



## Champion Coach Note: Positive Instructional Communication

In order to communicate effectively with their athletes, coaches should focus on giving them instruction in the appropriate manner (monitoring tone of voice and the presentation of constructive feedback). When you interact with your players remember to focus on building positive relationships and developing their self-confidence and feelings of competence. Sport psychological research reveals that the feedback provided by coaches can have a significant impact on athletes' motivation. The research indicates that providing frequent praise and information should translate into increased feelings of athlete competence and more self-determined motivation, whereas criticizing athletes or ignoring their performances altogether has the opposite effect. (Coaching Effectiveness by Anthony Amorose, PhD. Illinois State University). If you would like to read the full article, contact the Play Like A Champion office, <mailto:plc@nd.edu?subject=article>.

### Activities and Suggestions:

1. Give appropriate and instruction-filled feedback and help your players to "construct" their knowledge base.
  - Be patient and start with the basics before expecting players to be experts.
  - Provide encouragement and constant support.
  - Generally, a 4:1 ratio of positive to constructive feedback is a good model to

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"Let us be mindful to never shame a boy (girl), but to correct him (her) in an uplifting and loving way. Affirmation!"

~ Coach Joe Erhmann in  
Season of Life

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follow.

- Give each player specific feedback.

2. Structure your team meetings around the sandwich approach as well: highlight the positives of practice, suggest some areas for growth, and offer reassurance that you believe in the team's ability to succeed.

3. To build athlete's ownership and investment, ask the team open-ended questions about their play for example: "How do you think today's practice went?" "What can we do to improve on defense next game?"

Remember that as the coach you are a role model, teacher, guide. Your words and actions have an effect on the athletes you coach. You have the power to make a positive impact.  
Coach Like A Champion!