



WHAT IS EXPECTED OF A VOLUNTEER COACH?

Coaches play an important role not only in the sporting life but also in the everyday lives of the participants they coach. Coaches influence not just the development of sport-specific skills and sporting performance, but also a participant's development as a person and their approaches to other aspects of their life. While at times it can be challenging, coaching is also a very satisfying role.

To be an effective coach you will need a number of skills. A coach needs knowledge of the sport but, more importantly, they need to know how to pass that knowledge on to the participants they are coaching. To do this, a coach needs skills in:

- organising
- observing
- analysing
- adapting
- communicating
- improving performance.

Coaches should:

- be a good role model for the participants
- show enthusiasm and enjoyment for the task of coaching – make it fun!
- be self-confident, assertive, consistent, friendly, fair and competent
- ensure the safety of all participants
- behave ethically and dress appropriately
- maintain discipline throughout the session
- be very organised, not only for each session but for the entire season
- be able to justify, if necessary, why things are being done, and to be 'big enough' to ask for suggestions when not sure and to admit and apologise when they make a mistake
- treat everyone fairly and include participants of all abilities and disabilities, ages, genders and ethnic backgrounds.

Do you have a coaching philosophy?

A coaching philosophy will include aspects such as:

- how the coach communicates
- will the coach encourage athletes to ask questions and take some responsibility?
- will the coach seek to remain up-to-date and improve their coaching knowledge and skills?
- how behavioural issues will be dealt with
- will the coach include everyone, irrespective of ability or background?
- the coach's emphasis on winning, losing and cheating
- promoting respect for others.

