



## **Philosophy of Youth Sports Coaching**

Youth coaches should not fall into the trap of trying to teach too much. Basketball is a game. To be able to effectively and consistently shoot, dribble, rebound, defend and move can take years of practice.

Basic skills, a strong understanding of relying on team members and faith in coaching generally leads to greater success.

A successful practice, game or season is not about winning. It is about the experience one benefits from in the pursuit of personal and team excellence. A coach who can bring a team to a place where each player contributes their maximum effort in realizing goals is likely to benefit from a rewarding and successful campaign.

There are of course general and specific goals that are set for individual players and teams, but if these goals are to be accomplished, they must be attainable and there must be a strong plan of action with measurable outcomes. The key, and most time difficulty, is controlling the outside influences that demand some unrealistic expectation from children and coaches.

There will be times when the team or individual player will not meet expectations, and it is here that lays the greatest challenge for a youth sports coach. They must balance their own nature and desire to win, with their greater purpose, developing in their players, a love for the game and a sense of personal accomplishment.

Believing that motivating players means criticizing them for a lack of performance or instilling in them the magnanimous desire to win, generally leads to a sense of obligation rather than desire. For the youth sports coach that creates a positive, winning environment where players are self-motivated to do their best to contribute to the mission or stated goals, the ramifications are likely to be more than rewarding and long lasting.

### Ask yourself some questions:

Have you ever asked your players....

- Whether they are having fun?
- What would make it fun for them?
- What you are doing well and what they like about the team?
- What they think you could do better and what they don't like about the team?

Are the kids afraid to be honest with you?

Have you ever asked the parents of the kids the above questions about their child?

Are you afraid of what they might say?