

# Top 10 Training Tips and the Importance of Setting Standards

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In order to gain maximum results from your training sessions it is imperative that your players arrive on time, in the correct playing kit, focused and keen to participate. The standards that you set are a reflection of your character and what you aim to achieve. As a coach be first to arrive, look the part, be focused and enthusiastic and be the last to leave.

Below are my top **10 tips** to help your sessions be successful and enjoyable for both you and your players :-

- 1) Never underestimate **the importance of having the correct equipment available**. Bibs, cones and balls need to be easily accessible and of a decent standard. Every player should have their own ball.
- 2) If you are using “drills” as part of your session you **MUST** relate the object and outcome to a game situation - otherwise what is the point? Don't be afraid to focus on the basics especially with younger players - the ability to take a throw-in for example can be hugely beneficial.
- 3) **Pause** drills to provide positive and constructive feedback but try not to let the session become disjointed or stale. Ask questions and listen to your players answers and input. Avoid any exercise that involves players waiting in line - don't let boredom creep into sessions.
- 4) **Avoid monotonous repetition**, don't let your players see practice drills as boring and a game as a “reward” at the end of a session. Make your aim to ensure that by the end of each session your players have either improved an aspect of their game, learnt a new skill or improved their confidence.
- 5) **Aim to develop** your players in line with your belief and ethos - if you believe wholeheartedly in “two touch”, “quick press” or moving the ball quickly under head height then focus on these areas. Look at professional players going through their warm up routines pre-match - they play small sided games, they play keep ball and they focus on playing one or two touch football. In other words no magic secret!
- 6) **Keep control of your session**. Pre plan and make sure you are prepared for the number of players that you are going to be working with. Don't let a session “drift” and ultimately fail, be flexible and change the content if it isn't working. Keep players on their toes at all times.
- 7) **Don't forget your goalkeeper** - this is after all a specialist position and warrants individual attention. It is important to involve your keeper where appropriate with the whole squad, whilst striking a balance and giving them time to work on specific goal-keeping skills.
- 8) **Reflection** is really important - both you and your players at the end of every session should consider what went well, what has been learnt, what did you enjoy and what could be improved upon for the next session?
- 9) You will have different levels of ability to work with, however **insist on 100% effort**.
- 10) **Strive** to constantly improve - accept that you have weaknesses but focus on your strengths.

Remember, regardless of the number of players in your session you are coaching individuals. You cannot assume that every player will have the same level of enthusiasm every week, they may be pre-occupied with other issues such as school work or personal issues, or may simply be tired. Work on your relationship and trust with players, if they have issues let them feel comfortable sharing any problem

which may affect their performance.

**What do you think of my tips? Have you any tips of your own to share? Please leave a comment to let me know what you think.**

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