



# Becoming an Expert Coach

**Bryan McCullick**





**Never quit. Set a goal and don't quit until you attain it. When you do attain it, set another goal, and don't quit until you reach it.**

*Paul "Bear" Bryant*



**A teacher is never too smart to  
learn from his pupils.**

*Bill Bowerman*



**Confidence comes from being prepared.**

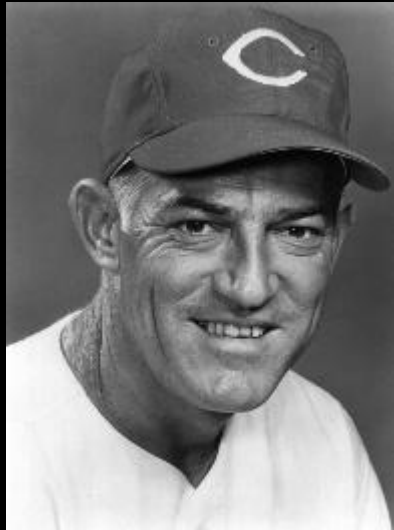
*John Wooden*



**Practice does not make perfect.  
Only perfect practice makes perfect.**

*Vincent Lombardi*





**I cannot get rid of the hurt from losing, but after the last out of every loss, I must accept that there will be a tomorrow. In fact, it's more than there'll be a tomorrow, it's that I want there to be a tomorrow.**

*Sparky Anderson*



**Always keep an open mind and  
a compassionate heart.**

*Phil Jackson*



**There is no need for me  
continuing  
unless I'm able to  
improve.**

*Knute Rockne*





**Leadership, like coaching, is fighting for  
the hearts and souls of men and getting  
them to believe in you.**

*Eddie Robinson*

**My attitude is never to be satisfied, never  
enough, never.**

*Bela Karolyi*





**The key to success is not in eliminating mistakes — mistakes are going to happen — but in controlling our reactions to those mistakes**

*Pia Nilsson*

**It only hurts once; from beginning to end.**

*Doc Counsilman*



**Excellence is the gradual result of  
always striving to do better**

*Pat Riley*



**Learning from Experts  
in Teaching & Coaching:  
Lessons from 15 years of  
Study**

**Dr. Bryan A. McCullick  
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University of Georgia**

# **The Elements of Excellence in Teaching & Coaching**

Baseball

American Football

Golf

Tennis

Physical Education

Dance

Gymnastics

Volleyball

Strength & Conditioning

# The Elements of Excellence in Teaching & Coaching

I. Characteristics of Expert Teachers and  
Coaches

II. Developing Your Expertise



# Expert Coaches

Who is the greatest coach you personally know, and what characteristics make them a great coach?

# Expert Characteristics

1. Extensive knowledge
2. Keen analytic skills
3. Perception finely tuned
4. Routines & rituals
5. Self-regulating
6. Thirst for knowledge--look to any source

# Knowledge of Athletes

- Novices:
  - learner difficulties due to ability, motivation, background
- Experts:
  - Felt responsible for learner difficulties
  - Sought solutions to problems athletes encountered



# Perceptual Skills

Write down everything you remember about the slide you just observed.

## Novice



## Expert



# Perceptual Skills

## Experts

- ✓ Focus tightly on technique and information relevant to instruction

## Novices

- ✓ Variety of topics irrespective of relevance to technique or instruction

# Decision Making

- invest time in:
  - a.) defining the problem,
  - b.) isolating cause (not symptoms),
  - c.) identifying constraints to solutions
  - d.) evaluating possible solutions
  - e.) 'go with your gut' (intuition)



# Rituals & Routines

- Openings
- Instructional routines
- Closings



# Rituals & Routines: Openings

- Opening Practice or Class
  - Greetings and getting comfortable
  - Interviewing athletes:
    - a. Personality and motivations?
    - b. Fitness level and injuries?
    - c. Current interests and experiences?
  - Practice with a PURPOSE
    - Set goals
      - Limit the number of goals (1-3)
      - Purposeful goals based on . . .
        - Team & Player performance
        - Motivation & Fitness
        - Season and schedule

# Rituals & Routines: In-Practice

- In-Practice Routines
  - Focus on goal
  - Use questions/ get players talking
  - Few but potent points
  - Coach less, but thoroughly
  - Highlight important concepts



# Rituals & Routines: Closings

## Critical Closings

Summarize the  
main points

Check For  
Understanding  
(CFU)

Highlight success  
Practice activities



# Self-Monitoring

## Definition:

a conscious, continuing monitoring and assessment of critical skills and knowledge.

# Self-Monitoring

What the *Top 100 Golf Instructors* set as self-monitoring goals:

- improving communication
- adjustments to personal lifestyle
- examining teaching perspectives
- increasing knowledge

# Self-Monitoring

Their self-monitoring strategies:

- seek help from others
- read
- learn new technology
- develop business strategies
- adapt teaching practices

# Self-Monitoring

- Evaluating YOUR performance
  - What was good?
  - What could be better?
  - How do we make it better?



# Thirst for Knowledge

*On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being all there is to know, how much do you know about teaching/coaching?*

–Novices

rated knowledge 8.5

–Experts

rated knowledge 4.5

# Expert Coaches and Teachers

1. Extensive knowledge of players, sport, and instruction
2. Keen analytic skills
3. Perception finely tuned
4. Rituals & Routines
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# Thirst for Knowledge

1. Coaching Experience (2.79)
2. Other Coaches (2.85)
3. Athletes (4.23)
4. Workshops/Seminars (5.32)
5. Playing Experience (5.46)
6. Formal Education (6.89)

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# Developing Your Expertise

I. Increase knowledge

II. Practice coaching skills

# Developing Your Expertise

- Increase knowledge
  - Observe/talk to other coaches
  - Listen to athletes
  - Attend seminars
  - Read

# Developing Your Expertise

- Practice coaching skills
  - Interviewing
  - Communicating
  - Analytic skills
  - Establishing goals
  - Closing practices



# Interesting Insight

*"Many ... have tremendous God-given gifts, but they don't focus on the development of those gifts. Who are these individuals? You've never heard of them-- and you never will ."*

*-John Wooden*

# The Secret to Success

*The heights by great coaches reached and  
kept*

*Were not attained by sudden flight,  
But they, while their companions slept,  
Were toiling upward in the night*

*-Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*