



Organising a Group

Establishing Routines

By establishing routines and giving the responsibility for routines to the participants the coach can devote more time to nurturing the sport skill development of the players. Coaches should:

- establish 'set up' and 'put away' systems that participants can assist with for the equipment and facility. These must be supervised by the coach
- use consistent warm-up and warm-down routines
- set up areas and equipment in advance for specific elements of the program
- use more experienced participants to take help the less experienced ones
- have a consistent routine for moving between coach instruction and activity to reduce management time. If the players know where to go, how quickly they need to be there and what behaviour is expected of them on arrival, then more time can be devoted to activity.

Formations

Coaches should position themselves so that they can observe all participants. To maintain a formation, particularly when introduced for the first time, it is recommended that coaches use markers to define the formation. Care should be taken that the markers don't hinder performance by distracting the participant or causing an injury. The following formations usually work for most coaches when managing training activities (the coach is the 'C' and the participants are the 'x'):

<p>File</p> <pre> x x x x x x x x x x C </pre>	<p>Lines — end to end</p> <pre> xxxxx C xxxxx </pre>
<p>Lines</p> <pre> xxxxx xxxxx C xxxxx </pre>	<p>Grid</p> <pre> x x x x x x x x x C </pre>
<p>Circle</p> <pre> C x x x x x x x x x x </pre>	<p>Squares</p> <pre> x x x x x x C x x x x x x </pre>

Engaging the participant

The following strategies can be used to engage participants:

- **Voice and expression** – by varying voice quality and volume to suit the situation coaches can gain the participants attention, and add qualities such as excitement, concern and annoyance
- **Eye contact** - by maintaining eye contact, the coach can personalise things, give the impression of confidence, and add expression to the message



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- **Signal for attention** - some coaches use a whistle and others use a variety of commands. Whatever the method, it should be loud, different and gain attention. Ironically it is possible to gain attention by being quiet. This usually happens when players are expecting noise and it doesn't happen.
- **Ask questions**- using questioning and discussion techniques shifts the focus from the coach to the participant. The participant takes on some responsibility and becomes more involved in the learning process.
- **Praise and compliment** - sincere and equitable praise and compliments to the group and individuals provides incentive and motivation to the participant.
- **Quality instructions** - Combining brief clear instructions with demonstrations enables the coach to maintain the interest of participants. One of the most difficult things for many coaches is to limit instructions to one or two key points and then return to the activity.
- **Increase participation** - long lines of participants waiting for a turn, and 'adult' games with large playing areas and large numbers of players on each team, greatly reduces the opportunities for players to be actively involved and the level of enjoyment for participants.