

**How to Get the Most out of Your Players:
Creating an Environment for Success**
Christy Johnson
Iowa State University

Practice Considerations

- Develop a skill warm up instead of jogging

- Keep it harder, faster paced, and more chaotic than the game

- Make drills game-like and competitive

- Keep it short and intense, careful not to over train

- Ask your players questions, get them thinking before and after the play

- Prepare them for situations they will see in matches

- Feedback – use key words, be specific, give less of it as a skill is mastered

Taking Time Off the Court

- Set individual and team goals and use these goals to plan practice

- Share advice, stories, books, and quotes

- Watch video of practice or matches with your players

- Be clear about their role on the team, and when their role changes explain why

- Mentor emerging leaders over a couple of years

Recognize Men and Women are Different

- Women need to be taught to compete, men need to be taught how to cooperate
 - Keep track of wins, keep stats, make the competition count
 - Appeal to their sense of wanting to connect (lack of effort = lack of commitment to team)

- For women self esteem is tied to a sense of belonging, in men it is tied to being higher up on the ladder
 - Everyone needs a role, make all your players feel important
 - Women shun the star role and reject the grunt role

- For women, the relationships are as or more important than winning, for men winning is everything
 - Women want to know you care about them beyond athletics
 - Relationships within the team are paramount

Game Time

- Keep positive body language

- Be consistent with how you coach in practice

- Address themes and the important stuff, keep feedback to a minimum

- Under stress – keep it simple

•Remember that game performance is a reflection of practice – if you don't like something in a match, go back and look at your training

Resources

- Gender and Competition *by Kathy DeBoer*
- Mind Gym *by Gary Mack and David Casstevens*
- Coaching Mental Excellence *by Vernacchia, McGuire, and Cook*
- Science of Coaching Volleyball *by Carl McGown*
- In Pursuit of Excellence *by Terry Orlick*
- IMPACT manual *by USA Volleyball*
- Training Soccer Champions *by Anson Dorrance*