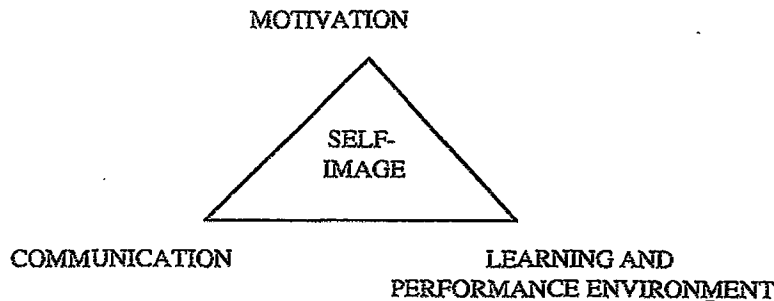


OBJECTIVES

In this section, we have chosen four areas of emphasis:

1. Self-image.
2. Communication skills for coaches.
3. Understanding motivation/goal setting.
4. Learning and performance environment.



I. AN INTRODUCTION TO SPORT PSYCHOLOGY

A. Definition

1. Sport psychology is the study of understanding why coaches and athletes behave as they do.

B. Complexity of Human Behavior

1. It is complex due to the interaction with other coaches, athletes, parents, friends, and the environment.
2. Examples of how athletes influence each other:
 - a. The athlete wishes to spend more time with friends outside of the sport and less time on the sport, yet fears the rejection of team members, parent(s), and/or coaches.
 - b. A young athlete sees a documentary of an Olympic athlete in training. This motivates him or her to strive for the same level of performance.

C. Key Objectives

1. To understand how to communicate with your athletes. Explaining the process of setting realistic performance goals for each of your athletes.
2. To understand your athletes' motivation. Understanding the need for self-worth as a source of motivation.

II. SELF-IMAGE: WHAT IT IS AND WHY IT IS IMPORTANT

A. Definition

1. Self-image is a person's own view of himself or herself.
 - a. Learned or acquired through important life experiences.
 - b. Molded by the reactions of others. For example, parents, peers, and coaches.
 - c. Susceptible to change.
 - d. Extremely important both on and off the sports field.
2. Self-image affects:
 - a. Motivation - Drive to pursue a goal.
 - b. Learning - Acquisition of new knowledge or new skills.
 - c. Athletic performance, as well as performance in other areas.
 - d. Personal relationships - Liking for others and acceptance by others.

- e. Life satisfaction - Realization of personal goals.
- f. Personal satisfaction - How a person feels about himself or herself.
- 3. Where self-image comes from:
 - a. Athletes acquire a sense of who they are, what they are capable of doing, and how worthwhile they are from FEEDBACK.
 - b. Feedback comes from important people around the athlete.
 - c. This acquired self-image affects how athletes feel, behave, and perform.
 - d. Athletes' self-image is affected by reactions coaches have to them and their actions.
- 4. Positive self-image in athletes is related to the following:
 - a. Acceptance of the athlete. Coach interacts with athlete as a person.
 - b. Positive management style. This includes the provision of clear and fair rules, a fair and consistent application of those rules, and the allowing of freedom of action within defined limits.

III. INTRODUCTION OF COMMUNICATION SKILLS

- 1. Effective communication skills are the cornerstone of effective coaching. Communication is the essence of what coaches do.
- 2. There are three dimensions of communication:
 - a. Sending and receiving. Listening skills need to be emphasized.
 - b. Verbal and nonverbal.
 - c. Content and emotion. Substance of the message and feelings toward it.
- 3. Communication also consists of:
 - a. Observing.
 - b. Just being there.
 - c. Communicating to those who also influence the athlete.

IV. LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AND PERFORMANCE ENVIRONMENT

A. *Learning Environment (Practice)*

- 1. Work ethic/effort.
- 2. Cooperation.
- 3. Feedback and reinforcement.
- 4. Skill acquisition.
- 5. Self-improvement.
- 6. FUN.

B. *Performance Environment (Meet)*

- 1. Confidence and trust.
- 2. Effort.
- 3. Self-responsibility.
- 4. Good decision making.
- 5. Self-improvement.
- 6. FUN.

V. UNDERSTANDING MOTIVATION

A. *People are Motivated to Fulfill Their Needs*

- 1. The coach must be sensitive to the athlete's needs.
- 2. This does not mean giving them everything they want.

B. *A Key Need is to Feel Worthy*

- 1. This includes the need to feel competent and experience a reasonable degree of success.

2. Development of self-worth is directly related to self-confidence.

C. Goal Setting

1. Meaning of success. Athletes exceeding their goals rather than surpassing the performance of others.
2. Performance goals relate to the strategies and techniques utilized to achieve the outcome goals. Outcome goals are related to the result.
3. Emphasize that athletes must learn to evaluate their self-worth, not on the basis of winning or losing, but on the basis of improvement and effort. For example:
 - a. Run even pace.
 - b. Hit the board on all six jumps.
4. Setting realistic goals for performance.
 - a. Competitive pressure results in athletes setting unrealistic goals.
 - b. Parents, friends, and coaches can influence athletes to set unrealistically high or low goals.
 - c. Coaches should help athletes set realistic goals.
 - d. There is no formula for this except good judgment.
5. Consequences of setting performance goals.
 - a. Greater motivation.
 - b. Athletes are not afraid of failing. They experience success because their performance goals are realistic. Athletes are less anxious and have more fun.
 - c. The motivation comes from within (intrinsic), not from the coach (extrinsic).
6. Specific guidelines for goal setting.
 - a. Specific.
 - b. Measurable.
 - c. Committed in writing.
7. Time frame for goal setting
 - a. Immediate.
 - b. Short-term.
 - c. Long-term.
 - d. Career.

SUGGESTED READINGS

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