

# ADVANCED COACH



Guide for Coaching Teenagers

*Develop Observational Skills and Match Analysis*



AMERICAN YOUTH  
SOCCER ORGANIZATION

COACHING SERIES

# AYSO

# ADVANCED MANUAL



everyone plays®

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Accredited By:



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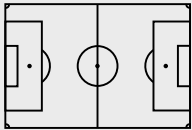
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# WELCOME TO THE TEAM!

## FROM THE **FIELD**



“Our National Coaching Program is expertly designed, tested and accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Coaching Education. We have a proven method for player development and I am proud of our contribution to the game in the USA.”

*– John Ouellette, AYSO Hall of Fame and former National Coach*

## THANK YOU FOR VOLUNTEERING!

The AYSO Advanced Coaching Course is designed to provide the experienced coach with a methodology necessary to coach and develop the 16U to 18U player.

The Principles of Play remain cornerstones to this level of competitive play; however, the 18U player is required to perform at a higher physical level and at a higher degree of intensity so physicality and periodization become more prominent. Players also require a greater understanding and ability to read the game.

In alignment with the Coaching Cycle, the objectives of this course are to develop observational skills to evaluate technical and tactical performance of players within a competitive match environment, recognizing and correcting errors, and provide quality communication and feedback to the players.

We continue to prioritize small-sided matches in our coaching sessions to provide the optimal learning platform to link technique to tactics.

Holistically, we strive to develop a better understanding of the responsibilities of coaching and the impact and responsibility we ultimately bear on the overall development of our players.

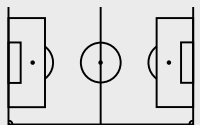
The full ownership of player technique, awareness, and understanding to team tactics and strategy are the expected outcomes of the player development arc via the AYSO National Coaching Program.

Thanks for all you do!

### **AYSO PLAYER DEVELOPMENT TEAM**

# AYSO

## FROM THE FIELD



“We strive to galvanize the player development pathways of our youth soccer organizations. The common objective is to develop the next wave of youth players. In this collective effort, it is critical to promote a single message and common coaching methodology with respect to player development. AYSO’s National Coaching Program is in line and coherent with these efforts.”

– Dave Chesler, WNT Performance Analysis Coach and Former U.S. Soccer Director of Coach Education

## THE WORLD’S BIGGEST SOCCER CLUB

Founded in Torrance, CA in 1964, AYSO is a distinguished cornerstone of U.S. Soccer and with approximately 50,000 teams across *all* age groups; AYSO is the world’s biggest soccer club!

Success can be measured in many ways, from the careers of professional players who got their start playing AYSO to the thousands of coaches (youth, high school, collegiate and professional) who developed their passion and understanding of the game in AYSO. Regardless of perspective, our contribution to the U.S. game’s success is founded upon our unique **Vision, Mission** and **Philosophies**.

### KEEP IN MIND



Any player development or instruction should always include a comprehensive understanding and practical application of our core values.

## AYSO VISION

To provide world-class youth soccer programs that enrich children’s lives.

## AYSO MISSION

AYSO’s Mission is to develop and deliver quality youth soccer programs which promote a fun, family environment based on AYSO’s Six Philosophies.

# AYSO SIX PHILOSOPHIES

## EVERYONE PLAYS®

Our goal is for kids to play soccer—so we mandate that every player on every team must play at least half of every game.

## BALANCED TEAMS

Each year we form new teams as evenly balanced as possible—because it is fair and more fun when teams of equal ability play.

## OPEN REGISTRATION

Our program is open to all children who want to register and play soccer. Interest and enthusiasm are the only criteria for playing.

## POSITIVE COACHING

Encouragement of player effort provides for greater enjoyment by the players and ultimately leads to better-skilled and better-motivated players.

## GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP

We strive to create a safe, fair, fun and positive environment based on mutual respect, rather than a win-at-all-costs attitude, and our program is designed to instill good sportsmanship in every facet of AYSO.

## PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

We believe that all players should be able to develop their soccer skills and knowledge to the best of their abilities, both individually and as members of a team, in order to maximize their enjoyment of the game.

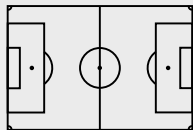
KEEP IN  
MIND



AYSO Six Philosophies:

Everyone Plays®  
Balanced Teams  
Open Registration  
Positive Coaching  
Good Sportsmanship  
Player Development

## FROM THE FIELD



“It is better to win ten times 1-0 than to win once 10-0.”

— Vahid Halilhodžić, Bosnian Coach and Former Professional Player



2016 AYSO National Games  
16U Girls Runner-Up  
Region 56



# KIDS ZONE®

## KEEP IT FRIENDLY

Regardless of age group (yes, even 18U!) or playing level, all developing players benefit from a positive sideline. In AYSO, fans (yes, including parents) are asked to be cheerleaders, not critics or sideline coaches! Kids Zone® is a unique program that includes a Parent Pledge that moms and dads sign to commit to positive, encouraging behavior when they're watching the matches. It also includes signs, buttons and other match-day reminders.

Soccer is a player's game! Players learn the game by trying new things, making mistakes and trying again.

Negative, even violent, behavior of players, coaches and parents involved in youth sports has become almost epidemic in this country. Kids Zone® is a proactive effort to counteract this trend and involves the following elements:

To help execute Kids Zone®, four basic elements are involved:

- 1. Kids Zone® Button.** Worn by program supporters at matches and serves as a reminder of the importance of positive sideline behavior.
- 2. The Sign.** A large sideline poster lists positive behavior standards and can be posted at the entrance of participating fields. Parents and spectators who will abide by these standards are welcome.
- 3. The Pledge.** AYSO requests all parents to sign a pledge that holds them to the Kids Zone® standards.
- 4. The Video.** A 12 minute documentary introduces AYSO's principles and its Kids Zone® action plan to new participants. Viewers will also watch a parent intervene to change another parent's negative behavior. In order to make this program work, everyone must help!

Kids Zone resources are available at [ayso.org](http://ayso.org) and materials from the AYSO Store.

### KEEP IN MIND



Sideline critics who scream instructions at players or criticize referees or coaches slow down the learning process and make it less fun for everyone. Consider how it would feel if every time you prepared to kick the ball, you received numerous screams of direction? Scary, confusing and frustrating!



### KEEP IN MIND



Help create a safe and encouraging environment for you and your team by implementing Kids Zone®.

To learn more visit [ayso.org/kidszone](http://ayso.org/kidszone)

# ADVANCED COACHING COURSE INTRODUCTION

AYSO Advanced Coaches must know how to OBSERVE and EVALUATE any training session, game or activity in order to determine how to improve player performance.

The basic process of Observation and Evaluation followed by quality correction and efficient feedback applies at all levels of coaching. Observe and Evaluate. Decide what to correct. Plan how to correct it. Use the coaching cycle, buildup, and the proven methodology to effectively make corrections.

You can and will need to modify the activities, the items to be corrected, the buildups, the training groups etc., during the season. Use the same basic process each time. What you teach will change; how you teach it should not. Coach yourself before you coach others. You expect your players to improve throughout their season and careers; you should expect the same of yourself. Set goals and work to achieve them.

Self-reflection and continual analysis will lead the Advanced Coach to improved training sessions and developmental environments to deliver the AYSO Experience.

Above all else, have FUN!



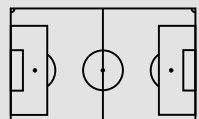
## KEEP IN MIND



- Strive to develop each and every player you coach, while at all times embracing the AYSO Philosophies.
- Use this manual as a constant resource and reference throughout your entire season.
- Plan, structure and progress sessions as shown to maximize development and time.
- All coaches improve through continued education!

# 18U PLAYER DEVELOPMENT

## FROM THE FIELD



“Learning to be a soccer athlete, there are progressive stages and if you don’t get the early stages right, in sequence, then you are fighting an uphill battle in developing an athlete.”

– Dave Chesler, WNT Performance Analysis Coach and Former U.S. Soccer Director of Coach Education

## INTRODUCTION

**“To provide world class youth soccer programs that enrich children’s lives.”**

This vision can *only* be achieved if we continually ask ourselves if the activity, method or decision will truly enrich the player’s life. To achieve this goal, our training sessions *must* be adapted to the player’s specific age and stage of development.

Technical, tactical, physical and psychosocial training components should be woven throughout each session; however, at all-times with deep respect to the player’s specific age and stage of development. At AYSO, we prioritize these important facets as follows:

**Psychosocial** Respect, motivation, confidence, cooperation, competitiveness, etc., and how these emotions and feelings impact a player’s development. Also, includes a player’s ability to reason, learn and solve problems. At AYSO, we develop the whole person!

**Physical** A player’s physical attributes: speed, agility, endurance, strength and power, etc. At AYSO, we promote a healthy lifestyle through soccer!

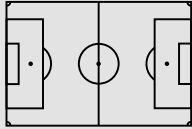
**Technical** A player’s ability to master ball skills, i.e., ball control, shooting, passing, etc. At AYSO, we prioritize skill development and ball mastery.

**Tactical** A player’s capacity to use their skill and ability within a game environment, i.e., creating space in midfield, possession and transition, creating width, etc. At AYSO, we educate our players on playing as part of (and within) a team dynamic.



# AGE APPROPRIATE UNDERSTANDING AND APPLICATION

## FROM THE FIELD



"I am not dealing with footballers, I am dealing with people. They have fears and worry about failing and making fools of themselves in front of 80,000 people. I have to make them see that without each other, they are nothing."

– *Pep Guardiola, Manager, Manchester City and formerly Bayern Munich and FC Barcelona*

Working with teenagers can be challenging but most coaches who coach 18U players find it to be extremely rewarding and very positive. Generally, players have finished most of their physical and mental development.

### PSYCHOSOCIALLY, 15-18 YEAR-OLDS:

- Develop own set of values and beliefs
- Value committed relationships and being respected.
- Look for more adult social settings (moving on from "teen" activities)
- Want support from adults, but only in guidance as they make their own decisions.
- Apt to reject goals set by others.
- Developing community consciousness.
- Take fewer risks.
- Reflect on their accomplishments.
- Expect to be treated as if they are "fully" grown.
- Considering long-term goals and career possibilities.

### PHYSICALLY, 15-18 YEAR-OLDS:

- Physical growth starts to taper off.
- Not as preoccupied with body changes but still have concerns about body image.
- Physical maturity does not always match overall maturity level.
- Many have reached biological sexual maturity by age 15, and certainly most have by 18.
- Smaller range and fewer differences in size and maturity among peers (than previous years).
- Tend to develop a more realistic view of limits to which body can be tested.

# DEVELOPMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS AND TRAINING ENVIRONMENTS

The following chart *generalizes* age characteristics of children ages 15 through 18 years of age. (Note: *All* children are unique and often chronological age can conflict with developmental age; therefore, individual application should always be considered.)

	DEVELOPMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS AND TRAINING ENVIRONMENTS
16U	<p>All training components can be organized and implemented to developing the player to their highest potential. Players should be committed to the team, train with intensity and compete to their utmost during matches.</p> <p>Endurance, strength and speed become physical platforms for faster and more dynamic technical and tactical execution.</p>
17U	<p>Small-sided matches are still an important part of tactical training, and attacking and defending principles of play should be woven throughout all planning, activities and discussions.</p> <p>Technically, individual focus should be first-touch efficiency, passing and goalscoring. Group training should be position-specific, e.g., back four.</p> <p>Tactics, strategy and set pieces should be present throughout training sessions. Other priorities include quick transition, speed of play, counter attacking and finishing.</p>
18U	<p>Be sensitive to and avoid comments that criticize or compare physically.</p> <p>Recognize leaders and involve them (and other players) in team decision-making and provide platform for team discussions.</p>

# PERSONALITY TRAITS OF SUCCESSFUL ATHLETES

Renowned professor of psychology at San Jose State University and author of the book "Sports Psyching: Playing Your Best Game All of the Time," Dr. Tom Tutko identified key personality traits shared by successful athletes. By recognizing these individual characteristics in their players, the coach can help team motivation and performance. And by building up individual players' less developed characteristics, the coach can help players maximize their potential. These traits are listed below:

## Drive

- Great desire to win or be successful.
- Concentrated desire toward improvement of weaknesses.

## Aggression

- Plays hard and stands ground.
- Physical, but not violent, play.

## Coach-ability

- Will take coaching and correction in a positive fashion.
- Will perform assigned tasks willingly.

## Determination

- Player will not give up easily.
- Player will work hard to improve.

## Responsibility

- Will complete assigned tasks.
- Does not shift criticism to other players.

## Conscientiousness

- Attempts to do things correctly.
- Does not need constant supervision.

## Mental toughness

- Can bounce back after error.
- Accepts strong criticism.

## Self-Confidence

- Confident of abilities and knowledge.
- Not upset by pressure or surprises.

## Leadership

- Ability to communicate.
- Ability to apply all of the points discussed here.

## Emotional Control

- Able to control emotion under pressure and adverse conditions.
- Not upset by others' mistakes or failings.

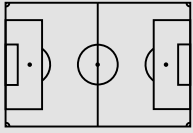
## Trust and Respect

- Ability to trust coach and team members.
- Able to trust and believe in oneself.



# COACHING DEVELOPMENT

## FROM THE FIELD



“A common mistake among those who work in sport is spending a disproportional amount of time on “x’s and o’s” as compared to time spent learning about people.”

– Mike Krzyzewski, Duke University Men’s Basketball Coach, [www.coachK.com](http://www.coachK.com)

## CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE COACHES

Mourinho, Guardiola, Klinsmann, Ellis, Schmid? Coaching styles differ based on personality and beliefs on how the game should be played. All effective coaches; however, possess similar characteristics:

1. Positive (focus on capabilities and convey optimism).
2. Supportive.
3. Individualized (training and instruction).
4. Fair (adjust to meet each athlete’s needs and strive for equity).
5. Appropriate (apply right behaviors at the right time).
6. Clear (in their communications).
7. Consistent (in their behaviors).

Source: Quality Coaching Behaviors, Dr. Andrea J. Becker, California State University, Fullerton, CA

The general qualities of any soccer coach combine into four fundamental attributes that all successful coaches share:

1. Soccer knowledge.
2. Prioritize athlete’s well-being and development.
3. Ability to communicate knowledge to the player.
4. Ability to observe and evaluate (coaching eye) to correct any apparent faults (in a positive manner).

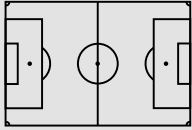
Sometimes a coaching style can work well with one athlete, and poorly with another or works very well in certain situations but not others, so it is important to adapt accordingly.

This is why at AYSO, regardless of bullet points, superior soccer knowledge or “x’s and o’s” mastery, we believe that by getting to know the person first, treating them as an individual, valuing them as a person, connecting with them as a human before that of a player, will make you an effective and respected coach and you will also maintain the AYSO Philosophy of Player Development.



# COACHING STYLES

## FROM THE FIELD



““I believe that the most difficult thing is to lead men with different cultures, brains and qualities.”

– Jose Mourinho, Manager, Manchester United Football Club

The purpose of this section is not to categorize you but to stimulate your awareness of how your coaching persona can impact overall player development.

Four time Australian Olympian, Coaching Consultant and Director of Athlete Assessments, Bo Hanson, devised the DISC profile for sport coaching. The following technical overview and introduction is shared with permission from [www.athleteassessments.com](http://www.athleteassessments.com).

### The Four Coaching Styles

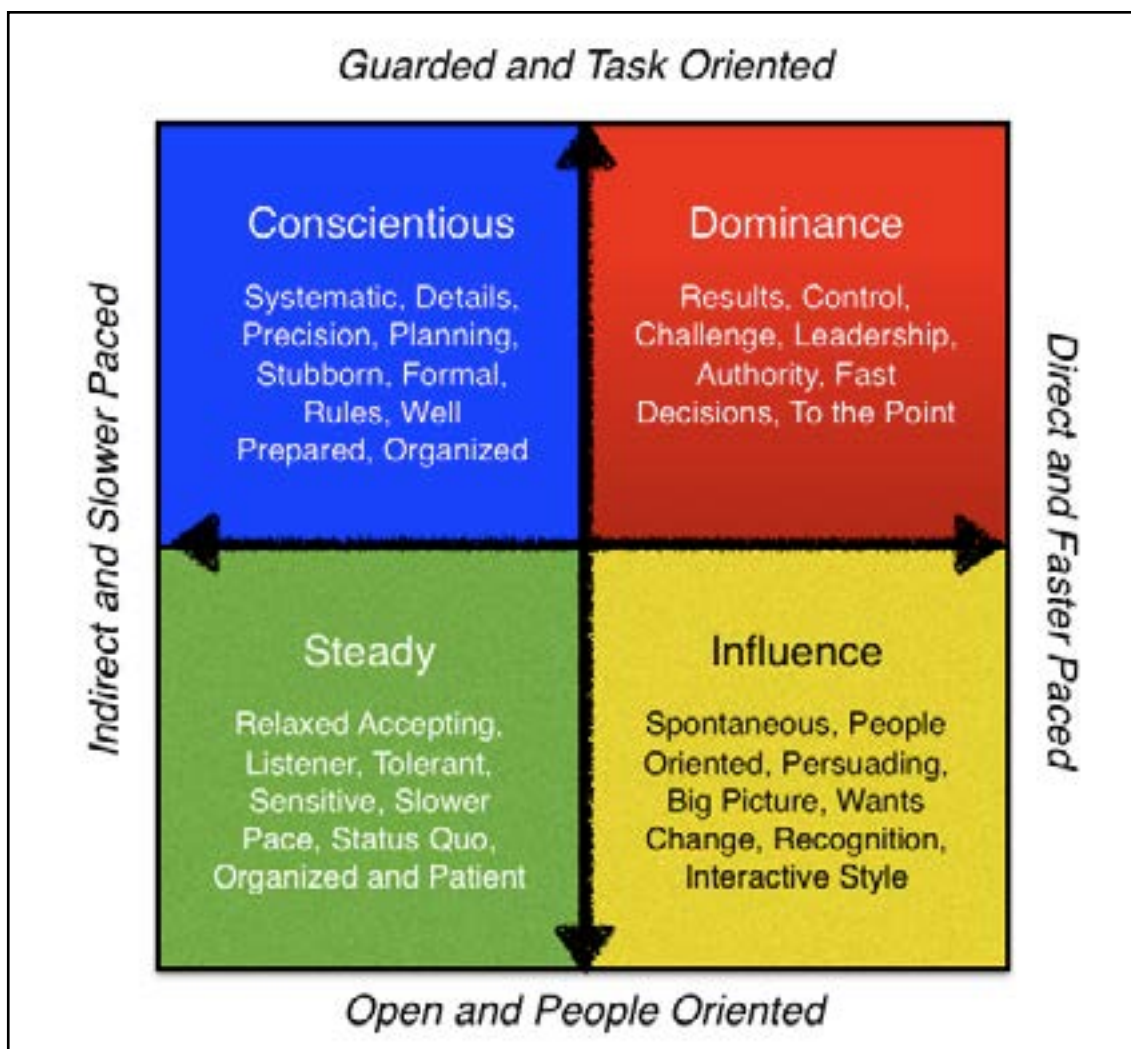


Diagram courtesy of [www.athleteassessments.com](http://www.athleteassessments.com)



# THE FOUR STYLES

## Dominant Style

- Highly directive and decisive. Use clear and concise instructions, monitoring and correcting as progress is made.
- The athlete requires high technical instruction but has low relationship/motivational needs.
- Works well with novice athletes (who lack skills and need direct instructions), athletes learning a new position or changing into a new sport entirely, who are motivated and enthusiastic.
- Works well when vital information needs to be given urgently, where high standards are necessary, when time is limited or when decisive action is needed.

## Steady Style

- Uses two-way communication, listens well, asks their athletes lots of questions rather than providing direct instructions and encourages their athletes to take an active role in their development. Guide their athletes technically, while providing emotional support.
- Athlete requires high technical instruction AND has relationship/motivational needs.
- Works well with athletes with some level of technical skills who may need emotional support for any set-backs they may face in the everyday progress of their sport.
- Work well when more collaboration is needed, when there is more time and no urgency, in times of developing teamwork, for one-on-one interactions or when a sense of security and acceptance is needed.

## Influencing Style

- Encourages, brings energy, is highly interactive and provides motivation to their athletes.
- Athlete requires low technical instruction but has high relationship/motivational needs.
- Works well with athletes who are displaying correct skills and technique but require more supportive and encouraging coaching to help them feel confident about their sporting performance.
- Works well when the environment needs a burst of energy or to provide variety, the situation calls for a highly motivational pep-talk or half-time speech or when morale is low but athletes' skill levels are high.

## Conscientious Style

- Creates a well-structured plan and environment so the athlete has the tools, program and necessary instructions to execute the drills or practice session with a minimum of coach intervention.
- Athlete requires low technical instruction AND has low relationship/motivational needs.
- Works well for athletes who are both technically proficient and confident in their own abilities.
- Works well at the beginning of the season when planning needs are high, to explain a detailed and complicated training drill, when things within the team are going well and the coach needs to keep things well-organized and flowing or when dealing with higher experienced athletes with strong technical and emotional standing.

Two main factors should be considered when deciding what style is best suited to your athlete(s):

1. Your athlete's DISC Style: Tailoring your approach or delivery to match the personality or style of your athlete will gain more success. For example, Dominant Style athletes respond well to Dominant Style coaches.
2. The circumstances or Situation: For example, do you have an abundance of time (pre-season) or in competition? Is it pre-match or half-time. Is it a natural stoppage or are you coaching in the flow?

All these factors influence your choice of coaching style.

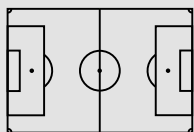
Generally speaking, this is when each style works best:

- **Dominant** Coaching Style: High technical needs AND low relationship needs.
- **Steady** Coaching Style: High technical needs AND high relationship needs.
- **Influencing** Coaching Style: Low technical needs AND high relationship needs.
- **Conscientious** Coaching Style: Low technical needs AND low relationship needs.

For more information on DISC Sport Coaching Styles or other sport performance resources, visit [www.athleteassessments.com](http://www.athleteassessments.com)



## FROM THE FIELD

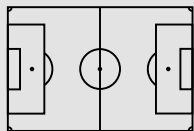


"In coaching, one style does not fit all nor all situations."

– Director of Athlete Assessments, Bo Hanson

# COMMUNICATION AND FEEDBACK

## FROM THE FIELD



“Effective observation and feedback isn’t about evaluation...it’s about coaching.”

– Paul Bambrick-Santoyo, Managing Director, Uncommon Schools, author *Driven by Data: A Practical Guide to Improve Instruction*

Despite any coaching or soccer prowess, “what” and “how” we communicate to our players will ultimately boost their development...or hinder it! In this section we apply the research and findings of two leading experts in their field, Stanford psychologist Carol Dweck and Uncommon Schools Managing Director, Doug Lemov.

### Know Their Mindset

Regarded as one of the world’s leading researchers in the fields of personality, social psychology and developmental psychology, Professor Carol S. Dweck identifies two distinct personality types: the “fixed mindset” and the “growth mindset.”

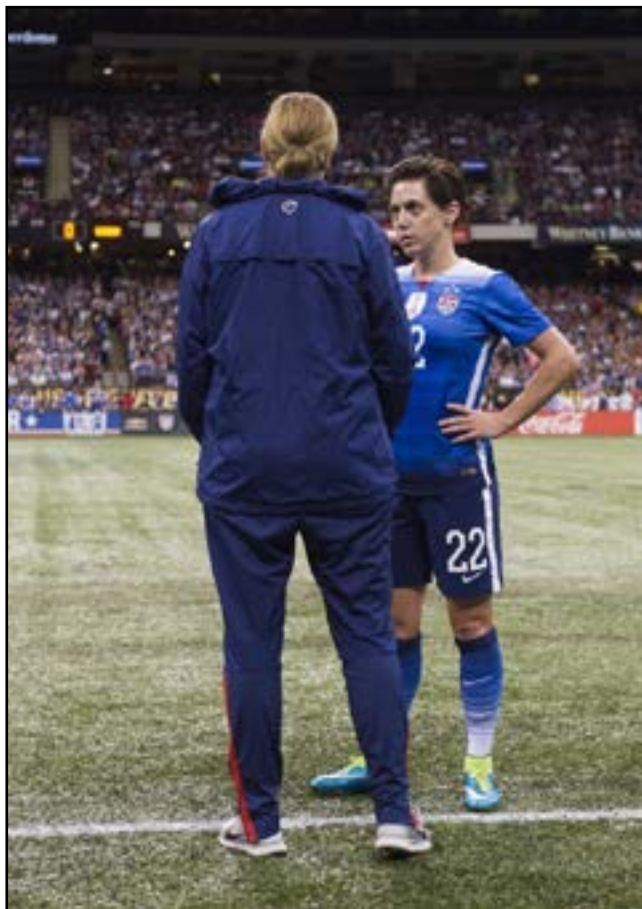
To generalize, a “fixed mindset” assumes that our character, intelligence, skill set and creative ability are static givens, which we can’t change in any meaningful way. Success is the affirmation of our inherent abilities. Success and avoiding failure at all costs become a way of maintaining the sense of being smart or skilled.

Alternatively, a “growth mindset” believes basic qualities can be improved, cultivated and developed. They may be limited in something “today” but they believe they can achieve improvement with effort, focus and commitment. Challenges and failure are viewed as springboards for growth and for stretching our existing abilities.

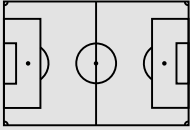
As coaches, having this awareness in our coaching pocket can fundamentally help in how we communicate and provide feedback to our players to help players fulfill their potential on and off the field. Let’s review some perspective:

### Praise

- Praise wisely, focusing more on process, effort, belief or perseverance, etc. Simply praising talent or brilliance can make players vulnerable, harm their motivation and performance. Value passion, dedication, pushing beyond their comfort zone.
- This doesn’t mean we can’t praise our players enthusiastically when they do something great or admire their success, it just means we should focus more on the effort, the attitude, the perseverance, the confidence, the willingness to take the penalty...even if it sails over the bar!



## FROM THE FIELD



“Parents think they can hand children permanent confidence—like a gift—by praising their brains and talent. It doesn’t work, and in fact has the opposite effect. It makes children doubt themselves as soon as anything is hard or anything goes wrong. If parents want to give their children a gift, the best thing they can do is to teach their children to love challenges, be intrigued by mistakes, enjoy effort, and keep on learning. That way, their children don’t have to be slaves of praise. They will have a lifelong way to build and repair their own confidence.”

– Carol Dweck, *Mindset, The New Psychology of Success.*

### Challenges

- Fixed mindset players tend to avoid challenge for fear of failure. They get defensive or quit.
- Growth mindset players embrace challenge as a source of development (persist).

### Effort

- Growth mindset players view effort as the source to mastery.
- Fixed mindset view it as fruitless as their skill set is fixed.

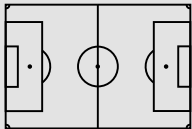
### Criticism

- All children need honest and constructive feedback.
- Fixed mindset players ignore useful negative feedback as it threatens their status.
- Growth mindset players see feedback as steps to learn from.

### Failure and Rejection

- Players with a fixed mindset often feel judged or labeled by failure or rejection. For the fixed mindset, if success means they’re talented, then failure means they’re limited.
- Growth mindset players tend to see failure and rejection as something to learn from and not permanently labeled.

## FROM THE FIELD



“When Michael Jordan was cut from the varsity team, he was devastated. His mother says, “I told him to go back and discipline himself.” Boy, did he listen. He used to leave the house at six in the morning to go practice before school. At the University of North Carolina, he constantly worked on his weaknesses—his defensive game and his ball handling and shooting. The coach was taken aback by his willingness to work harder than anyone else.”

– Carol Dweck, *Mindset, The New Psychology of Success.*

### Normalize Error!

- Remember, mistakes are vital road maps to improvement.
- Getting it wrong is part of getting it right.
- By not making a big deal out of mistakes, provides a secure platform for players to try and fail...and learn.
- Normalizing mistakes encourages players to try new things, be creative and play with freedom (which ultimately leads to enjoyment) and player retention.

### Check for Understanding

- Assess mastery constantly, including after explanation and during execution.
- Anticipate likely errors, take action quickly in response to failed mastery.
- Design time, space, actions to maximize data-gathering, i.e., standardize the field, circulate, position to see well, track specific errors.
- If you check for understanding and there is a clear disconnect, it is better to stop and provide more information, demonstration, perspective or time to master.
- When gauging learning, “cold-call” on different players to respond, not just the ones who raised their hand. This keeps players engaged and provides you with a more diverse picture of the squad’s progress.
- Using guided discovery questions can help facilitate understanding and learning:
  - Why did you play that pass?
  - What other options do you see?
  - What other players could have offered you support?
  - How could you and your teammates create other options?
  - Can you show me?



### Feedback

- Only one or two important things at a time. Quickly. Bite-sized. Specific.
- Use feedback to teach; describe the solution more than the problem. (“By moving into this space, you become available.”)
- Use correction rather than critique (“Let’s play again from where you were.”)
- Give critical feedback in a motivating, positive and honest manner. (“Can you possess the ball and penetrate at speed?”)
- Great teams can. And that’s the team we’re going to become.”
- Establish tacit accountability where players apply feedback immediately (as opposed to just listening to it). (“Now show me!”)
- Align feedback to teaching points. (“I’m looking to see you push into the space created by John, as we talked about after the last play. That’s it!”)
- Use purposeful praise. Not just to be “nice” but to reinforce the power and importance of success as well as effort. Also, players often don’t know when they’ve done something right. (“James, the effort you put in to get into the box was brilliant! You withdrew the other defender and created the chance for Eric to shoot.”)
- Consider careful and intentional use of vocabulary. Be positive, clear and economical.
- Don’t lower your players’ expectations or focus by communicating a topic, session or activity, i.e., the cool-down is boring.
- Great coaches make everything exciting.
- Use a short engaging introduction (hook) to excite players about the session or topic. Use a story or analogy.
- Paint vivid pictures, animate!
- Use a strong voice to earn respect and credibility.
- Re-practice: Bridges the gap between seeing, hearing, or talking and execution. Builds muscle memory.

### References:

Doug Lemov, Teach Like a Champion, [www.teachlikeachampion.com](http://www.teachlikeachampion.com)

# POSITIVE COACH AND PLAYER INTERACTION

## Cover Your Bases!

Because the players are older and often more “adult-like,” it is an easy mistake to relax on the AYSO volunteer protection protocols reviewed in Safe Haven. Therefore, it is “vital” that you review the Safe Haven Course contents and at all times protect the precious coach-player relationship.

## Administration

At minimum, make sure you have:

- Signed and submitted a current Volunteer Application for this playing year! (Also provides volunteers with eligibility for Soccer Accident Insurance.)
- Been authorized to coach by the Regional Commissioner/Board, Area Director/Board, Section Director/Board or National Board of Directors.
- Act within the scope of the Coach job description, AYSO’s policies, procedures and guidelines.
- Complete annual Safe Haven training in order to stay updated about player and volunteer protection.
- Be appropriately trained and certified to coach at this level.

## Supervision

AYSO requires the following supervision:

- At least two registered adults present at all times.
- One adult for every eight or fewer players – this still applies when one or more turn the age of majority.
- At least one adult of the same gender as players.
- Never be alone with a player other than your own, including transporting a player in a car. This is still important in order to ensure there are no misunderstandings that could damage a reputation.
- When it’s necessary to speak privately with a player, select a spot out of earshot but within eyesight of others.

## Physical Contact

In order to prevent misunderstandings, physical contact with children should be:

- In response to the need of the player only.
- With the player’s permission.
- Respectful of any hesitation.
- Careful to avoid private parts.
- In the open, never in private.
- Brief in duration.
- Age and developmentally appropriate.

## Travel

AYSO does not recommend that players walk or ride a bicycle home alone. However, when approved, the Coach should secure a release form from the parent/guardian to ensure their approval.

If your players drive to and from training on their own and they are a minor, **you still need to secure release form from the parent/guardian!** And if parents want their player to carpool, they should sign the same release indicating the driver is authorized to take their player home.

Remember, car or no car, we’re still responsible for minors; and to protect yourself, make sure a player has the parents’ permission to go home with one of their friends.

The Release Form is available at [aysovolunteers.org/coaches-clipboard](https://aysovolunteers.org/coaches-clipboard) and in the Appendix.

## People First!

Consistent throughout all AYSO coach training, we first need to understand the person before the player. Treat the player as a person first and athlete second, and you’ll establish a deeper connection in how your words will influence them.

- Meet with the player without drawing major attention to it.
- Talk with the player in a calm and non-threatening manner.
- Listen.

- Stay calm and note your observations as a coach. Seek to provide tangible solutions.
- Where possible, involve the player in the decision-making process.
- If needed, seek outside support from assistants, parents, etc.
- Remember that different perspectives can be beneficial and an important part of team and culture building so be open-minded.

## SELF REFLECTION

A “Growth-minded” coach concludes every session with a list of what went well and what did not (if even only in their mind)!

Self-reflection is an important component of coaching development. Linked to the concept of learning from experience, in that you think about what you did, and what happened, and decide from that what you would do differently next time in order to improve.

Thinking about what has happened is part of being human. The difference between casual ‘thinking’ and active ‘self reflection’ is that self reflection requires a conscious effort to think about your efforts, preferably address them in writing and then develop insights into them to improve.

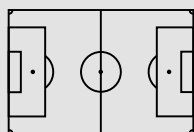
Could you have someone record your session for self-reflection? Uncomfortable, yes, but there is no better platform for self-reflection than by watching your own performance.

Regardless of on film or in mind, in it’s simplest form, you can ask yourself three main questions to address key areas of growth and key strengths:

1. What went well in the training session?
2. What improvements would I make?
3. Did the players respond positively to the session?

Answers should be concise, detailed and directive. Also, consider adjusting your training plan to accommodate your findings and compare your reflection the next time you run the same or similar session.

### FROM THE FIELD



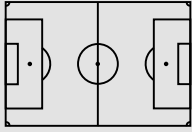
“You cannot connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backwards.”

– Steve Jobs



# COACHING METHODOLOGY

## FROM THE FIELD



“Football is simple; trainers (coaches) shouldn’t make it so complicated.”

– Johan Cruyff, Dutch soccer legend

At the end of the day, it is the coach’s job to coach! Having the content is one thing (and we are providing this for you), but knowing how to effectively communicate, motivate and develop your players is another talent.

### KEEP IN MIND



**Positive Coaching!** Regardless of your personal approach or delivery, **Positive Instruction and Encouragement (P.I.E.)** should *always* be used to instruct and motivate your players. They will respond better to you and it will help keep AYSO a developmentally rich and positive environment.

## MANAGING THE COACHING MOMENT...LESS IS MORE

Know in advance who will be at your session (requires ongoing communication with the player and/or parents. During technical and tactical training, plan and group players to maximize their development. This does not simply mean strong with strong, etc., but rather it is more on a personality or positional grouping.

The coaching environment you create must be safe and conducive to learning. Players must be stimulated to learn and educational opportunities must be well thought out to maximize development.

Occupy a central but sideline position during training to allow a clear, panoramic view of the exercise.

It is a fine line managing the flow of your session and finding the appropriate time to step in. Methods of intervention:

- Forced Stoppage (freeze, get in, make your point, get out)
- Natural Stoppage (be careful the coaching opportunity hasn’t passed and the situation forgotten). Flow (talking as the game is playing...but avoid constant commentary).
- Individual Reference (pulling a player aside to make an observation).

### KEEP IN MIND



Players must be given freedom to be creative and find solutions without constant coaching in order to learn from their mistakes. Remember, mistakes are guidelines for improvement!

**LET THE PLAYERS PLAY AND THE GAME TEACH!**