

Role of the Elite Coach in the Development of Talent

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- The stages of development of an individual require coaches to assume different roles. Whether introducing a child to a sport and fostering interest in that sport or developing a more rigorous practice routine, the elite coach will be encouraging, challenging, and understanding with the athletes.
- Talent development can occur only through deliberate practice. The elite coach understands how to stimulate athletes to participate in deliberate practice.
- In competition, the coach must maintain emotional control, develop a positive relationship with officials, and use time-outs and intermissions strategically.
- There is documented support by coaches for the use of sport psychologists either directly or indirectly; in actuality, however, the prevalence of sport psychologists involved in athletics remains uncertain.

Life to him [John Wooden] is a one-room schoolhouse. A pedagogue is all he ever wanted to be. (Tharp & Gallimore, 1976, p. 78)

Vince Lombardi's success, I am convinced, lay not only in his inspirational personality but also in his ability to teach. He was a teacher. He could communicate an idea to his players, explain it so they understood it—not only how to execute it but why! He taught, right to the heart of the matter, without frills or gimmicks. You had to be smart to play for Lombardi. In a split second a lineman had to read and react to the move of his opponent, and react correctly—so for all players, both offense and defense. Of course the physical talent was there, but all teams in professional football have that. The ability of his teams to do the right thing—cut the right way, block the right man, read the key correctly—these are the reasons for championships. (Flynn, 1973, foreword)