

Reflective observation report



Reflective Observation Report

My observation was of a level two football coach. I attended a session once a week for three weeks with the same group. Staying with the same group was beneficial as I was able to see the development of the athletes and see the full variety of coaching techniques and styles of learning that was applied by the coach. The age group was fifteen to eighteen year olds and the sessions lasted 3 hours.

The coach would generally use a variety of teaching styles throughout their sessions. One style used was the cognitive learning style. On a basic drill of finding movement in a limited space some players found it hard to identify where space is often found and how to exploit it. The coach took these players aside and made them view the game from an outside perspective. By making the players view the game and try to solve the problem of limited space, cognitive learning took place. After viewing the drill once over the coach sent the players back in and they showed a visible change of tactics and in the specific game a definite improved level of ability. The coach used a similar technique in a different session. The holding playmaker of the team was struggling with their passing vision. The player couldn't identify when and where to pass to keep possession. The coach realising this set the player homework. The coach gave the player a dvd, which included the basic five areas of a playmakers passing range and had examples of elite footballers performing the set passes. In the next session the player was showed improvement and displayed a calmer performance in the session's end game. This involved participation, thinking and memory some key traits of the cognitive learning style.

When certain players were disobedient the coach was quick to act and make

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example of the players. Punishments such as press-ups, sit-ups and sprints were all included. These punishments set the tone of the football field. Be disobedient to the coach or other teammates and receive punishment. When doing the punishments the other players watched and passively acknowledged how to act on a football field. With this a regular occurrence the players were subject to the behavioural learning style. Learning information based on the environment that an individual is placed in. The environment that the footballers were placed in sets a positive tone of not to be disobedient with the coach or teammates.

The sessions I attended were at the early part of the football season. Gaining match fitness was vitally important. The way that this was achieved was done so in a very democratic way. The coach hadn't previously worked with this particular group and was unsure of fitness levels. The coach therefore negotiated the set targets with the players. The captain of the team was at the front of the negotiations. The coach used this as a bonding activity and gained social connection with the players. This inactive passive approach showed the players the level of respect that the coach had for them. This increased the players' motivation and the coach had players achieving fitness goals which were set by the players thus easing the pressure off them.

One of the more technically difficult drills the coach set up was set piece training. The coach set two teams of defenders and attackers. They were also told to act if in a game situation. This clear use of team based competition was a sign of team based learning. The defenders were left to figure out how best to set up their defensive unit. The attackers would have to make decisions on how best to attack the goal. The ball could either be

crossed or shot at from one of the more technically better players in the team. This kind of match environment is a sign of further behavioral learning. The coach let the drill go on and took a passive approach but when the attackers failed to score after a maintained period of time the coach felt it was time to intervene. The coach displayed a simpler option which created more goal scoring chances. The simple change of tactics developed more chances on goal than before. This is a sign of constructive learning. The coach let them develop a basic structure of attacking the goal but when they reached their limit the coach just gave a few bits of information to help them go slightly more advanced. The attackers learnt a basic understanding themselves and were only developed on when necessary by the coach. Shortly after doing this the coach did the same with the defending team. A simple suggestion of putting two players on the post denied many accurate shots by the attacking team. By allowing the players to steadily improve themselves and only having coach interference when absolutely necessary the coach became a facilitator not a lecturer which is a key trait of constructive learning. By determining the state and needs of the players by intervening to assist in improvement, the coach showed signs of instructional design learning.

During the end of the third session the coach again took a passive approach. A drill was set up to inspire freedom and creativity. Samba music was played and the drill was to beat your opponent one on one. Skills and tricks were encouraged to develop the creativity and flair of the players. This allowance of free roaming and putting faith in the players that they would create and use complex skills was a sign of humanism.

To summarize, I believe the coach was of a high level and was able to teach

complex drills with ease. I saw a variety of drills taught and a wide range of learning styles incorporated. There weren't many set goals in the sessions. Instead there was a more general development of a wide range of skills. Maybe this was due to the coach unsure of how long his placement was with this particular group of players. The key focus of all the sessions was largely dominated by fitness. In doing this the coach showed his primary form of teaching was done in a democratic way. The players were of a sufficient ability to improve on their own fitness and the coach was merely enforcing the idea not the actual practice itself.