



Ambassador Coaching

What does it take to motivate a team to accomplish their goals and dreams? The best coaches put their answers into action at every practice. In this badge, find your answers and share them! Coaching is an opportunity to share your love of a sport, demonstrate your athletic skills, and inspire and empower athletes to realize their potential.

Steps

1. Begin to outline your coaching strategy
2. Conduct a first assessment
3. Design your coaching plan
4. Put your plan into action—and revise it, if necessary
5. Attend the big event, and make a final assessment

Purpose

When I've earned this badge, I'll know what it takes for a coach to be successful.

Step 1: Begin to outline your coaching strategy.

Before you identify your team and the activity you plan to coach, dig into coaching strategies. In this step, focus on three areas: how to motivate a team, how to train, and how to assess progress. After you've gathered tips from pros, gather the tips together, and start your personal coaching playbook. (As you grow through the badge with more ideas and observations, you can add to the playbook— it's your personal and inspirational reference.)

CHOICES – DO ONE:

Talk to a great coach or highly experienced athlete. Ask for insights from a coach or a professional or amateur athlete. It might be someone who coaches at or plays for a school, an after-school program, or a local college or university. If possible, shadow them during a practice or a game. You might ask to see a playbook—and take notes!

OR

Watch three sports documentaries. The sport doesn't have to be the one you'll coach—this is about the nitty-gritty of strategy. As you watch, keep the three focus categories in mind, and analyze what makes the coaches you see successful.

For More FUN: Get together with a group of girls working on this badge to watch and dissect great coaching moments.

OR



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Attend a coaching clinic or seminar. If there isn't a class nearby, check online for various coaching clinics and sports camps. At the clinic or seminar, look specifically for ideas about the three focus areas.

Step 2: Conduct a first assessment.

Do one choice to clearly define each of your athletes' objectives for your sessions, as well as the team goal (if appropriate). Depending on the sport or event you're coaching for—or what individual or group assessment may be most appropriate—decide which choice is best for your group.

CHOICES – DO ONE:

Prepare individual questionnaires. Ask each athlete to assess where they are in their sport and what they want to gain in your time together. Review the questionnaires, and meet with each person to set goals and outline how they might achieve them.

OR

Host an initial session. Design a fun session that tests players' skills and/ or how they work together as a team. The drills should help them decide on goals for your sessions. During the session, make notes to assess the skill level of each player and how you think you can help.

OR

Prepare a goal chart together. In a group, ask players to discuss what they hope to accomplish in their sessions. Together, make a chart outlining a training schedule and goals for each player, as well as for the team collectively, if appropriate. Use the chart to help you guide each session.

Step 3: Design your coaching plan.

Combine what you learned about coaching strategies and what you now know about your players into a coaching plan that utilizes everyone's best skills. Use at least one of these choices to help you define and design your plan for each of your sessions. You'll need to run at least one session in each of the four weeks to complete this badge.

CHOICES – DO ONE:

Design a special warm-up and cool-down. For any sport, it's important



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to stretch before and after training. Instead of running through these components in a basic way, research the best stretches and warm-up exercises for your sport, and put them together in a unique format. You might incorporate some fun trust-building games or exercises.

OR

Research and choose some training drills. Are they too hard, too easy? Try them out on your own. If neither you nor any of your athletes can do a particular skill your team needs to practice, find someone who can demonstrate it.

OR

Open and close each session with a message. Interview a sports psychologist or find some sports psychology tips (perhaps on motivation, teamwork, or perseverance) to inspire your athletes. Incorporate these tips into the opening and closing of each of your sessions. You might even get creative with visuals and music or by singing an inspirational song.

Tip: Before your first sessions, gather the necessary equipment. You might need things like a whistle, cleats, cones, weights, or balls to conduct drills. If you want your athletes to bring specific items to sessions, let them know!

Step 4: Put your plan into action- and revise if necessary.

Now's the time to start your sessions. At some point during your four weeks of coaching, get some feedback to help you assess and improve your coaching plan.

CHOICES – DO ONE:

Add a morale-boosting time-out. Find a place outside your practice sessions where you and your team can talk. It might be a coffeehouse, a picnic table in the shade, or in front of a fire on a cold afternoon. Get your athletes together to ask questions, to inspire discussion about sportsmanship and goals, and to review how your sessions are going.

OR

Ask your players to coach you! Discuss with your athletes, as a group or individually, how you're doing as a coach. What have they loved about your sessions, and what suggestions for improvements do they have for you? You might design a questionnaire, and then discuss their answers to lead



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the conversation.

OR

Bring in another coach to watch a session. You can do this in one of your initial sessions or when you feel more comfortable with your athletes and your routine. Ask for advice on the content of your sessions and your coaching style.

For More FUN: Ask the coach to co-run your session so the group gets double the feedback and double the fun!

Step 5: Attend the big event, and make a final assessment.

Be there at the final event—whether a game, tryout, race, or performance—to coach your athletes to success or to cheer them on! Review their goals, and take notes on their performance so you can offer specific feedback.

CHOICES – DO ONE:

Meet with your players for a relaxing post-training assessment. While there, ask each athlete to share two or three things they learned in your sessions. Find out if they think they met their goals, and if not, why. Tell them how you think they did and why you're proud of their accomplishments.

OR

Host a celebration. Get everyone together for a post-event party. Over food and fun, discuss how it went. Focus on what goals were accomplished, and share encouragement for the future.

For More FUN: Before the event, make individual cards for each athlete. Offer positive feedback on their progress. This way, no matter the result of the final game, competition, or tryout, each person will have a written record of their success.

OR

Make a “trading card” for each athlete. You'll need a photo of each person in your group (you could take one at a practice session or during the final event). Review your first assessment and how far each person has come toward reaching their goals. Choose decoration, statistics, sayings, or inspirational tidbits specific to each person.

Tip: If your group doesn't have a specific event to work for, create one! Show off new skills for family, friends, and Girl Scout sisters.

Now that I've earned this badge, I can give service by:

- Sharing my best drills with other coaches
- Assisting with practices for a school sports team



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- Using coaching strategies to motivate teams or groups I'm a part of to achieve our goals

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