

Ten Commandments of Coaching the Heart of an Athlete



1. Care more about the person than the player.

Remember their only high school students coach with respect, show them respect and that you actually care about them as people, not just as athletes



2. Lead by example

I think one way coaches can really get to the heart of an athlete is by leading by example. Not when it comes to physically performing on the playing field, but in how you hold yourself on the field, your attitude, how you interact with opponents, teammates, and officials. If players see their coach swearing, complaining, and exhibiting poor sportsmanship they will probably be more prone to doing it themselves.



3. Encouragement is key

Give constant encouragement and praise to the athlete. It is very easy in the business of coaching to be upset and treat it more like a business when you have a very large role in the self esteem and athletic worth of an athlete.



4. Think before you speak

I always had a hard time with a coach who just said the first thing out of their mouth....I wish they would have thought before they said anything.



5. Accept who they are...the good, bad, and ugly

It was always easy to see when my coach was mad at me...he/she would shut me out, coach others more, and would stop coaching me altogether...that always broke my heart.



6. Take responsibility for performance as well.

I think submission is something I could have used a lot from my coaches. My sister had talked about how her coach from ASU took the blame for a tough loss because he did not prepare them enough. That, in turn, made the girls take the blame for what they did wrong.

I would have LOVED that from my coaches in the past! Not all the time, I know discipline is needed, but once in a blue moon would have made all the difference.



7. Tell them what they need to hear not what they want to hear.

My coach rarely spoke honestly with me about my performance. They told me what I wanted to hear not what I truly needed to hear. I think I would have been a better athlete with more honesty even if it hurt at times.



8. Understand stress levels

Being a good student, good child, and good athlete was very tough in high school. I was under a ton of stress all the time. When I had a bad practice or meet and my coach yelled at me instead of talking to me always made me turn him off and made my stress level go through the roof. I still struggle today because of some things my coach said to me.



9. Know their name

I swear my coach never knew my name or I thought my name was @\$%\$# Johnson...He/she rarely if ever used my first name to say anything. I know every athlete loves to hear their first name after something positive, even if it is negative at least they knew my name.



10. Coach them in every area of their life

Really it is coaching to an athlete to impact them in every area of their life...making them see they are valuable on and off the field.

