



Coach Development Session #1

Implementing Teaching Techniques

October 17 and October 18, 2015



Glenlake Minor Hockey Club

c/o Flames Community Arenas
2390 47th Avenue SW
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Effective teaching means...

...using the available tools:



- Skills inventories
- Hockey Canada Skills manuals or Initiation Program manuals
- Supplemental materials and videos
- Other coaches and/or mentors

...using appropriate teaching methods:



- ✓ Identify necessary skills
- ✓ Plan explanations and demonstrations
- ✓ Teach effectively on-ice, using proper progressions
- ✓ Provide immediate and effective feedback

Key Features of Skills Instruction

Purpose of the skill: What do you want the skill to do? Does it meet your athletes' needs at this stage of their development?

Components: All skills can be broken down into smaller components. This makes them easier to teach and easier for the athletes to learn.

Key Teaching Points: What are the most important components needed to execute the skill? Choose just 3 or 4 at the beginning. Since these will be taught first, they're called Key Teaching Points.

Progressions: We should teach by building one component on another in an organized, progressive manner. This may be done during one training session, or over several.

Use Skill Inventories to...

- ❖ ...determine what skills to teach
- ❖ ...evaluate your athletes' skills
- ❖ ...make practice and season plans
- ❖ ...evaluate your athletes
- ❖ ...chart/report progress
- ❖ ...design drills

A sample skill analysis: The forward glide turn

Identify its purpose:

List the components:

List 3-4 Key Teaching Points:



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"Baby Steps"

In the movie, *What About Bob?* (1991), Richard Dreyfuss plays a psychiatrist who helps people with personality problems. His new treatment required his clients to deal with their problems in "baby steps", one small thing at a time.

When teaching skills, "baby steps" are important. Learn to break down skills into their components and then practice them. This is especially true for complex skills and even drills with numerous options.

Remember:



While there are many skills and components of skills you can teach, your players are at varying levels of development or readiness. You need to assess your situation (through team profiles and philosophies) then rank the skills in order of importance. Select only priority skills, even if they are not the most glamorous. Regularly update your prioritized list based on the players' development.

Using the Resource Manuals

The Hockey Canada Skills Manuals and Initiation Program manuals have lessons for different levels of development. These will assist you in the implementation of your program. The practice drills in each seasonal plan are designed to provide you with a progression to achieve the specific goals of each program as defined by the Player Development Pyramid. Remember though: the age and skill level of your team defines the seasonal plan.

Hockey Canada believes a coach *must emphasize fundamental skill development* during practices. It is the responsibility of every coach to teach these skills to all players.

The Hockey Canada Skills Development Program has been developed specifically for you, the Canadian coach.

Each seasonal plan is divided into four phases. This provides the coach with an opportunity to assess players based on the objectives of practices and games to that point. (Since players develop at an uneven rate, it is likely that individual assessments will be more beneficial.) As a result, each player will receive attention and a direction for future development.

Just remove the practice plan from the manual and insert it into the plastic sleeve. Then head off to the rink with confidence, and enthusiasm!

Notes:

Fewer Canadians playing in the NHL

"There were 375 Canadians, or 52.3% of all players, on opening night NHL rosters compared to 380, or 53.2%, a year ago. It is the fourth consecutive year of decline, according to the NHL. Twenty years ago, the NHL was 81.8 % Canadian."

- Edmonton Journal, 2001



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Teaching Progressions

Teaching Phases:

When we teach skills, there is a sequence to follow, the tried and true method to develop hockey skills. And don't forget! Your athletes will need positive and specific feedback to correct deficiencies and to encourage them.

Introduction of a new skill phase

- determine preliminary movements and key teaching points
- have at least one demonstration
- teach in a controlled environment

Development phase

- review, refine or practice the skill to develop proficiency
- apply minimal resistance

Application phase

- simulate game-like situations in drills with increased resistance

Note:

You might begin your progression at any one of these levels. This depends on your group's skill and age level. However, all athletes will need to pass through these phases to learn and master their skills.

The Hockey Canada Resource Manual lessons are arranged with each skill built upon another. This is called a **progression**.

Drill Progressions:

When we design skill drills, we should use a progression.

1. Identify Purpose and Key Teaching Points
2. Drills to introduce or develop skills (Technical Drills)
3. Drills to review or practice skills (Tactical Drills)
4. Drills to apply skills (Efficient Drills)

"The minute you get away from fundamentals, the bottom can fall out. They are really the basic principles that make anything work. I don't care what you are doing or what you are trying to accomplish. You can't skip fundamentals if you want to be the best."

- Michael Jordan

Skill Progressions:

We break down skills into their components, then teach the components in the correct order and to precision.

For example, to teach backwards striding, we might see the components as follows:

- Balance/Agility
- ↓
- Backwards walking
- ↓
- Backwards T-push
- ↓
- Backwards stride

To teach backwards striding, we might begin with balance and agility drills, then walking backwards drills, then backwards T-push drills, and finally the stride. We have progressed from the simple to the complex.

In other words, baby steps!



Use the Hockey Canada Skills Manual to find examples of Teaching Phases, Drill Progressions and Skill Progressions. How could you use each for your team?



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✓ Methods for Effective Teaching

The teaching of skills and techniques is a chain with four main links.

The 4 Links of Teaching

1. Select the skill
2. Plan the explanation and demonstration
3. Use effective on ice methods
4. Provide proper feedback

1st Link: Select the skill to be taught

- Know the core skills
- Work with Skill Inventories
- Use the Hockey Development Pyramid
- Use the Skills Resource or Initiation Program manual

The Resource Manuals provide a set of lesson plans that progress systematically through the skills. They begin with the most basic skills and progress from the simplest to the more complex ones.

When teaching, you could present lessons in any order. However, your sequence of lessons (and skills) should be at least similar to those recommended in the manuals. The manuals match skills with player learning stages and growth and development principles. You should first develop a list of skills, starting with basic ones and progressing to more complex skills. Use the Hockey Skill Developmental Pyramid as your guide.

2nd Link: Plan the explanation and demonstration

- Identify the purpose of the skill
- Identify the skill's components or the steps needed to master it
- Select 3 or 4 Key Teaching Points
- Plan the explanation and demonstration – Use the NIKE Skills Manual or the Initiation Manual.
- Decide
 - Which resources will you need?
 - Where will the demonstration take place?
 - Who will demonstrate?
 - How many demonstrations and from which angles?
- Use teaching progressions to develop the skill



3rd Link: Use effective on-ice methods

Although much of this has been done for you in the Skills Manuals and IP lessons, it is important for you to understand the sequence to follow in conducting a proper on-ice lesson.

1. **Explain the skill**
 - name the skill and describe it
 - explain why it is important and when it is used. (Use only 3 or 4 key teaching points for each skill)
2. **Show how it is done**
 - demonstrate
 - re-state key points
3. **Give time to practice**
 - get players to practice the skill right away
 - keep everyone involved
 - let everyone have numerous tries
4. **Tell them how they're doing**
 - move around to each player
 - give individual feedback
 - get assistants to help

4th Link: Provide proper feedback

Feedback during learning means providing information to the players about their efforts. It serves three important functions in learning:

1. to guide improvement
2. to measure progress
3. to provide encouragement

Providing feedback to your players is critical in developing skills. Always remember these points:

- Give the "good" picture. Demonstrate what you want, not what the player is doing incorrectly.
- Be positive. Acknowledge what is being done well, then point out what needs improvement.
- Be specific. Demonstrate exactly what it is you want done.
- Do not forget your goaltender(s), who require the same kind of feedback.
- Evaluate performance, not people or outcomes.



✓ **Tips for Effective Teaching**

- Teach only what the player can handle.
- Teach new skills early in the practice.
- Use progressions – work from the simple to the complex.
- Break down complex skills into smaller components.
- Correct major errors immediately.
- Repeat drills for short periods at a time and over several practices.
- Introduce and develop skills in a controlled environment, then apply them in game-like situations
- Praise good performance and effort.

Factors That Influence Teaching and Learning

To teach effectively, a coach must realize the difference between athletes and their ability to learn skills. Identify some of the factors that will affect your athletes' learning.

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Two methods for teaching fundamental skills:

The Imitation Method

Simple imitation is often the best way for players to learn. It requires them to focus on what is to be imitated or copied.

"Watch this... Try it".

Often the imitation is as accurate as it needs to be. You should then confirm it: *"Yes. That's it. Now remember that."*

If necessary, have them practice several times.

When minor corrections are required, point them out in a clear, matter-of-fact way. If players have trouble picking up the correct action or movement, then perhaps the information or instruction was not as simple or clear as you thought.

The Demonstration/ Explanation/ Practice/ Correction Method

This method is used extensively:

Demonstrate & explain: "Watch this: Be careful to stand like this, then shoot the puck. Now try it."

Allow for practice: Observe carefully, looking for correct features and common errors.

Provide feedback while practice continues if possible. If you must, stop practice and

Correct errors: confirm correct actions and if necessary make suggestions to correct errors.

Allow further practice and correct in more detail, if necessary.

"There is a difference between learning about a topic and learning how to do it."

Notes:



Error Detection and Correction

One of your most important tasks is telling your players whether or not they are using the correct techniques to perform a skill. You should be able to explain the **specific** correction technique that will improve the skill.

What is Skill Analysis?

The coach, as a teacher, is a judge of hockey skill. To be a good judge, you must be able to:

- break complex skills down into simple parts.
- separate the good parts from the bad parts.
- focus on the important parts and not be distracted by ones that are less important.
- put the whole technique back together to form the whole skill.

Common faults of new coaches:

- memorizing all the details of each skill
- correcting errors in performance by demonstrating a series of poses
- using expressions such as "skate hard", "you're not trying", and "put more into it" which are not specific enough to give the player something to change.

Principles of Movement

Sports science experts apply fundamental principles of physics to skill analysis. They have discovered ways to assist hockey coaches and those of other sports in the analysis and correction of sport performance.

The principles explain how the different parts of the body should be used in skating, shooting, stickhandling, passing and other hockey skills.

According to sport scientists, *there are only a few principles of movement that explain how all sports skills are done.*

Movement principles are based on how forces either affect or are affected by the player's body. Muscle action creates force at the joints, which in turn produce speed, acceleration or momentum. These movements determine the quality of a skill.

They further conclude that:

1. *movement should begin with the large muscle groups and move progressively to the smaller ones.*
2. *movement must occur in proper sequence, without any breaks in flow, if the skill is to be performed correctly.*

If you can understand and apply these two basic principles, you can become a better analyst of hockey skills.

Notes:



Analyze the skill of striding backward by breaking the action into: 1. Preliminary movements, 2. Critical instant, 3. Follow-through action. What are the Key Teaching Points for the skill?

Detecting Errors

Decide on an Observation Plan:

- What movements will you watch?
- Where will you stand to best observe the movements?
- How often will you watch the movements performed?
- How will you record what you learn?
- How will you correct the error(s)?

When observing players performing skills, you must ask yourself two questions:

- Did they use all joints they should have used? (movement principle #1)
- Did they use the joints in the right order, without gaps in the movement? (movement principle #2)

To detect errors:

- Identify the Key Teaching Points for the skill – Use the Skill Inventory or the Resource Manual. These will tell you the important movements

Correction Methods: Implementing your Observation Plan

If your players “violate” either movement principle, i.e. they do not use a required joint, use an incorrect sequence or have gaps in joint movement, how do you fix it?

There are two main correction methods:

1. Check for preliminary movements.

Preliminary movements are the movements players perform just prior to performing a skill. They may include stick grip, foot placement, body position etc. They are usually opposite to the “pay-off” movements that follow. For example, a player who does not execute a proper two-foot stop may have his feet too close together while entering the stopping phase. Correct the player’s stance first.

2. Whole-part-whole teaching

These types of errors involve either the wrong sequence or timing of the parts of a skill. You have to *break the skill down into its parts, practice those parts and then put the whole skill back together again.*