

# SECTION 04

TEACHING TECHNIQUES



04



**CANADA**  
BASKETBALL



## 4.0 TEACHING TECHNIQUES

This section focuses on helping coaches understand how to most effectively teach youth. It is designed to make coaching easy for coaches who have little or no prior experience teaching basketball to youth.

The section outlines the process by which new concepts are taught and provides effective teaching formations that help facilitate a child's ability to comprehend information.

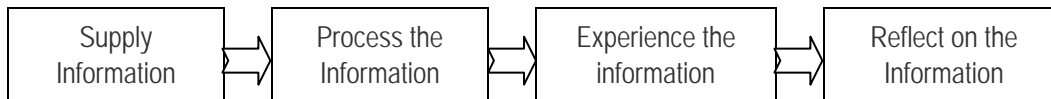
### 4.1 - TEACHING

Teaching is a process of planned action that enhances learning and performance. The key to teaching children is to keep things simple.

The first step is to start with a new concept that you wish to teach. Once this new concept has been established there are four phases that need to be covered:

#### **The four phases of learning a new concept:**

1. Supply information about the concept
2. Process, relate or analyze the concept
3. Experience the concept
4. Reflect on the experience to gather new knowledge or make improvements for the future



It is important that you ensure that your athletes not only have the knowledge, but have also processed the information to the point where they understand the how, why and when of the information.

#### **Supply Phase**

In the supply information phase, athletes are exposed to new facts, concepts, procedures, skills, drills or other information. Information should be supplied in a clear and concise manner. It is also a good idea to have key words so that participants can associate the sound of the word with the required movements. Information can be supplied in different ways, with the most effective way for young children being demonstration.

**Demonstration** is a show and tell method that is perhaps the most widely used method of presenting material to young children. It is important that the demonstrations are done properly so that players see exact performance. If you cannot correctly demonstrate, use a guest, or a participant that possesses the technical knowledge and proper execution.

The following are suggested times for demonstrations:

- Introduction: 5-10% of total time.
- Demonstration: 15-20% of total time.
- Practice: 65-75% of total time.

With young children, try to spend no more than 5 minutes on one particular skill, drill or activity.

#### *Tips on Making Demonstration Effective*

- Ensure that all athletes have a clear view.
- Use multiple angles to ensure athletes get a comprehensive view.
- Emphasize only a few key points during a demonstration.
- Use short, descriptive key words.
- KEEP IT SIMPLE! Keep explanations short.



It is important to focus on one or two key teaching points. Answer questions, but avoid doing so at the expense of practice time. If one or two children seem confused, talk to them individually while the other children continue the activity. Make sure you give the children an opportunity to practice immediately after the demonstration (put them into the activity quickly). Children will be more successful if they can practice skills while instructions are still fresh in their minds.

### **Process Phase**

It is important for you to ensure that your athletes not only have the knowledge, but have processed the information to the point where they understand the how, why and when of the information supplied. The process phase is where this takes place. It is imperative that coaches spend enough time with this phase of teaching.

### **Questioning**

Questioning is one of the most effective ways to determine an athlete's knowledge. This is not an easy process to apply as utilizing the proper questions can often be difficult. The key to this process is to honor and respect each answer given by your participants.

By honouring each answer:

- You show the athletes that you truly want to know what they think.
- You encourage truthful responses as opposed to responses that are based on what they think you want to hear.
- You also eliminate later confusion when you must correct or qualify your previous answer.
- You force them to process the information at a deeper level.

The goal is to use questions to draw information from the players. Most often, a coach has a specific answer in mind. A setback can occur when the coach knows to honor each answer, but finds it is taking too much time to get the correct answer. In these situations you must give more information or knowledge. The types of questions you can ask are now based on processing the information.

For example:

The coach wants the players to run wide on the fast break. He wants to use questioning to draw the answer from the player. After 2 or 3 minutes of futile attempts the answer he/she wants has not been given. What should you do? A better method would be to supply the athletes with the information and then ask processing questions.

Coach, "When fast breaking we want you to run wide. That means one big stride in from the sideline. Who can tell me why we would want to do this?"

This is a **process question**. It requires you to think about the information. Others might be:

- How can we get to this position quickly?
- Why one big stride from the sideline?
- Why is it important that we run?
- What would be the exception to this rule?

This last question is very important. It shows players that there are options. (Note: you don't run wide if the basket is open. Go to the rim. You run wide because there are defenders in the key and you want to stretch them out).

Some things to remember about questioning;

- Use questions to probe for deeper understanding, but not as a way to gain trivial information.
- Focus on the **how**, **when** and **why**.
- Honor all answers.
- Like athletes learning a new skill, it takes time for coaches to improve on questioning. It will improve with practice.

### **Experience Phase**

This is the phase in which you need to create situations so that players will experience the concept through practice. As the skill is being practiced, it is a good idea to reinforce key points. Modifying the rules of the game or drill is a key way to emphasize the concept. Players need plenty of repetition early in the learning experience. If a decision is required, it is important that players be given reads to help determine which option to use. Be cautious of using numerous drills



against air because the players do not learn the vital step of decision making. Implementing modified games and guided defense is vital in developing an understanding of the **how**, **when** and **why** of the information.

**Guided Defense** - The idea behind guided defense is to expose the athlete to decision making at all times of the learning process. Players learn the hardest concept first, which is the decision. Also by guiding the defense, you as the coach can expose your players to many situation that will occur, not just the way your team plays defense. By adding guided defense, you can modify many traditional drills, thus helping players with their decision making skills as well as the fundamental skill.

### Reflection Phase

Effective learning cannot occur without appropriate feedback. This is really where coaching comes into play. As the athletes are practicing their new skill, it is very important that you provide constructive feedback to correct errors. It is important that interaction with children is positive and that there be variety. This is also where questions can be used in order to probe concerns with what occurred.

- What went well?
- How can you improve?

This is similar to the **Process Phase** because you need to ask appropriate questions to see if the participants understand the **how**, **when** and **why** of the concept.

The importance of giving athletes the time to reflect **individually** first on the experience cannot be emphasized enough. You, as the coach, need to save your thoughts for later. **How** and **what** questions should dominate.

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## **4.2 - SKILL DEVELOPMENT**

When acquiring a new skill, it is important to realize there are several stages of skill development through which individuals progress. Your job as a coach is to facilitate and monitor the advancement of these stages. Most of your athletes will be somewhere in the first four stages for most skills being taught. Some of the more advanced athletes will be ready for introduction of the **Creative** stage and it is important to encourage this type of development.

### **Five stages of skill development:**

1. **Initiation** – first exposure to a skill.
2. **Acquisition** – still thinking and performing the skill.
3. **Consolidation** – can perform the skill without thinking – breaks down under pressure.
4. **Refinement** – can perform consistently under pressure.
5. **Creative** – has created a variation of the skill that is highly effective.

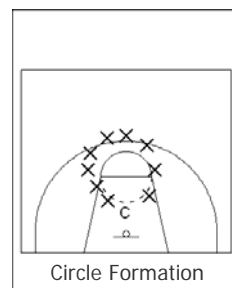
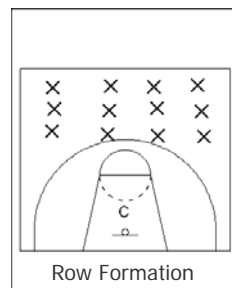
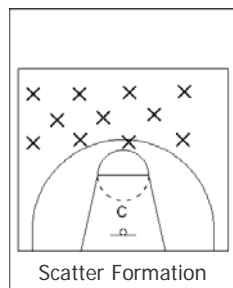
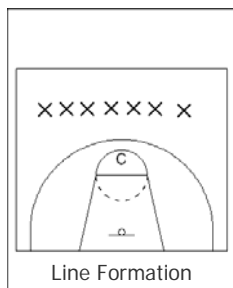
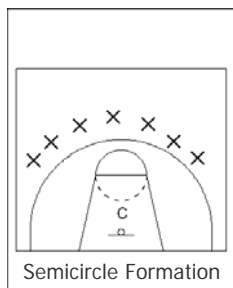
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## **4.3 TEACHING FORMATIONS**

Learning can be enhanced by varying the physical arrangement of children for discussions or demonstrations. Several basic teaching formations ensure that children can see and hear you, are facing you and are not distracted, and are close enough to make eye contact with you.

You can make practices more efficient by naming formations so that children know how to arrange themselves in specific situations. Some examples are:

- Semicircle Formation
- Line Formation
- Scatter Formation
- Row Formation
- Circle Formation\*



\*Note that when using the circle formation, try not to instruct from the centre of the circle. Participants behind you may have trouble hearing and seeing and lose interest or become discipline problems. In a circle formation, one should stand on the perimeter with the children, as part of the circle.

Please refer to section 5.0 Teaching Tips, for more information on effective teaching strategies.