

10 Tips for Giving Great Feedback

1. Athletes learn from two types of feedback: intrinsic and extrinsic feedback. Intrinsic feedback can be thought of as feedback originating from one's own body, such as feeling one's own muscles and balance. Extrinsic feedback is feedback originating from outside the body, such as a coach telling you that you have successfully executed a skill, task, or movement. Encourage athletes to be aware of their own intrinsic feedback. In addition, coaches should be aware of the type and amount of extrinsic feedback they give to each of their players. It is important that Coaches endeavor to give all players equal amounts of feedback.

2. Coaches should give timely and effective feedback to athletes.

3. Effective feedback is a 4 step process of communicating with the athlete:

Step 1: Compare the athlete's technique to the correct technique.

Step 2: Ask yourself, "What caused this error?" and determine how to correct it.

Step 3: Select one part of the technique to correct. Initially focus on the one change in technique that you believe will make the largest impact on skill performance.

Step 4: Offer the athlete feedback to refine his/her technique.

4. Avoid giving redundant feedback like, "You Missed!" The player likely already knows that he or she has missed.

5. Use the K.I.S.S. principle: Keep It Short and Simple. This is especially important when working with youth.

6. Feedback should always be specific and informational. For example, "Jason, stay low when fielding ground balls." The addition of the player's name increases the impact of the feedback.

7. When giving corrective feedback use the sandwich method: Sandwich the corrective feedback between two pieces of positive feedback. For example, "Nice play Trevor, but next time, charge the slow rolling ball and you will have time to make a double play. (show the technique) You did a great job making the play but next time let's try for a double play."

8. Give athletes time to process both their own intrinsic feedback and your extrinsic feedback. Wait a few seconds before giving feedback, then give it to the athlete and walk away for a short time. Try to avoid hovering over a player as he/she tries the technique again.

9. Provide athletes with feedback, but not on every attempt. This teaches players to analyze their own technique and make appropriate corrections rather than depending on the coach for feedback.

10. When working with young children it is often beneficial to assess if they understand the instructions by asking them what they are going to focus on during future