

Level 3 Coaching Course Assessment Task No.12

What makes a successful coach?

By Ross Reynolds.

The following notes are a summary of what five very successful coaches saw as some of the reasons for their successes. What follows is a summary of their ideas, quotes and methodology.

These coaches were :-

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| 1. Brother Anthony Boyd | St. Joseph's College 1 st XV Coach |
| 2. Bob Dwyer | Australian Rugby Coach 1982-83 & 1988-1995
NSW Rugby Coach 2001 |
| 3. Alan Jones | Australian Rugby Coach 1984-87 |
| 4. Kevin Sheedy | Essendon Football Club Coach 1981-2001 |
| 5. Bob Turner | Sydney Kings Basketball CEO |

Topics

The Coach

1. Definition of a good coach
2. Coaching personality
3. What a good coach should possess?
4. Coaching culture

The team

5. Players
6. Involvement of players
7. Team selection
8. Leadership
9. Skill sessions

Administration

THE COACH

1. Definition of good coaching

"You can't win without good players but you can definitely lose with good players. Good coaches don't lose with good players." Bob Dwyer.

2. Coaching personality

Decide what type of coach you want to be. Select a little from each coach on the menu i.e. mentors you admire. **Be yourself** don't pretend to be someone else. Develop your own individual coaching personality.

Do you want to be an attacking or defensive coach?

Kevin Sheedy is a risk taker, never frightened to rotate players and experiment
"I wasn't going to be a boring person, I don't want a boring footy side that doesn't win games and wont fill stadiums. My job is to fill our 95,000 seat stadium. I have one client, Essendon Football Club and has been for 20 years.

3. What a good coach should possess?

Have the '**we not me**' philosophy. Must have the game as their **passion**.

Select **good management** i.e. Assistant coaches, strength and conditioning coaches, physios, doctors, team managers, gear stewards etc. Clearly define everyone's roles and responsibilities. **Delegate** coaching to your assistants and make them accountable for their performances.

General fitness must be better than your opposition.

Players must be able to withstand the hits and dish out punishment to your opposition.

Make your own selections. Never play favorites.

Get the best out of your players, week in week out.

Talk with your players, not at their faces.

"Beat the change before it beats you", Kevin Sheedy.

Be flexible. Think ahead of the pace. Be an innovator not a follower.

HAVE FUN! Enjoyment breeds success.

Be **organised**. Players gain confidence when coaches have a full training sheet. Explain the training program before training and clearly illustrate your game plan and how training has been programmed to meet this game plan.

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Be able to **deliver the message**. Speak clearly. Think deeply about what you are going to say.

Expect to be successful.

Ensure players believe in themselves.

Expect problems. Problems are normal. "Misery loves company", Bob Turner. Don't go to training expecting an easy session. Players bring their outside influences to training e.g. wives, girlfriends, exams, work, etc.

Your team must attack to make things happen - both in attack and defence.

Good man manager, understand the strengths and weaknesses of each player. "When to take ground and when to give ground", Alan Jones. Understand your players, take an interest in their jobs, study, family situations, etc.

Demand perfection in skill drills but do not criticise failure in the process. The biggest cause in failing to complete a skill correctly is **hesitation**. Players should be encouraged to make a decision quickly and other players will respond.

"Encourage players to not think while they are playing but when they are not playing. Let your **eyes see**, your **ears hear** and your **mind make decisions**", Bob Dwyer.

4. Culture

Develop your own coaching culture. Everyone in your club must have clearly defined roles and responsibilities. **A structure**. E.g. coaching policy, player policy, etc.

Tom Maher, former Opals coach. His team culture stated each player must put in a all out effort, be an athlete and play to the end. Each player knew the culture. If they failed in any of these three requirements, they would not play for the Opals.

Help players reach their **potential**. Strive for constant improvement. Encourage players to strive to be successful. Push players above their safety barriers. Demand perfection and do not criticise failure.

Defence, the best way to stop your opposition from scoring is hard work in defence. If everyone on your team works hard, this creates pressure on your opposition.

THE TEAM

5. Players

One criteria for success is **attitude**.

"Ideal attitude has to be there on and off the field. If a player is cheating off the field, he will bring that indiscipline onto the field." Tony Boyd.

"Give players a **second chance**. Successful people can handle their disappointments and work harder. One way to find which of two players has the better attitude. Drop one player this week and the other next week. One will whinge and the other will work harder when the chips are down." Tony Boyd.

Must have the '**we not me**' attitude.

Michael Jordan, Chicago Bulls. Jordan was the NBA's leading point scorer in his first four years of professional basketball and Chicago never finished better than 40 wins and 40 losses. When Jordan realised he had to include his team mates at both ends of the court, Chicago started to become unbeatable.

Must have **talent**.

Players must be happy in their position and the role they have to fulfil in the team. E.g. Tim Morrissey, Sydney Kings defensive guard, would only score 6 points a game but could shut down the opposition's offensive weapon. A coach must deflect the accolades for a win not always to the 30 point player but to the 6 point player who shut down their opponents attacking weapon.

6. Involvement of players

"At half-time, give the captain first say. There are a lot of things that happen on the field a coach cannot see from the sideline", Tony Boyd.

Consult a nucleus of players (not just senior players, utilise mature young players) to help with selections, game plans, training sessions, etc.

7. Team Selection

"**Consistency in selection**. John Wooden of UCLA won 10/13 National Basketball Championships. Had a pyramid of success, he built from the top. He selected his

starting five players. He would not change if one player was struggling. He remained loyal to his starting five. Players should just go out and play", Bob Turner.

Select players with good **vision**.

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8. Leadership

Successful teams have several leaders. Leaders can maintain their thought processes when mayhem breaks out around them. e.g. Michael Lynagh, Rugby World 1991 versus Ireland.

Senior players set the standard for the young players to follow. They need leaders.

9. Skill sessions

Training sessions **must vary** and each skill session should only go for 10-15 minutes. Create variety e.g. Disguise speed work as skills drill to prevent boredom.

Skills must be **done at pace**. Start slow and gradually increase the speed. Keep increasing the pressure on players to continually develop their skills. Do not accept forward passes. Nor low passes. For a low pass, a receiver loses his field of vision.

Players must anticipate contact and lower their body height.

ADMINISTRATION

At "Clubland", if everyone does their job, everything will be fine. Everyone has a job to do and they must not over-step their responsibilities.

Stability, keep players happy off the field. Good managers look after all the peripheral things. No distractions for the players.

Management play a very big role in a team's success.

