

Developing the 5Cs in training

Top tips for coaches



Loughborough University



- Use first name when giving praise and specific feedback on individual accomplishments.
- Work with players to apply individual goals where possible. Progressively build success using 'personal bests' and self-set targets that all players respect, value and strive to achieve.
- Challenge players to train like 'the confident player', encouraging them to make brave decisions and show a positive physical presence. Reinforce players when they copy their current role model.
- Offer players the chance to do their 'feel good' drills which give them the opportunity to practice and hone their strengths.

- Show players the difference between negative and positive email reactions - illustrate the effects of anger, self-criticism and negative thinking on pitch.
- Encourage players to detach themselves from mistakes/ negativity by using immediate or refocusing triggers (e.g. Deep breath, 'Back on it' or 'Next effort'). Challenge players to recover the quickest!
- Use simulated pressure games/drills to train responses to adversity (e.g. Use bad officiating decisions, 1-0 down, time pressure etc). Administer consequences for poor self-control and discipline.
- Reinforce the use of mental routines for pre-game, breaks in play, at set pieces. Ask how much are breathing, visualisation and positive affirmations used as mental weapons for the physical performance.

How do you think players could improve their 5Cs between training sessions?

- Develop a specific drill that highlights the role of communication (e.g. only 2 players can talk; swap every minute; silent soccer - non-verbal communication only).
- Include conditions in drills that develop communication (e.g. name on a pass; use of trigger words; encourage teammates; silent soccer).
- Recognise and reinforce when a player gives appropriate praise, acknowledgement, feedback, information or instruction to a teammate.

Confidence

Commitment

Control

Concentration

Communication

- Reward a player's efforts, attitude and intentions beyond merely the execution or outcome.
- Give skill-specific feedback and personalised recognition when earned. Encourage the use of individually chosen goals and targets.
- Encourage persistence after mistakes and create a 'no limits' environment.
- Offer positive reinforcement and recognition when extra effort led to a positive outcome.
- Ask players to review and rate their commitment levels (out of 10). 'Can the squad raise it 1 notch in the next 5 minutes?'

Can you 'psych up' your practices to encourage mental development during a normal training session?

Can you think of any individual 5C challenges for players to focus on in training?

- Highlight the correct cues that a player should be focusing on (when on and off the ball).
- Use trigger words to reinforce relevant concentration cues for a task or move (e.g. 'press', 'squeeze', 'drop').
- Employ practices that challenge players to scan and switch focus effectively - e.g. between ball, space, key players (check shoulder; control ball with peripheral vision, close eyes - 'where are your teammates?').
- Overload and stretch players' concentration spans and attention to tasks by adding irrelevant distractions or extending drills when fatigued/bored.