

Teaching Youth Soccer - How To Boost Players' Confidence

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As a soccer coach there's something you should know... the relationship that you have with your players has a major impact in their self-confidence and performance.

A long time ago, coaches didn't care too much about players' feelings.

Their main goal was "to win" at all cost and if some players were lost along the way, that was just "part of the job". The kind of thinking: "we can't make a nice omelet without breaking some eggs".



Well, you're not a "caveman coach" anymore. You must be open to a new modern way to look at your players, and share with them ownership of the challenge and find ways to boost their performance, motivation and performance.

How Does Your Coaching Style Affect Your Player's Confidence? (Girls Vs Boys)

Several studies reveal that you as a youth coach play an important role in female's attitude and performance to practice and compete. You have a huge impact on your young girls' confidence.



On the other hand, if you coach young men, they seem to have a bigger capacity to stay motivated without your positive support, but their confidence will still be severely damaged if you have a negative attitude.

It's very important that you understand that you can help your players acquire positive attitudes and confidence if you teach soccer in a way that is challenging, exciting, fun and motivating.

Developing Your Own Right Style Of Coaching...

If you'd like to develop your own coaching style that boosts your players' self-confidence and self-esteem here are some guidelines that you should try

to follow:

- Make Learning Soccer Challenging, Exciting And FUN!

You need to embrace and understand the power of humor and take it with you to the soccer practice sessions. Do not underestimate the power this 'weapon' has to dramatically improve the confidence of your players.

I know several top youth coaches that use, for example, fun warm-up soccer drills to start the session with great positive energy or end practice sessions with short enjoyable games so the players leave with smiles on their faces and feeling positive about themselves.

- Treat All Players With Respect

You need to make ALL your players feel like heroes.

* For that I recommend you get used to knowing and using each of your players' names;

* Treat each of your players as an unique individual that deserves your special unique attention;

* Encourage your players to express their feelings, ask questions freely without being afraid of saying something "silly", and trust you with their problems and concerns (which you should listen to very carefully);

* Give your players some time to breathe and find their own space. Don't pressure them about getting fast results or put too much emphasis on winning. Sometimes, all they need is just a little time to feel comfortable and adapt themselves to your methods and the team.



- Be Alert, Give Credit And Reward Good Performance

Confidence is measured by achievement. You need to be alert, look for good performance, and be vocal and visual in your praise. You need to make your players feel like achievers, but still point out weaknesses in a positive way so they can improve... here's an example:

1. Praise: "You did great when you..."
2. Positive Criticism: "...but next time let's try to improve by..."
3. 2nd Praise: "...and I know you can do it!"

Coaches who focus only on the mistakes will never be successful.



- Always Think And Act Like A True Scientist...

When one of your players do something wrong, look at it like a true scientist. Notice that the mistakes are always gold opportunities to learn and improve.

Success people make a lot of mistakes and learn from them. People that don't try new things, never improve and simply freeze in time.

Encourage your players to try, even if they feel they can't do it. Just by taking action and trying to discover the causes of why it didn't work... like "why that ball went to high..." or "how can I improve?"... this kind of simple thinking will lead to incremental improvement. Small changes made by testing different things can take you and your players to the top.

That's the truth!

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