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## Positive and Negative Effects of Various Coaching Styles on Player Performance and Development

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## Positive and Negative Effects of Various Coaching Styles on Player Performance and Development

Aaron Singh



### Coaching Techniques

From a humanistic perspective, a coach can conduct leadership through five different methods: training and instruction, democratic behavior, autocratic behavior, social support and positive feedback (Gardner, Shields, Bredermeier & Bostrom, 1996). “Coaching, from this point of view, capitalizes on a person’s inherent tendency to self-actualize and looks to stimulate a person’s inherent growth potential” (Ives, 2008). Similar to coaching, psychotherapy shares the purpose of developing individuals, enhancing their potential and creating a supportive relationship (Ives, 2008).

On the other hand, the goal-oriented approach is a strict goal-focused or solution-driven approach (Ives, 2008). One primary function is to promote autonomy of the players. In order to establish autonomy, the player must implicitly apply goals upon them self. According to Grant (2006), “Coaching is essentially about helping individuals regulate and direct their interpersonal and intrapersonal resources to better attain their goals.” However, the concept of the goal-oriented approach is to increase performance and tactics of the team, without regard of individual feelings and thoughts (Ives, 2008).

Lastly, autonomy support from coaches shows the readiness of the coach “to take the others perspective, provide appropriate and meaningful information, offer opportunities for choice, while at the same time minimize external pressures and demands” (Black & Deci, 2000). The player’s ability to become autonomous was determined by the type of environment that the coach put them in. Reinboth, Duda, & Ntoumanis (2004) said the fulfillment of the players basic needs and well-being (e.g. Do they have fun?) is essential for self-determined, goal-directed behavior. They also found that the majority of the players in their study agreed their coaches supported methods that induced autonomy amongst the players. Players

*This review highlights the important role that coaches play in the physical and psychological development and performance of athletes under their stewardship; it also explores various types of techniques used by coaches to accomplish their goals and objectives and examines the effectiveness of these coaching techniques on the players and their ability to perform on the field. Two main ideals will be considered: the coaching techniques and the effects of those techniques on the athletes. Though there are various methods of coaching, this review will use three examples of coaching methods. The result of this review may prompt coaches to evaluate their coaching and leadership styles and make appropriate adjustments. For the purpose of this review, the coach will be placed as the leader role of the team.*

The main purpose of a coach is to maximize the performance of his or her athletes, help them reach a higher level than they could have done alone, and develop a winning team. “Coaches are known to fulfill many different roles including leader, psychologist, friend, teacher, personnel manager, administrator, fundraiser and role model” (Côté, 2004).

The skill development of a player involves training and learning, therefore, it becomes important for the coach to use proper coaching techniques. The coach must find a balance between helping his or her players reach their full potential as athletes and achieving success through winning, so that one purpose does not inhibit the other. “During competition it is important that a coach wisely manages the tension between ‘coaching to win’ and coaching for learning” (Naylor, 2006). The question “What makes a good coach?” can then be debated between a coach that concentrates on the players and their individual development as an athlete, and a coach who measures success through a win/lose ratio. It may be argued that the ideal coach is the person who can balance or achieve both.

who were placed in environments and were given duties generally had feelings of responsibility and accountability for their own behavior. However, not all players lived up to the expectations or wanted the responsibility given them. This feeling may change as the players continue to increase their skill and become more experienced. The coach places trust in the player by encouraging autonomy. This placement of responsibility and accountability may be part of player development.

### Effects on Athletes

In order to receive positive results, the humanistic approach to coaching relies on positive feedback and a care for the individual's needs and feelings. Conroy & Douglas Coatsworth (2004) revealed that psychosocial training increased coaches' use of reward/reinforcement. Positive reinforcement through either a reward system or verbal compliments appears to increase performance.

The goal-oriented approach typically aims to achieve its goals in a comparatively short space of time and normally focuses on a relatively defined issue or end result (Ives, 2008). This method allows very little empathy for the players, and uses a negative psychological approach. A potential downfall to this method is that it usually focuses on a short-term end result, leaving little or no concern for long-term goals. The lack of empathy usually contributes to a negative relationship and environment between player and coach. Baker, Cotes and Hawkes (2000) "suggest that negative rapport between coach and athlete is an important contributor to athlete anxiety." Based on studies on negative coaching, this method may produce short-term results, but it can be unsustainable. The goal-oriented approach was unsuccessful, and destroyed team cohesion when coaches used negative techniques. These included abusive language, inequity, player ridicule, and poor relationship (Turman, 2003). However, when coaches used positive feedback, it promoted higher levels of task cohesion (Turman, 2003).

The type of autonomy made available to players depends on the coach because he or she is the authoritative figure. An interpersonal relationship, according to Reinboth et. al. (2004), can be a strong influence in determining the psychological, emotional, and physical effects (both positive and negative) of sport involvement. These influences are affective, yet have only been proven through short-term research. During the course of this review there appears to be no current research available

on the long-term effects on players from the autonomous style of coaching.

### Conclusion

Coaches play an important role in the level of enjoyment and performance of their players; parents share a similar role (Scanlan & Lewthwaite, 1986). In comparison with the goal-oriented and autonomous methods of coaching, the humanistic style appears most affective for player development and performance; one of the determining factors for this was positive feedback from players about their coaches. These motivating factors included inspiration direction, personal relationship, inspirational devices and support. Turman (2003) found coaches could promote higher levels of task cohesion for their players by using training and instruction, democratic behavior, social support and positive feedback. His studies also found that positive feedback brought better team cohesion and therefore better overall performance. It may be argued that the humanistic approach to coaching is the most effective method that can balance both player development and winning. According to Grant (2006), "Coaching is essentially about helping individuals regulate and direct their interpersonal and intrapersonal resources to better attain their goals." Coaches who understand this concept may avoid negative punishment or reinforcement techniques and move toward a more positive approach.

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