

COMMUNICATION: Ins and outs



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Quality communication is
a hallmark of the culture of
your team/program/group

Culture



- Is about
 - shared language
 - our connection
 - stories we tell
 - feeling safe
 - feeling supported

*When there are discrepancies
between “what we say” and
“what we do”*



Foundations of Effective Communication

- **Credibility** - must be accurate, “one more and then you can go”
- **Trust** - is a function of reliability. Once lost, difficult to regain.
- **Respect** - affects individual motivation and self esteem

Factors to consider before you speak

- Age
- Experience level
- Personality
- Language
- Why are they there or what do they want?



Effective Listening

- **Look at the person who is speaking**
- **Hold questions**
- **Be empathetic and non-judgmental**
- **Afterwards, ask questions for clarification**



Barriers to Effective Listening



- **We think faster than a speaker can talk & jump to conclusions**
- **We are distracted & allow our mind to wander**
- **We lose patience & decide we are not interested**
- **We overreact to what's said & respond emotionally**
- **We interrupt**

Speaking Well



- **Ask good questions to ensure clarity and understanding**
- **Best questions are “what”, “when”, “how many”, etc.**
- **“Why” questions can imply criticism or blame**
- **Send a clear message, get to the point**
- **Use “I” statements**
- **Begin with :**
 - “I see . . . “I feel . . . “I need . . .

Non Verbal Communication



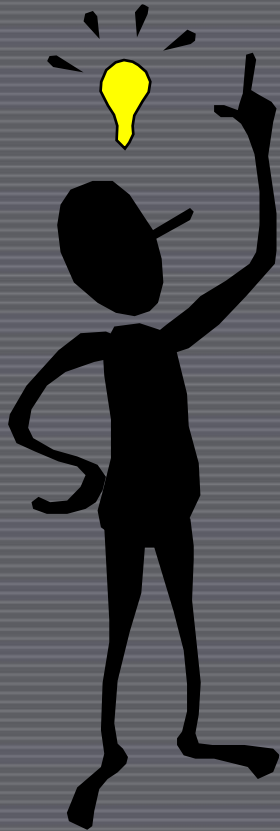
- **Body Position - personal space**
- **Body Motion - gestures, arm movements**
- **Physical Characteristics - appearance**
- **Touching Behaviours - pat on the back**
- **Voice Characteristics - tone, volume**

Giving Constructive Feedback



- Healthy balance of critique to praise feedback
- Corrections
- Provide a solid picture of what you want
- Watch the righting reflex
- Ask questions first – ratio 5:1

So what to say? But first:



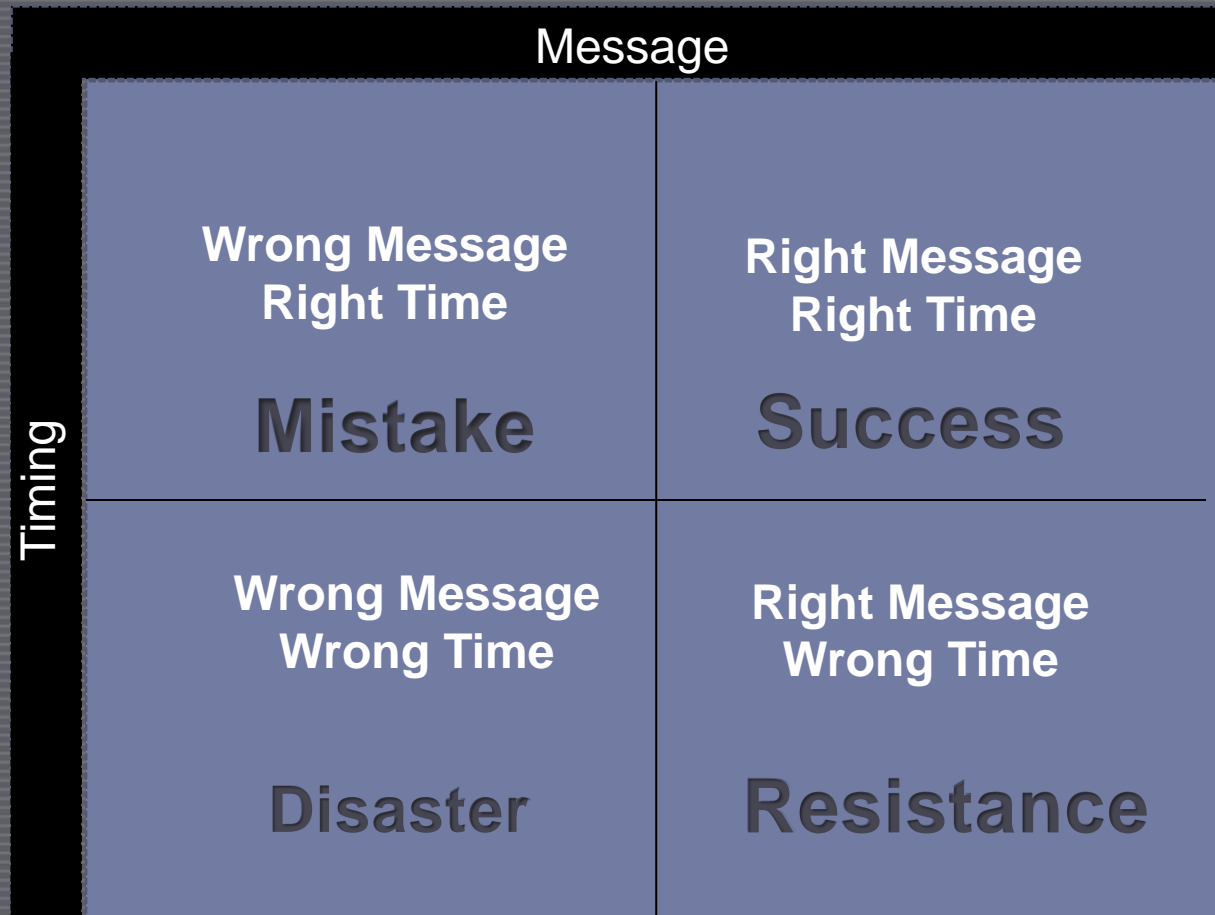
- **Pick your time**
- **Pick your place**
- **Prepare your subject**
- **Pick your words**
- **Prepare yourself**
- **Say it in 7 seconds or less**

Coach-Athlete Relationship



**COMMUNICATION BETWEEN COACH AND
ATHLETE IS ESSENTIAL TO DEVELOP
MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AND SHARED
KNOWLEDGE.**

(JOWETT & COCKERILL, 2003)





- Consider the emotional needs of the athlete based on time of season, proximity of competition and influence of good or bad performances.
- Consider your emotional state when communicating with athlete.
- Prepare a concise message.
- Avoid pointing out or dwelling on obvious mistakes.
- Avoid constantly using high intensity, rah-rah approaches to motivate your athletes.

Complete the statements . . .



- When I think of conflict I...
- When someone disagrees with me about something important I usually...
- I was raised to deal with conflict by...



Beliefs about Conflict



- Conflict is generally negative and destructive
- It is better to ignore small problems
- Recognizing conflict can make it increase
- Problems will work themselves out
- Conflict is the result of bad management
- There are usually single, simple causes of conflict



- Step 1: You understand and summarize the facts of the situation
- Step 2: You indicate your feelings towards the situation
- Step 3: You state what you want from the situation



- Step 1: “When you arrive late for practice”
- Step 2: “I feel frustrated because I have to change the training plan for everyone and the quality of my plan suffers”
- Step 3: “What I would like is for you to arrive on time and if there is a problem, please let me know prior to training so I can adjust my plan”

Dealing with Parents



Setting yourself up for Success



- Clearly outline your philosophy and goals
- Keep parent informed as to YTP
- How they should communicate with you
- Performance and behaviour standards

Why is it hard to be a sport parent?

Parents are well-intentioned but ill-informed

- Periodization
- Physiological loading
- Skill acquisition
- Motivation
- Maturation
- Biomechanics

- Scheduling
- Registration
- Nutrition
- Travel
- Equipment
- Finances
- “Momager”

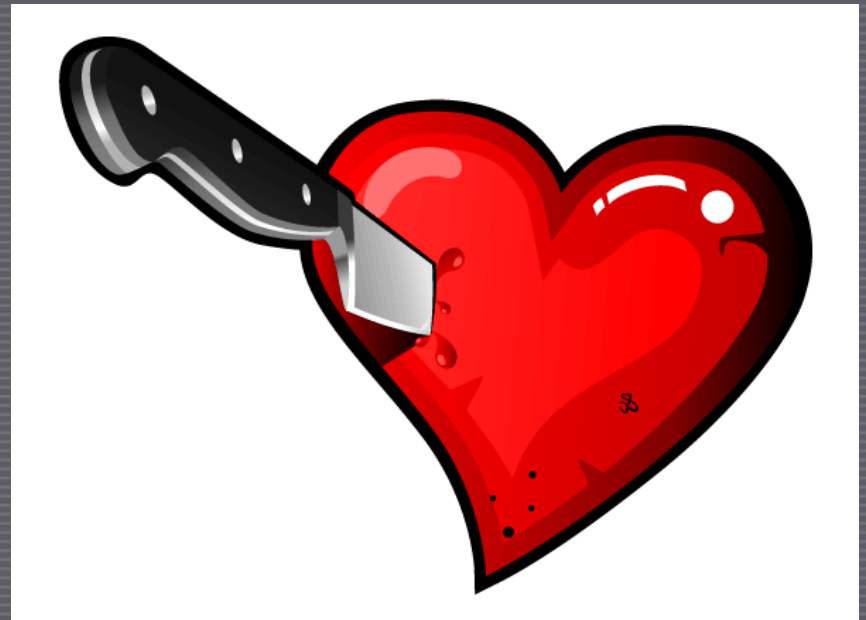
Parents gain most of their knowledge from other parents.





Very biased

It is difficult to hear
criticisms of their child



Difficult Conversations



- Prepare
- Role play if possible
- Have someone else with you
- Remember what your job is
- Take notes
- Conversations closers