

Power + Attitude = Performance

Coaching at the youth level, this is where it all begins.

When you are working to develop young kids into athletes, I believe this equation can help you as a coach instill the foundation for the athlete to build into the future. First mentally, the second concerns the attitude, and finally the physical.

To achieve the physical performance you desire, the power and attitude need to be in the right place. With this equation the performance is the sum of the application what you know (power), and the confidence (attitude) necessary to execute or perform physically.

A quality performance does not always guarantee winning, but it does create the opportunity for success.

What we should be striving for is consistency. When we follow the equation with the application of knowledge with the right attitude, the opportunity for success will increase. You have to be able to relate what you know to the athlete and if the same way you must be the example of power plus attitude equaling your performance if you want the athlete to emulate your lead.

This is where it all begins:

- Mental Preparation: Understanding information each day about what you have been taught.
- Mental Focus: Application of the information you understand.
- Mental Attitude: Confidence in what you know.
- Physical Preparation: the practice of information in mechanics and drills.
- Physical Focus: understanding the mechanics and drills to refine the physical ability.
- Physical Attitude: The body follows the mind, if the mind is confident, it will relate that confidence to the body.

Our coaching clinic is to help provide you with the tools to help you understand how to prepare yourself for the task at hand. Increasing your knowledge and the ability to apply it to your practices and management of games. To help develop the confidence you need and the proper attitude towards development in Youth Baseball. Performance will always be the sum of how well we execute the variables in the equation power and attitude.

1. Developing a Coaching Structure
 - a. Coaching Youth Baseball is more than just hitting ground balls and standing in the third base coach's box.
 - b. Developing young players is about laying the foundation of basic mechanics.
 - c. Without these basic foundational mechanics there can be no structure for the athlete to continue to build.
 - d. Building this trust at the foundational level is key to having success as a youth coach. Remember these players have parents that care about their success.

How do we manage expectations?

2. Developing a Practice Plan

- a. Have a plan when you get to the cages in the winter, or to the diamond in the spring. This will help develop the trust you need from the players and the parents.
 - b. These young athletes are looking to you for guidance. If you do not have a plan, you will lose the confidence of both the player and the parent.
 - c. Keep the practice engaging, fluid, and competitive. Engaging the youth athlete is key, do not lose their attention. The fluidity, movement, from station to station keeping the energy in the practice. Finally, add competition to the practice. Building a competitive mindset within practice helps you develop a competitive attitude.
3. The Nuts and Bolts of Practice Drills
- a. Determine the practice and drills you will need within your weekly practices based on the level of your athletes' abilities.
 - b. Understanding how to execute the practice plan with well-organized drills is essential to your success.
 - c. How familiar as a coach are you with the drills and how well can you or other coaches explain and demonstrate the drill to the athletes?

Dynamic warm up

- We could have all the coaches go through this process before we start the drills.
- My suggestion would be to have it revolve around the exercises you see used in all sports:
- high knees, butt kicks, shuffles, carioca, power skip, high step, and backwards sprint

Base running

- Talk about Hard 90's, Hard turns, secondary leads, and ground ball reads at second base.
- Explain a base running sequence that involves 5 players at a time and covers home to first, first to third, tagging at third, home to second and second to home.

Catch Play

- Throwing drills will be added after the clinic.

Infield

- Pre-pitch and first step; approach and route to the ball (simplified); and fielding position.
- We will add more information after the clinic

Outfield

- We will add after the clinic, a few drills that involve anything from simple catching mechanics to throwing footwork to changing directions and communication.

Hitting

- From a mechanics standpoint, I like to emphasize the "YES!" mentality, i.e. you are swinging until you decide it's a ball.
- I like two games in particular for kids: Lightning BP (stay as long as you hit the ball hard) and Rounds (kind of like "every man for himself" baseball; 4 or 5 hitters at a time; when you make an out, you have to start in RF and rotate through each position until you get to hit again; you continue to hit as long as you make it score before it's your turn to hit again). It forces kids to play every position and encourages aggressive base running.

We are working to create video chats with these coaches on these subjects and we will add to the resource page.

Kevin Moulder – Developing youth Athletes for High School baseball, not college.

Tony Perkins – Building a coaching structure, putting a plan together, developing structure in the athletes.

Tim Canavan – Having the right approach to coaching kids - emphasizing development and fun - can have a lasting impact.

Darin Cissell – Mental performance foundations- building a process mindset over product mindset

Mason Horne – Coaching, what's important? "Touch the Hearts and Minds of the Players"