



Cairns Basketball Inc

Coaching on the Run



"Just do it! You learn to talk by talking. You learn to walk by walking. You learn best by doing it!"
- University of the First Age

What is coaching on the run?

Coaching on the run is a key practical technique to ensure athletes are at the centre of the coaching process. When done effectively coaching on the run ensures that athletes get maximum opportunity to develop the necessary understanding and ability to achieve success in the game and most importantly have ownership of this process.

At core of 'coaching on the run' is ensuring there is optimum athlete activity for a maximum amount of the time. This ensures practice time is efficient and the person at the centre of the coaching process, the athlete, garners maximum benefit.

Key Principles:

1. Athlete ownership of their development

Athletes are at the centre of the coaching process and are given the opportunity to demonstrate and/or develop their understanding and ability.

2. Athletes learn by doing

First and foremost athletes learn through unaided activity and as a learning tool this is preferential for athletes than listening and/or watching activity.

3. Optimum learning for a maximum amount of time

The aim is to create an environment that promotes optimum athlete learning (through activity) for the maximum amount of time.

4. Each athlete is coached as an individual

One athlete's progression, or lack thereof, should not inhibit the entire squad. Targeted individual and/or small group coaching with activities takes precedence over team instruction.

5. Coach intervention that best meets the needs of the individual athlete

The manner in which a coach intervenes during a session should best meet the needs of each individual athlete and facilitate athlete owned learning.

Key Steps:

Prior to a drill the coach should;

- Identify desired outcomes for athletes
- Establish indicators so athlete performance can be measured
- Select a drill that will allow athletes to achieve the desired outcomes

During the drill the coach should;

- Set activity parameters

This should involve minimal instruction but some communication of indicators is required so athletes know how they are performing.

- Evaluate each player

If they are reaching indicators, then allow players to complete activity and give them positive reinforcement on the fly

If they are not reaching indicators, then determine the most effective way to intervene and facilitate athlete learning

Performance Indicators:

Below is an example of athlete performance indicators;

- Cutter sets up defender to come off screen
- Cutter waits for the screen to be set
- Cutter rubs shoulders with the screener
- Cutter uses a change of pace to get open

If the majority of athletes demonstrate these key indicators, then the coach can be confident that the outcomes of that section of practice are being achieved. In this instance is constant coach intervention necessary?

Coaching Vocabulary:

It is important that coaches develop their coaching vocabulary so they are able to deliver instructions concisely and efficiently, use consistent language with athletes and utilise coaching cues to assist athletes with minimal intervention.

Coaching cues are a valuable tool for coaching on the run. These are words or phrases that summarise information and key teaching points. They can also be used to reinforce or to introduce to athletes to the key competency indicators (key teaching points or points of emphasis) during a part of practice.

An example of coaching vocabulary and coaching cues when working on scoring off screens is listed below:

Vocabulary	Coaching Cue
Set up defender	SET-UP
Wait for screen to be set	STAY
Rub shoulders with screener	SHOULDERS
Use change of pace to get open	TWO SPEEDS

Activity Instruction:

Activity instruction should be minimal but precise. Coaches should avoid giving the athletes a 'step by step' account of the activity, athletes learning and development will be more significant if they 'discover' their own learning. Coaches can either explain the action inherent to the activity/drill or more effectively briefly overview the parameters of that part of the practice.

For example if setting up a 3 v 3 screening drill:

Explaining Action (Not recommended)	Game like parameters (Recommended)
<p>"Wing player you must lead for the ball. Take their player in, V cut and lead out. If over played back cut or re-cut until you are open.</p> <p>Player with the ball must pass the ball to wing when they are open then start with a cut before screening for the weak side wing player.</p> <p>Weak side wing player you must set your player up, rub shoulders with the screener and cut off the screen to the top of the key for a shot.</p> <p>We are going to play until one team scores 3 baskets. If you score you stay on offence."</p>	<p>"3 v 3 no dribble until a pass has been made and a down screen has been set.</p> <p>Make it take it. First to 3 scores wins."</p>

Coaching Intervention:

Coach intervention refers to the level of influence a coach has on athlete activity during practice. If the goal of coaching is to develop the athletes' competency in competitive game like situations which is the primary premise of athlete centred coaching, then the coaches goal should be minimal coach intervention.

Aiming for minimal coach intervention does not mean the coaches have no involvement in the athletes' development processes, or that coaches should ignore incorrect or poor technique; understanding; or performance. Rather it involves coaches making sure their level of intervention is appropriate for each individual athlete.

Designing activities, games and scrimmages and using appropriate intervention techniques will ensure the coach develops an environment that gives the athlete ownership of developing their ability and understanding of key technical or tactical areas of the sport. This is a coach driven, but athlete owned process.

Coach Intervention techniques:

Ideally coaches should aim to use coaching practice that involves medium or low levels of intervention but coaches should also be aware that no intervention is ineffective as intervention that is too intensive.

Level of Intervention	Coaching Practice
Ineffective	<p>Coach stops the entire practice because a small percentage of athletes are not demonstrating competency</p> <p>Coach 'talks' the athlete through the drill</p> <p>Coach conducts drill of practice that requires athletes to follow patterns</p>
High	<p>Coach stops the entire practice because a large percentage of athletes are not demonstrating competency</p> <p>Coach uses coaching cues to reinforce key emphasis and athlete indicators</p> <p>Coach conducts a timeout at the end of drill of practice to review key emphasis</p>
Medium	<p>Coach identifies individual athlete or small groups of athletes who are not demonstrating competency and intervenes with these athletes without stopping the entire practice</p> <p>Coach changes the parameters of the drill of practice to better achieve the desired outcomes</p> <p>Coach divides the group, utilising all available space/baskets to ensure more athletes are active</p>
Low	<p>Coach provides activities for athletes when they are not directly involved with the practice</p> <p>Coach facilitates athletes to self or peer coach</p> <p>The coach promotes optimum athlete activity for the maximum amount of time allocated within the session.</p>
Ineffective	<p>No provision for athletes to evaluate or assess their performance and key learning</p> <p>No intervention when athletes do not demonstrate competency with key athlete indicators</p>

Effective coaching on the run involves appropriate levels of intervention for each individual athlete being coached. Within an athlete centred coaching processes this will encompass facilitating athlete's ownership of their own development.

The ultimate assessment of coaches' effectiveness in area is to ask the following:

How competent would the athlete be with no coaching intervention?

Ultimately in competitive game like environments and in the bastion of high level competition, there is no coach intervention. Does your coaching practice recognise this?