



## FELLOWSHIP OF CHRISTIAN ATHLETES BASEBALL



Building off of the previous eight competencies I have given over the past two weeks, this week's focus is on presentation skills.

Believe it or not, players will get bored listening to us old guys talk. Which means we have to be effective with not only what we say, but how we say it. I know a coach who used to sit his players down and talk for 45 minutes straight. During this time, he used terminology that completely baffled his players. He would give 10 key points for them to know. The result? They didn't understand anything he was saying and were bored stiff. Don't get me wrong, there is a time for high level bio mechanical instructions.

I suggest doing it in small groups and facilitate a lot of questions. Small groups will keep them engaged with high level information. But when in larger groups, try to combine these two leader competencies for effective communication.

### Leadership Competencies

#### 9. Demonstrate effective presentation skills

It is important to communicate in an understandable and effective manner. This involves good presentation skills that don't distract from the content. The combination of effective presentation and facilitation skills results in a positive learning experiences for players.

A Leader who demonstrates effective presentation skills:

- Speaks clearly, concisely and with appropriate volume.
- Maintains good eye contact. My suggestion is to have players on a knee so that all players can see you and that you can see each player's face.
- Maintains an appropriate and consistent energy level.
- Refrains from pacing, rocking, swinging a bat or other distracting gestures.
- Keeps group talks to 5-10 minutes and emphasizes key points.

***Your challenge – This week pay attention to how you communicate with your players. I know, this sounds odd. But maybe you don't communicate as well as you think you do. Ask another coach to watch players when you speak to them. Ask him to evaluate how good your presentation skills are and how well you are received. Ask him to be honest and don't worry about hurting your feelings. You need to know how well you are connecting with your players. You should welcome the feedback even if there are areas you need to improve on.***

## 10. Manage Time

Managing time well is critical to success because players will learn better when excited and engaged over the content. A fast pace when giving instructions will help keep interest. Time management requires balancing the importance of thorough explanations, questions and group discussion with the need to accomplish all of the content objectives and key points. Poor time management often results in cutting corners in some of the most important parts of the content.

A Leader who has good time management:

- Has an effective practice plan using dedicated time blocks for key objectives.
- Posts the practice plan and teaches his players to move on their own from each segment block.
- Stays on that plan and on the exact amount of time allotted.
- Limits the use of examples, analogies and group discussion to only what is needed to clarify concepts and gain buy-in to what is being taught.
- Covers material concisely without adding comments or dragging out lesson objectives.

***Your challenge – draw up a practice plan with dedicated time to each segment. Plan exactly what you are going to teach and say. Plan time to demonstrate the skill, time for a couple of questions and then time to practice the skill taught. See how close you can come to staying on time with your plan. Make notes and see where you are off or on target. Your goal is to get everything in to each segment that you plan/need to and make sure that your players have a good grasp of the objective.***

It is important that you come across to your players as a good organizer and planner and a good communicator. If you want them to listen – you need to set yourself up for success. Players will not improve if a coach cannot understand how they learn best. Effective presentation skills and great time management will help maximize your chances for learning and player development.

May our Awesome God bless you for your dedication and commitment to your teams.

- Pat Lightle, Player Development, NOVA/DC FCA Baseball