



If you would like to submit a question or topic to be covered in Coach's Corner, reply to this email with your question and be on the lookout for it next week!

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Today's Topic

Welcome back to the Coach's Corner!

I hope everyone had a great Thanksgiving and enjoyed the well deserved break!

If you Google 'Coaching Model' you are hit with millions of different ways to coach and every single one of them believes their way is the only correct one (Very similar to Goal

Setting). This really bothers me because I don't think there is just one correct way to coach athletes and get the best out of them. I believe so much of it depends on your own situation and all the factors that make your team who they are. This is why in this newsletter I try to avoid giving a '1-way street' approach to coaching or anything else we talk about. Instead, I try to offer tips that you can implement into your coaching style and that is already in place.

Today I do want to talk about coaching styles or models, but in a much more basic way than most sources on the internet. While there may be millions of different specific styles or strategies to coaching, I much prefer to look at it as 2 different approaches instead.

Build It Coaching and **Fix It Coaching**.

I want to explain what these two styles of coaching look like, explain why one can be more effective than the other, and look at how it plays into our day-to-day interactions with our players.

As I said earlier, I'm never trying to tell you exactly how you should coach. I am only offering suggestions, tools, and strategies that are backed up by research and experiences. As you'll see, there is one style that I heavily favor over the other, but we will also talk about how just because one style is your primary way of coaching, there will still be times where the other version will be necessary to get the most out of your athletes.

Coaching is an ever-changing and constantly evolving lifestyle. It's so much more complex than anyone from the 'outside' could ever understand. That's why it's so important to constantly learn and grow as a coach so you can offer the best version of yourself to your athletes every single day.

[Build-It vs. Fix It](#)

How Can I Apply This?

Build-It Model to Coaching

This model of coaching is much more holistic and progression based than it's opposition. When we talk about the Build-It Model, we are focusing on a few different things:

1. Building a Strong Foundation
2. Meeting Athletes Where They Are
3. Proactivity

A Build-It Model is all about starting with a strong foundation, and building upon that to help our athletes grow into the player they have always dreamed of being. This will look different depending on what level you're coaching at. If you're coaching youth, middle school, or even junior varsity sports where your athletes don't have much, if any, experience- foundation building should be your main focus.

If you have a group of basketball players who have never picked up a ball before, you don't want to start by implementing the pick-and-roll, right? Instead, you would focus on the most basic of fundamentals: dribbling, passing, and shooting. By doing this you are giving them the foundational skills they need in order to grow and improve throughout their lives.

This is a pretty extreme example of working from the ground up. Starting with nothing and creating a foundation that gives them the chance to grow and continue learning for as long as they play.

Then, it moves right onto our second point of Meeting Athletes Where They Are.

Maybe we are coaching at a higher level, High School or College, where our athletes already have those foundational skills and

they are in need of much more nuanced adjustments and coaching. The Build-It Model is still a perfect fit in this scenario.

Instead of spending time teaching the fundamentals, we determine what 'level' our athletes are at and we meet them there and implement our strategies to help them continue growing and improving.

Maybe you're a high school football coach and you have a freshman quarterback come in who is struggling to make the adjustment to throwing the larger football. Instead of completely revamping his mechanics and changing the fundamental way he throws, you could make a small change to his hand position on the ball to help him out until he grows and his hands get bigger. You meet him where he is and adjust accordingly.

In this model we are avoiding the massive, drastic changes just for the sake of change and instead helping the athletes build on what they already have as far as skills and fundamentals go. This doesn't mean we are never making changes in our athletes mechanics or fundamentals, what it means is that we aren't making those changes just for the sake of changing them. That is something that would happen more in the Fix-It Model that we're about to talk about.

Lastly, this model is based on being very proactive- or preparing for anything that could happen in the future. I know we can't prepare for absolutely everything that could happen in sports, but if we equip our athletes with a strong foundation of fundamentals and build upon that as they grow, mature, and improve, we are setting them up as best as we possibly can.

Fix-It Model to Coaching

As you could probably tell from the previous section, I am a big proponent of the Build-It Model over the Fix-It Model. But I think it's very important to understand both sides of the coin

and learn places where a more 'FIX' based approach may be appropriate for you and your athletes.

I don't want this section to entirely demonize the idea of fixing things within our athletes, but this model as a whole focuses on different key points than the Build-It Model. These points being:

1. 'My Way or the Highway'
2. Tear Down to Rebuild
3. Reactivity

A common trait we see in coaches who whole-heartedly subscribe to this model is a 'My Way or the Highway' mentality. We all probably know a coach that this phrase reminds us of, and this mentality can be extremely frustrating for athletes.

I understand that in a lot of situations, there is a correct form or way to do things, but just because an athlete does it a slightly different way (but still achieves the same results), doesn't mean their way of doing it is entirely wrong, it might just take a small adjustment.

My best example for this is simply looking at hitters at the MLB level. Almost every single guy looks different in the batter's box. They stand open, closed, tall, squatted down, and everything in between. But what doesn't look different is their position and form when their front foot lands and they are actually swinging the bat. There are a million different ways to get to that position, but as long as the result is still there, most coaches aren't going to change that hitter's swing.

This can translate to tons of other sports and situations as well, but as a baseball guy, this is the most obvious example in my mind.

If a coach is stuck on the 'My Way...' mentality it may cause them to make more drastic changes to their athletes' mechanics more often. Leading into our second point of having to Tear Down in order to Rebuild.

Instead of working with what you've got and meeting an athlete where they are (like above), in this model we often see coaches strip everything away and go all the way back to the basics, even with very advanced athletes. They do this with the goal of 'Rebuilding' the skill in their way; or the way they want it to be done as the coach.

Not only does this strategy take much more time, effort, and repetition to get the skill back to a 'usable' level, it also has a negative impact on that player-coach relationship that we've talked so much about throughout these newsletters. If you are tearing a player's mechanics or form apart you are attacking all the hard work they've put in over the years to get to the point they're at now. It can become such an ugly situation sometimes and that's why I advise avoiding those massive changes unless they are absolutely necessary.

This is where the Reactivity comes into play, which isn't innately a bad thing. Reacting to and solving problems that we see is a massive part of our job as a coach. There will always be things that we never expect to happen, or changes that need to be made that we could have never anticipated. That is just the nature of sports and coaching.

This is why I say the 'Fix-It' model isn't all bad and I'm not trying to demonize it!

There will undoubtedly be times as a coach where you try to build on what an athlete has and it just simply is not working. Then it's perfectly okay to make a big mechanical change and teach them your way of doing things instead.

Personally, I subscribe to the 'Build-It' Model as my primary form of coaching. Then using 'FIXES' as I see fit. There have been plenty of times when I see a serious mechanical flaw in an athlete and there is no way to handle it other than to go back to the basics and rebuild what we can.

A lot of these situations will be up to your discretion and will look very different depending on the sport and level you're coaching at.

My big take-home message from all of this is to avoid being a FIXER first, and instead try to build your athletes up before you have to tear them down.

Find that perfect balance between the two styles that fits you and your team the best!

This Week In Sports

1. Tiger back at the Podium.

Tuesday morning Tiger Woods held a press conference prior to the Hero World Challenge golf tournament that he hosts in the Bahamas. This news conference was a massive deal since it is the first one he's held since his devastating car accident last February.

During the press conference Tiger talked about the accident, his road to recovery, and his potential future in golf. Tiger looked happy to be back in front of the camera, being the center of attention which is to be expected from one of the most famous athletes of all time.

A few things that stood out to me were Tiger discussing that he will probably never play a full competitive season ever again, and that he is still in constant pain from his injuries.

He was asked if he had any pain right now and he simply stated 'Yes.' He then elaborated to say that his back and leg were in pretty significant amounts of pain just sitting at the table. Which is not a great thing to hear, but completely understandable with the injuries he's recovering from at his age.

The saddest news of all was his admission that he will probably never play at an elite level again. It was good to hear that he has come to grips with this and has accepted his new reality and I was glad to see him in a good place, especially when facing

something he probably never could have anticipated. He plans to play 'a few tournaments a year' but has no time table or expectations for when this will happen.

We can always hope for Tiger to make another miraculous comeback and win a few more majors, but this time I really don't see that happening. I wish him the best of luck in the rest of his recovery and in whatever his future golf career holds.

[Here is a link to the full press conference.](#)

2. MLB Free Agency Has Been Insane!

After the end of the 2021 MLB Season there were some pretty high expectations for this off-season's free agency market. The list of free agents was extremely long and filled with some of the most high profile names in the league. It was just a waiting game until moves started to be made.

And this week was the start of some of these blockbuster moves, including:

Max Scherzer signing with the NY Mets, Corey Seager and Marcus Semien signing with the Texas Rangers, Javier Baez signing with the Detroit Tigers, and a number of other big time moves. This all happened and there is still a slew of massive names that remain unsigned.

The big takeaway from this week is that both the NY Mets and Texas Rangers (2 very bad teams in 2021) are going all-in and trying to make a World Series push in 2022.

As a Cardinals fan, they have signed Pitcher Steven Matz, which wasn't a 'blockbuster' by any means. But I'm still holding out hope for a few more big signings this winter. I hope the Cards are able to sign another Pitcher in Marcus Stroman, as well as lock down the SS position by signing Trevor Story (*please not Carlos Correa!*).

I think the next few weeks are going to stay exciting with more massive names signing all over the league. The downside, is that

we are still months away from the start of the 2022 season and I'm not sure I can wait that long!

Other Sport Psych Resources

1. [Another Way to Look at Failure](#)

Failure is something that is a given in sports. We all fail, it's unavoidable. But what we can do is get better at handling it, moving on, and preparing for the next battle.

I love finding different techniques or different perspectives on failure and resilience because there isn't a one-size-fits-all solution that will work for everyone. I try to find as many different ways of teaching similar topics as possible, and this is another great one right here.

Josh Kuzoch, a Mental Performance Coach with the Tampa Bay Rays shared this simple graphic the other day. In it is asks you 3 simple questions that can help you handle a failure or mistakes more effectively and put you in a better place to succeed next time.

This is a pretty simple graphic, but sometimes those are the best ones!

[Check out the Graphic HERE.](#)

2. [A Look at Different Coaching Models](#)

As we discussed throughout this newsletter, there is no 1 correct way to coach and there are a million different 'models' out there to learn from.

In this article from positivepsychology.com, they discuss a number of different coaching models and strategies that could give you a more in-depth look into some of the models I chose not to

include in this newsletter. As well as a number of different books and other resources that are great for coaching education.

This article is more geared toward the business world and working with co-workers and clients, but no matter the verbiage they use, the topics still hold strong and would transition well into sport coaching.

Like I've said before, it's important to constantly be learning and growing as a coach so you can provide the best version of yourself to your athletes. This article is a great learning tool for any coach whether you take anything from it or not, you now have the information if you ever find a time or place to implement it.

[Read the full article HERE.](#)

Quick Quote



"Teamwork is what makes common people capable of uncommon results."

-Pat Summitt

Check out Older Editions of the Coach's Corner at the Bottom of
the Page Here:

<https://www.streckersportpsych.com/coachs-corner>

Thank you for reading and until next week, remember:

Today is a great day to change a life!

Cheers,

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