

## What makes a good coach?

The word 'coach' comes from the Hungarian 'kocsi', the name of the village where the first coach is thought to have been made. In the 1830s at Oxford the word 'coach' was first used in the meaning of a tutor who carries the student through an exam. From around 1860 it was also used in sport, although coaching applies to many other areas, such as personal development, adult education and psychology. From the mid- 1990s, professional associations such as Association for Coaching, developed. John Whitmore defined the role of the coach to help them learn rather than teach and to build awareness, responsibility and self-belief.

There are numerous models which have been used in coaching. Many of these do not need the coach to be an expert in the field, but relies on their role as a facilitator. These models imply that coaching is a skill that can be acquired rather than a characteristic some people have and other do not.

Sir John Whitmore developed **GROW**.

**Goal**-what do you want to achieve?

**Current Reality**-may produce the solution

**Options/Obstacles**-brainstorm

**Way forward**-commit

Another model is **FUEL**, mentioned by John Zenger and Kathleen Stinnett, where they suggest to:

**Frame the conversation**-agree on purpose, process and desired outcome

**Understand the current state**-from the coachee's point of view

**Explore the desired state and how you may achieve it**

**Lay out a success plan** which is specific and time-bound. Follow-up and be accountable.

Others, in brief, are as follows:

**POWER** –positive, own part, what specifically, ecology,real

**GAINS**-goal, assessment, ideas, next steps, support

**CIGAR**-current reality, ideal, action, review

**ACHIEVE**-assess current situation, creative brainstorming of alternatives, hone goals, initiate options, evaluate options, valid action programme design, encourage momentum

**OSKAR**-outcome, scaling, know-how, affirm+action, review

**PIE**-problem definition, implement a solution, evaluate outcome.

And the seven 7's of coaching, namely client, clarity, create, change, confirm, continue, close.

When setting a goal, be **SMART** (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, time bound).

It is a good idea to address your own challenges as well. A range of communication skills is recommended, such as targeted restatement, listening including active listening, questioning, clarifying to help clients shift their perspective and so discover different solutions to achieve their goals.

In sports coaching, the aim is to develop the player both physically as well as mentally and focus both on performance and skills. The coach is generally assumed to know more about the sport and have more previous experience and knowledge. Their job is to transfer as much of this to players and they are seen as a role model. Safety, professional standards and ethics are particularly important. The coach must set realistic goals depending on the player's ability, provide non-judgemental feedback and encourage the player to develop personal competencies rather than depend too much on the coach. It is important that sessions are of an appropriate length and that outcomes are evaluated. The player should be left with ideas which could lead to further development. The coach should aim to transfer skills rather than do their job. A coach does not work in isolation, but ideally be part of a team and work with instructors who teach the techniques.

One thing coaching does not do is resolve any deeper underlying issues which may affect performance.

Looking at judo coaching at Blackwater Judo Club in particular, some of the models above could be useful tools to adopt. I particularly liked CIGAR and PIE as they are simple and could be transferrable to our sessions. Both senior and junior sessions are for a similar length of time, and may have a different group of participants from one week to the next. Both groups may contain a mixture of abilities, even in red and white foundation group. If number of instructors allows, this is ideally split into level of experience or ability subgroups, but this can otherwise be overcome by pairing up less experienced with more experienced judokas. A coach will not be only responsible for the small group they are working with at that particular time, they also need to consider who these activities may have an impact outside the dojo. Particularly with younger judokas, there may be issues with bullying and showing off which will need addressing. Also, chatting during sessions can be disruptive but are more easily dealt with in juniors by giving them a warning and then removing them from the group for a short period of time. This would be more difficult with seniors, but the offender can be given a position of responsibility in the session to encourage them to participate in a more constructive way.

A good way to build up confidence in teaching is by helping or running warm-ups or teaching break-falls to novice judokas.

Judo is a hobby which is participated in for fun, so it is important that the sessions stay fun and participants are not judged or made to feel inadequate. However, to ensure that people get the best out of their valuable time, the coaching should be carried out safely, and in a skilful manner. Perhaps incorporating some models in coaching such as CIGAR and PIE could help achieve this.