

EHF REFEREE CANDIDATES SEMINAR, Drammen, Norway, 13 – 17 June -
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THE BRIDGE BETWEEN PLAYER AND COACH STATUS

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Coaching Athletes Means More Than Victory

- It is well known that sport training is a main characteristic of the sport phenomena. The ability to overcome obstacles is a defining aspect of this characteristic and an essential component for success. Globally, sports training is, as one of its major principles, the achievement of a maximum sports performance (Carlos Alberto Ferrão Garcia, 2003).
- According to some sports specialists opinion (Rainer Martens, 2004) the whole high performance sports coaching process has to follow some of the next steps.

Some of the major Objectives in sport

Most of the goals coaches list usually fall in the following three broad categories:

- to have a winning team;
- to help young people to have fun;
- to help young people develop
 - physically, by learning sports skills, improving physical condition, good health habits and avoid injuries;
 - psychologically, by learning to control their emotions and developing feelings of self-worth;
 - socially, by learning cooperation in a competitive context and appropriate standards of behavior.

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Which of these objectives are important for each of you?

- Winning?
- Having fun?
- Helping your people develop?

Perhaps we believe that all three are worth-while. But are they equally important?

What if you must choose among them, which one could be?

Coaches often must decide whether to pursue victory at the possible expense of an athlete's well-being or long-term development.

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- From another point of view, it has to take in considering that, of us are like most of the coaches, who played sports many years before becoming coach, so the things seems to take a new direction from many points of view. So, when you assume the role of coach you must make the difficult transition of getting things done through others. You can no longer play the game your self, even though you may yearn to do so. Now you have to help your players play the game. The skills needed to do that are not at all the same skills you needed when you were playing.
- **THE SKILLS YOU NEED NOW ARE LEADERSHIP SKILLS.**
- So, starting with this, it has to be settled what kind of coaches do we are?
- The coaching style it seems to be concentrated in three major categories (Martens R, 2004):
 - The Command style;
 - The Submissive style (The Baby-sitter) or
 - The Cooperative style.

The Command style – THE DICTATOR

- In this style of coaching, the coach makes all the decisions. The role of the athletes is to respond to each coach commands. The **assumptions underlying** this approach is because the coach has knowledge and experience, so that's gives to the right to tell to the athlete what to do and sometimes when to do. However, the athletes' role resides in to listen, to absorb and to comply.

The Submissive Style -THE BABY-SITTER

Coaches who adopt this style make as few decisions as possible. It's a throw-out-the-ball-and have-good-time to approach. The coaches provides little instructions, provides minimal guidance in organizing activities and resolves discipline problems only when is absolutely necessary. Coaches who adopt this style, most of the times:

- have a lack of competence to provide instructions and guidance;
- are too lazy to meet the demands of their coaching responsibilities;
- are very misinformed about what coaching is.

As it is mentioned before, this style is a *Baby sitter style* and most of the times a very poor one of that.

The Cooperative Style – THE TEACHER

- Coaches who select this style share decision making with their athletes. Although they recognized their responsibility to provide leadership and guide young people toward achieving the objective set forth, COOPERATIVE STYLE coaches also know the youngsters cannot become responsible adults without learning to make decisions. The challenge of this style is providing the right balance between directing athletes and letting them direct themselves. That's why it is called COOPERATIVE – style; coaches cooperate with their athletes in sharing decision making.

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13 – 17 June - 2013

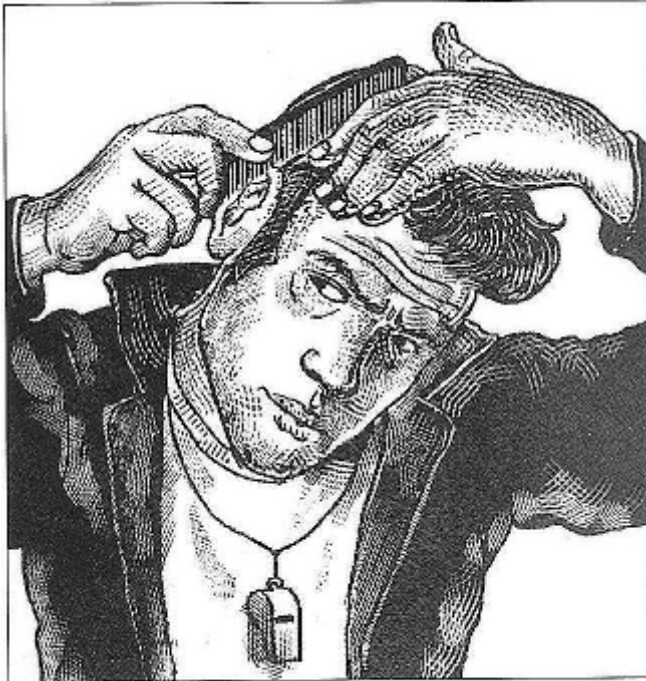


- According to the previous coaching style details and the main objectives which have to be followed in gaining victory, one of the other most important aspects in team working process it seems to be the COMMUNICATION skills.
- In *Successful Coaching, 3rd. edition, 2004*, by Rainer Martens, are mentioned Three Dimensions of Communication:

1. Communication includes not only **sending** messages, but also **receiving** them.
 - Generally coaches are known much more for their oratorical skills than for their listening skills.
- 2. Communication consists of **verbal** and **nonverbal** messages.
 - Gestures of hostility, facial expressions of joy, movement of intimidation, and acts of kindness are all forms of nonverbal communication. It is estimated that over 70% of communication is nonverbal, which reinforces the previous observations that what you say is not nearly as important as what you do.

- 3. Communication has two parts: **content** and **emotion**.
- **Content** is the substance of the message and **emotion** is how you feel about it.
 - **Content** is usually expressed verbally, **emotion** nonverbally. Pressure-packed competitive sports challenge coaches to be in control of both – the content and the emotions they communicate.
 - Putting all together, the evaluation process of the Communication skills has to take in consideration the following coaching characteristics, according to the same Rainer Martens:

Coach INCREDIBLE



Coach Incredible

- Never admitting to an error. The “Incredible” finds he doesn’t get the respect he demands because he doesn’t show any for his athletes. He often doesn’t follow through of what he says he will do, he things is far more knowledgeable about the sport that he is and he is very self – centered. When he speaks, he preaches rather than coaches so his athletes tune out because what he says never amounts to much. Coach” Incredible” **has not yet learned that he cannot demand respect, instead it must be earned. Hence he has no credibility with his athletes.**

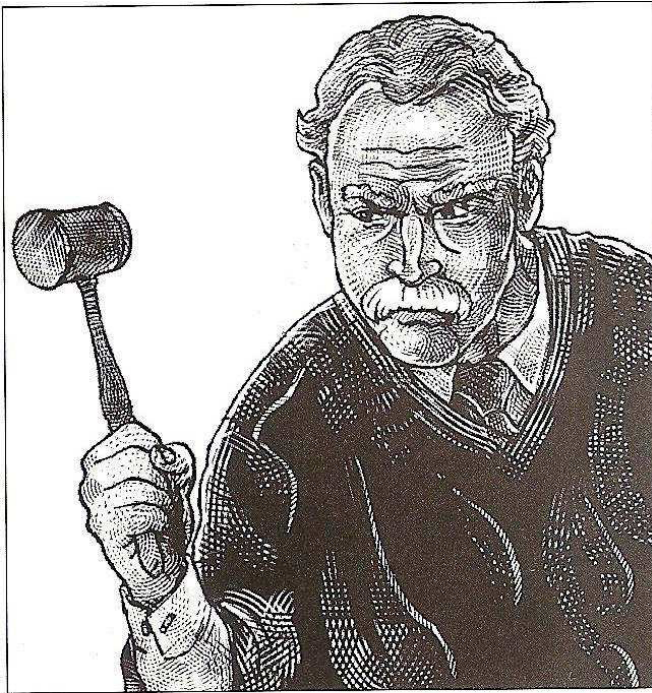
Coach NAYSAYER



Coach Naysayer

- Most of the words and actions of this kind of coach are **negative**, sometimes almost hostile. She or he criticizes frequently their athletes, increasing their self-doubts and destroying their self-confidence. Coach “Naysayer” is slow to praise, as though she believes it is not “coachlike” to say a kind word and when she utters an infrequent kindness, she usually overshadows it with other negative comments.

THE JUDGE



The Judge

- The judge continually evaluates his athletes instead of instructing them. When a player errs, the JUDGE places blame rather than providing feed-back or information about how to correct the error (“Who screw up here?”, “Why can’t you get this right?”, “You cost us the game with that dumb move”). When the players do well the JUDGE cheers them on but doesn’t know how to instruct them to achieve advanced skills levels. The continuous judgments, even when they are occasionally positive, cause athletes to feel uncertain and uncomfortable around the JUDGE.

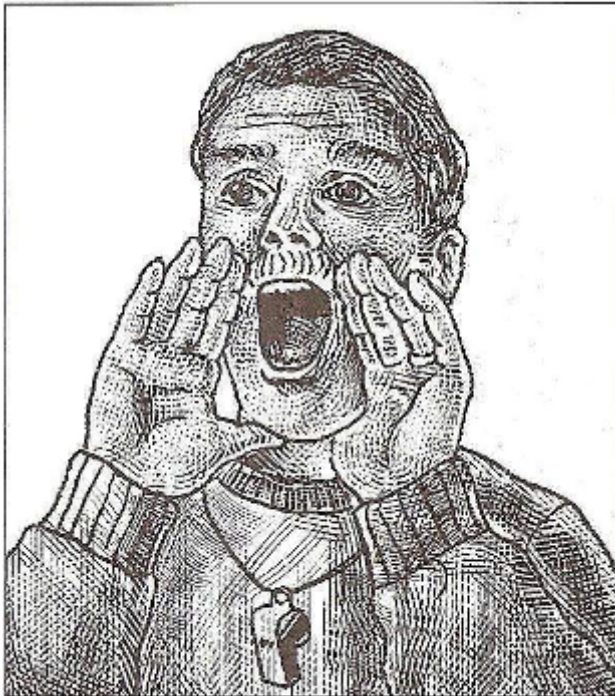
Coach FICKLE



Coach Fickle

- You are never sure what coach FICKLE will say next. Today is one thing, tomorrow is another. Last week she punished Jane for fighting, but not Sarah, her star goalie. She tells players not to argue with the officials, but she does so, regularly.

Coach GLIB



Coach Glib

- This kind of coach is the most talkative person you ever meet. He gives instructions constantly during practice and when he's not yelling advice to his players during the match, he's muttering to himself on the sidelines. He's so busy talking that never has time to listen to his athletes. It has never occurred to him that his players might like to tell him something rather than always being told.

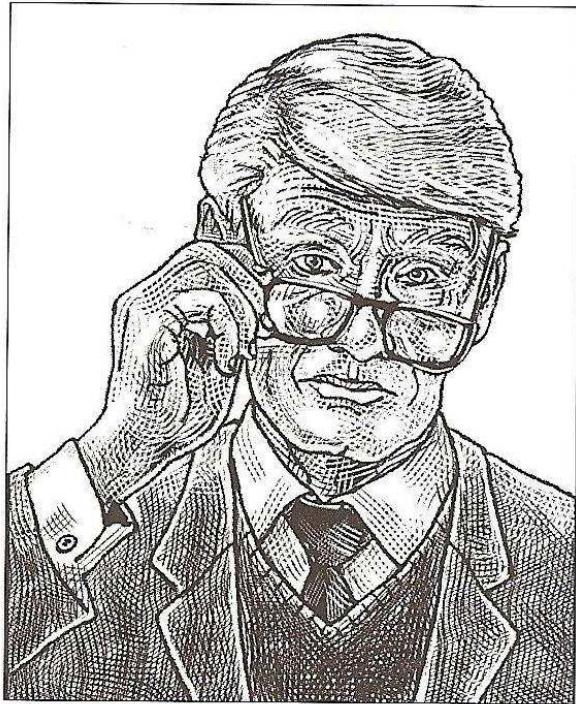
Coach STONE



Coach Stone

- Coach Stone never shows emotion. She doesn't smile, wink, or give her athletes path on the back. Nor does she scowl, kick at dirt, or expressed disgust with them. You just don't know how she feels, which leaves her players feeling insecure most of the time.

THE PROFESSOR



The Professor

- This kind of coach is unable to explain anything at a level understandable to his players. He talks either above their heads or in such a roundabout way that they are repeatedly left confused. In addition, the PROFESSOR who is used to dealing with abstractions is unable to demonstrate the skills of the sport in a logical sequence so that the athletes can grasp the fundamentals.

Coach SKINNER



Coach Skinner

- Coach Skinner just doesn't seem to understand the principles of reinforcement work. Although he gives frequent rewards to his athletes, he reinforces the wrong behavior at the wrong time. When faced with misbehavior he either lets the infraction pass or comes down too hard.

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- After all, the environment within youth competitions, either at national or international level, increases the challenges to which those persons responsible for education cannot remain insensitive to (Carlos Cruz, 2008).
- According to this, what should have been done to acquire a high level in coaching to victory our players?

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In resonance with some specialists' concepts, one of the approaching ways has to take in considering the followings:

- we have to be credible when communicate;
- positive approach of the communication process;
- high information in short messages;
- consistent communication;
- be open to players thoughts and opinions;
- develop your nonverbal communication skills.