

# The Art of Making Mistakes & Failure - How We Learn From It

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In football, mistakes are often treated as something to avoid. Mistakes are development: they shape judgement & decision-making. A player who never risks the pass, never steps into a press, never tries the turn may look tidy, but misses the moments that build execution & emotional control. Initiative creates errors & learning. A long-term pathway must protect the willingness to try.

**1. Mistake & Failure?** A mistake is: mismatch between intention & outcome. It's information about what to improve next (scan, timing, body shape, decision). Failure is not a verdict. Setbacks missed chances & defeats are part of football. Failure becomes harmful only when it turns into shame or avoidance & the player stops learning & re-entering the problem.

**2. Courage, trust, the willingness to keep trying.** Courage is continuing after setbacks: showing again, stepping into the next duel, trying with a better cue instead of safety. Courage is built on trust: mistakes won't cost belonging, feedback helps, there is another chance to re-engage. Without trust, the safe option becomes the default. Learning slows.

**3. Fear of failure.** Fear is often a signal about belonging. When fear rises, thinking narrows, players shift into self-protection: safe decisions, hiding, reduced initiative. The issue is not mistakes/failure it is what fear does to behavior: it reduces initiative & initiative drives learning.

**4. Environment: leadership is presence.** The biggest lever in development is the environment. Emotional safety, steadiness & belief make high standards achievable. Clear, consistent responses to mistakes reduce fear, restore initiative & accelerate learning.

**5. High performers are not mistake-free, they are response-proof.** What matters is not the mistake, it's the response. High performers reset quickly, reflect honestly, adjust something small & try again. They treat setbacks as feedback, not identity. Reset → Reflect → Adjust → Try again

**6. Training quality: mistakes must be designed, not random.** Players learn through game-based training that exposes real problems, provides clear feedback & creates chances to try again. That is how they build pattern recognition & access better solutions under pressure.

**7. In many girls' pathways, the cost of mistakes can be higher (minutes, roles, visibility).** Adolescence can make execution "noisy." Risk-avoidant behavior can be shaped by the environment, not a lack of talent. Talent ID must go beyond who looks clean today & ask who is allowed to learn, try, & re-try.

**8. Don't scout the mistake, scout the response.** After an error, does she show again, stay connected, adjust, keep initiative & learn across the match? That response signals learning agility, resilience, decision ownership, & growth potential.

The art of making mistakes is the art of becoming great. Normalize mistakes, setbacks as learning, protect initiative, develop players who handle pressure, joy & keep growing.

