

-Change it to “This is going to be challenging; let's embrace the challenge and have some fun!”

You can't get from good to great unless you are willing to fail.

To succeed, they too must embrace challenges and seek not to be proven smart but strive instead to improve a bit more each day.

“Coaching is about developing people to become better, to reach their potential and- for team sports- to become better than the sum of your parts.”

If winning is the only prize, it's probably not enough to sustain you for the long haul.

Hunger and humility, relishing the journey of maximizing other people's skill by relentlessly seeking to maximize their own potential. Focusing always on the things that can make you better.

But to develop players correctly, to coach effectively, is to be willing to forgo credit, to be invisible or to give the credit to someone else.

Good coaches solicit input, adapt the plan and delegate leadership

Ego is a constant companion, necessary at times, disruptive at others. Beneficial to some degree, problematic if unchecked.

“The first principle is that you must not fool yourself, and the easiest person to fool is yourself.”

“The more familiar the cue, the most consistently associated with an action, the more likely players are to be able to use it.”

So a good rule of thumb is that during games you can remind players of what you are **sure they already know using language that they are familiar with**

Coach sparingly in live action and strive to give guidance at breaks in play.

The tendency of competition to make us more likely to shout or lose control of our tone of voice is another reason to try to coach only (or at least mostly) at breaks. You'll be a little calmer.

Khris would take him out of the game very briefly, stand next to him on the sideline, usually with a hand on his shoulder in a fatherly way, and quietly explain the desired solution.

Establishing blame is rarely the basis of a productive public conversation. It's a result of lack of clarity about what you want to say before you start, so why not take 20 seconds to plan? In your phone or on a notecard, jot down the two or three most important things to say. Glance at your notes to keep on task.

The coaches almost always highlight process and mindset.

Frustrating tie or loss= long post game talk

Coaching is a performance profession

What you want to change you must practice in moments of calm

If you want to develop a new skill and be able to implement it in a complex environment, you must practice it

“I’ve always spent an inordinate amount of time detailing what parents will see at training and why.”

They proved it by using those metrics, sharing the results and talking about them with parents

Emphasize “73” possessions

If you’re frustrated by the quality of referees in your area, ask yourself why anyone would be a referee in the first place when they are subject to constant abuse.

Generally, the result was around 50% of comments made to or about the referee, depending on events and who I was standing near.

Weaker schools tend to be like shopping malls; each teacher and coach runs his or her own classroom or team like their own little shop.

“Look at our players with a telescope, not a microscope.”