

Upside Down Drill

Coaches need to have a level 2 strategy for dealing with the emotions of the athletes on the team. This strategy helps to create the positive-helpful emotion of JOY and to combat the positive-harmful emotion of COMPLACENCY. Also, the spirit of the play comes alive in athletes when they experience elements of the playground at practice. The self-rewarding nature of play helps to combat unhealthy forms of extrinsic motivation and entitlement.

Overview

In a team sport where you have different types of positions (football, basketball, lacrosse, etc), schedule into your practice a few minutes of role (position) reversals. For instance, in football, end with “goal line” (10 yards & in) scrimmage but have the skilled positions play offensive line and offensive linemen play the skill positions for 4-6 plays. Defense can do the same. Let the players come up with their plays. For instance, your quarterback is playing left tackle, wide receivers are playing guards, etc. Your left tackle is the quarterback, your guards are the running backs, etc. It is hilarious to watch the left tackle take a snap from the slot receiver and hand the ball off to your guards on a dive play behind the drive blocking of a wide receiver. The players will laugh and banter with each other just like being on the playground as a kid in a “pick up” football game. This allows those that never get to touch the football (linemen) a chance to “score.” What you never heard on the playground as a kid was this, “Pick me and let me play right tackle and never touch the ball again for the rest of my life”.

If it's basketball, let the guards play in the post and your post players handle the ball. Be creative to apply this principle to your sport. Coaches use this strategy when they see the emotion of complacency. Complacency is a “feel good” emotion that hurts performance. As coaches, we can’t stand complacency and many times our “go to move” is to holler and get mad for not getting better at practice. The opposite emotion of complacency is “joy.” Joy always enhances performance and is an emotion that feels good. When you see complacency, usually on long practice days, include one segment of “upside-down.” The emotion of joy replaces the emotion of complacency and practice jumps to a higher level. The 5 minutes invested in this re-energizes the WHOLE practice. We don’t have to yell or scream to motivate but rather have a second dimension strategy to use emotions as our ally!

"To" Strategies		"Through" Strategies
2nd Dimension		
Motivation		✓
Confidence		
Emotions		✓
Team Cohesion		
Goal Setting		
3rd Dimension		
Identity		
Character		
Significance		
Self-Worth		

Values		
Purpose		

*Because many 3D strategies have multiple level 2 & 3 implications, these checkmarks do not likely display their full scope of impact. We have tried to limit the number of checkmarks to the most obvious applications to make the planning process easier.

When will this strategy be executed?

☐ Pre-Season ☐ In-Season ☐ Post-Season ☐ Off-Season

Notes: