

Lesson 15: Developing a Coaching Philosophy

EBCS Level 2 CPD – Advanced Technical Coaching

Learning Objectives (for the coach)

By the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Explain what a coaching philosophy is and why it is important.
- Identify your core values and beliefs as a coach.
- Understand how philosophy shapes coaching style and decision-making.
- Develop and write a personal coaching philosophy statement.
- Apply your philosophy consistently in training, competition, and interactions.

Background (why this matters)

A coaching philosophy is the foundation of effective coaching. It reflects the coach's values, beliefs, and principles, shaping decisions, behaviours, and communication. Without a clear philosophy, coaches may act inconsistently, confusing players and undermining trust. A strong philosophy ensures:

- Consistency in behaviour and decision-making.
- Alignment between values (e.g., respect, inclusivity, performance) and actions.
- A clear message to players, parents, and peers about what you stand for.
- Long-term credibility and integrity as a coach.

Your philosophy should balance performance goals with player welfare, inclusivity, and development.

Practical Activities

Philosophy Mapping Exercises:

- Values Brainstorm: Write down words that represent what matters most to you as a coach (e.g., respect, fun, discipline, learning).
- Case Study Reflection: Read scenarios (e.g., choosing between winning and giving all players equal opportunity) and note how your values guide decisions.
- Philosophy Mapping: Draw three circles (Values – Beliefs – Actions) and fill them in to connect your principles with your behaviours.

Sample Coaching Philosophy Statement Template:

- 1) Core Values: My coaching is based on... (list 3–5 values).
- 2) Beliefs: I believe that players develop best when...
- 3) Style: I coach by... (describe communication and decision-making approach).
- 4) Purpose: My role as a coach is to...

Application Drill:

- Write your draft philosophy statement (10 min).
- Share with a peer coach and discuss alignment with your practice (15 min).
- Reflect on how to apply it in your next session (10 min).

Questioning Prompts

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- 'What values matter most to you as a coach?'
- 'How do your beliefs about learning shape your coaching?'
- 'What should players expect from you consistently?'
- 'How will your philosophy guide tough decisions under pressure?'
- 'How will you communicate your philosophy to players and parents?'

Coach Notes (ethics, inclusivity, safety)

- A philosophy must prioritise respect, inclusion, and player welfare.
- Align philosophy with safeguarding and ethical codes.
- Revisit your philosophy regularly—it can evolve with experience.
- Ensure your philosophy is lived daily, not just written on paper.
- Communicate it clearly so players know what you stand for.

Reflection (self + peer)

Coach self-reflection:

- Did I articulate my core values clearly?
- Does my philosophy align with my coaching actions?
- How do players experience my philosophy in training and competition?
- What adjustments will make my philosophy stronger?

Peer feedback:

- 'Your philosophy highlights... (values). I saw this when... (evidence). You could emphasise... (suggestion).'

Player homework:

- Ask players: What do they think my coaching values are?
- Reflect on whether this matches what I intended.
- Encourage players to write their own mini-philosophy about sport.

Outcomes (what you should achieve)

- Define and articulate a personal coaching philosophy.
- Align philosophy with EBCS standards and ethical codes.
- Demonstrate consistency between values and behaviours.
- Apply philosophy in daily coaching practice.
- Promote respect, inclusivity, and growth through philosophy.

Appendix A – Glossary of Coaching Terms

Coaching Philosophy: A statement of core values, beliefs, and principles guiding a coach's decisions and behaviours.

Values: Principles or standards that matter most (e.g., respect, fairness, growth).

Beliefs: Views on how players learn, improve, and succeed in sport.

Philosophy Statement: A written summary of a coach's values, beliefs, style, and purpose.

Consistency: Ensuring coaching behaviours always reflect stated values and philosophy.

