PRINCIPLES OF SPORT TRAINING AND TEACHING PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Sport training is a process of preparation for a sport performance, put simply. It consists of four parts:

Conditioning training (strength training, endurance training, flexibility training)

Training of technique (Technical preparation)

Training of tactics (Tactical preparation)

Psychological training (Mental preparation)

Before considering the technical aspects of training, experts recommend ten concepts as the backbone of any successful training program:

Define your goals (You may have one primary goal and several minor ones.)

Match your sport to your goals and your abilities (Carefully evaluate your physical, emotional, and social needs and abilities.)

Set intermediate goals (You should have several sets of goals: general goals, long-range goals, season goals, monthly, weekly, even daily goals.)

Plan your workout (Divide your workout into four phases: warm-up, skills practice, match- related practice, cool-down.)

Get professional coaching help (Ask your coach to analyze your game, correct your form, and help you plan your workouts.)

Join a club or sports organization (Not only will you enjoy working out with others, you will also learn from them.)

Maintain year-round fitness (Ideally, the off-season should be used to rest and to work on building your strength, endurance, or aerobic capacity without the strain of competition.)

Prevent injuries (In addition to avoiding sport-specific injuries, you should devote part of each workout to general injury prevention. Warming up, stretching, and cooling down are the key stones of injury prevention. Don’t forget that protective equipment is as much part of the game as the rules.)

Use sport-specific training (Sport-specific training is the best way to develop the fine neuromuscular coordination and judgment we call skill. Depending on your sport, you will also develop some cardiovascular fitness, endurance, strength, and speed as you play.)

Enjoy yourself (Some of the reasons why athletes stop enjoying their sport might be overtraining, poor goal setting, or unrealistic expectations.)

**SPORT TRAINING PRINCIPLES**

Whatever is your particular sport, game, exercise system, martial art or physical activity, there are basic principles which apply to increasing your performance.

Overload (the stimulus magnitude)  
Specificity   
Progressive resistance (Progression)  
Individualization  
Regularity (Frequency)  
Rest and recovery  
Arrangement  
Proper training environment  
Recognition of different physical goal requirements  
Prevention of overtraining

Overload

To bring about positive changes in an athlete’s state, an exercise *overload* must be applied. The training adaptation takes place only if the magnitude of the training load is above the habitual level. During the training process, there are two ways to induce the adaptation.

1) One is to increase the training load (intensity, volume) while continuing to employ the same drill (e.g. endurance running).

2) The other is to change the drill, providing the exercise is new and the athlete is not accustomed to it.

Training loads can be roughly classified according to their magnitude as: 1) stimulating, 2) retaining, and 3) detraining.

Progressive Resistance

Particularly applicable in strength, flexibility and endurance training, this principle means that as you improve it is necessary to increase progressively the demands you are making upon your body (i.e. gradually increase the intensity and duration of exercise).

Specificity

Training adaptations are highly specific. Specificity may be described as an issue of transfer of training. The closer the training movements parallel the kinds of physical activity you are training for, the more effective the influence of training on performance.

Overtraining symptoms

Overtraining can best be defined as the state where the athlete has been repeatedly stressed by training to the point where rest is no longer adequate to allow for recovery. The*overtraining syndrome* is the name given to the collection of emotional, behavioural, and physical symptoms due to overtraining that has persisted for weeks to months. The most common symptom is fatigue. The athlete may also become moody, easily irritated, have altered sleep patterns, become depressed, or lose the competitive desire and enthusiasm for the sport. Some will report decreased appetite and weight loss. Physical symptoms include increase in resting heart rate, consistent elevation in the normal body temperature, persistent muscular soreness and stiffness, increased frequency of viral illnesses, digestive system problems, and increased incidence of injuries.

Personality of the Coach and Physical Education Teacher

Coaches often list many specific goals they hope to achieve when coaching their athletes. Usually, their goals fall under three broad objectives:

To have a winning team

To help young people have fun

To help young people develop physically, psychologically and socially

Successful coaches know the difference between their objectives for the contest, their objectives for their athletes’ participation, and their personal objectives.

We can distinguish various coaching (as well as teaching) styles such as authoritative or command style, submissive style, democratic style, cooperative style, liberal style, etc.

What makes a successful coach?

Successful coaches must have good knowledge of the sport sciences, sport management, and techniques and tactics. Successful coaches rank their program objectives in the right priority. To be successful, coaches adopt a coaching style compatible with those objectives. There are three other attributes of successful coaches: knowledge of the sport, motivation, and empathy.

School Physical Education Lessons

When preparing a PE lesson, the PE teacher has to consider the following factors:

Participants (age, gender, number, level of abilities and skills, experience, theoretical knowledge, gear)

Goals and objectives of the lesson (and its parts)

Composition and duration of the lesson (warm-up, main part (skills practice, match-related practice, conditioning), cool-down)

Methods and exercises to accomplish the set goals

Organization of the lesson including the use of demonstrators and/ or assistants

Sport facilities and equipment incl. safety measures

READING (Authentic text)

COACHING STYLES

Most coaches lean toward one of three coaching styles: the command style, the submissive style, or the cooperative style.

COMMAND STYLE (THE DICTATOR)

In the command style of coaching, the coach makes all the decisions. The role of the athlete is to respond to the coach’s commands. The assumption underlying this approach is that because the coach has knowledge and experience, it is his or her role to tell the athlete what to do. The athlete’s role is to listen, to absorb, and to comply.

SUBMISSIVE STYLE (THE BABYSITTER)

Coaches who adopt the submissive style make as few decisions as possible. It is a throw-out-the-ball-and-have-a-good-time approach. The coach provides little instruction, provides minimal guidance in organizing activities, and resolves discipline problems only when absolutely necessary. Coaches who adopt this style either lack the competence to provide instruction and guidance, are too lazy to meet the demands of their coaching responsibilities, or are very misinformed about what coaching is. The submissive-style coach is merely a babysitter – and often a poor one at that.

COOPERATIVE STYLE (THE TEACHER)

Coaches who select the cooperative style share decision making with athletes. Although they recognize their responsibility to provide leadership and guide young people toward achieving the set objectives, cooperative-style coaches also know that youngsters cannot become responsible adults without learning to make decisions.

COACHING STYLES EVALUATED

Which style best describes you? I consider the submissive style to be no style at all and urge you not to adopt it. The command style has been prevalent in the past and is commonly seen among professional, college, and high school coaches. Many novice and inexperienced coaches adopt the command style because it is the one they have seen modelled by their own coaches or others. Some coaches adopt this style because it helps them conceal their own doubts about their capabilities. If they do not permit the athletes to question them, if they can avoid explaining why they coach as they do, then their inadequacies won’t be uncovered – or so they think!

On the surface the command style appears *effective*. Good athletic teams need organization. They cannot be run effectively as participant democracies; the team cannot vote on every decision that needs to be made. Indeed, the command style can be effective if winning is the coach’s primary objective and if its authoritarian nature does not stifle athletes´ motivation. But this risk is one of the major limitations of the command style. Coaches who use the command style also prevent athletes from fully enjoying the sport. The accomplishments are the coach’s, not the athletes’.

It is obvious by now that I favour the cooperative style of coaching, because it shares decision making with the athletes and fosters the *Athletes First, Winning Second* objective. Cooperative-style coaches provide the structure and rules that allow athletes to learn to set their own goals and to strive for them. Being a cooperative-style coach does not mean you avoid rules and order; failing to structure team activities is neglecting a major coaching responsibility. The coach faces the complex task of deciding how much structure creates the optimum climate for athletes’ development. The cooperative-style coach gives direction and instruction when they are needed, but also knows when it is useful to let athletes make decisions and assume responsibility.

We know there is more to being an athlete than just having motor skills. Athletes must be able to cope with pressure, adapt to changing situations, keep contests in perspective, exhibit discipline, and maintain concentration in order to perform well. These ingredients are fostered routinely by cooperative-style coaches, but seldom by command-style ones. The cooperative approach places more trust in the athlete, which has a positive effect on self-image. It promotes openness in the social-emotional climate and improves both communication and motivation. Athletes are motivated not by fear of the coach, but by a desire for personal satisfaction.

There is a price to pay, however, in choosing the cooperative style. This style requires more skill on the part of the coach. Reference:*MARTENS, R.: Successful Coaching. New York: Human Kinetics, 1997. ISBN: 0-88011-666-8. Chapter 2 – Your Coaching Style, p.11-17.*