



The role of a good grassroots coach

Lead by example

A top football coach has to be a good leader. You need to show your players what is expected from them by being consistent with the philosophy that is in place. If you have certain values and principles that every player must follow, make sure that you follow them too. Even at grassroots level players can quickly lose respect for you if you rarely follow through with your ideas (especially if you don't follow them either). It may be hard to believe but your players look up you, so be the role model you would love your kids to look up too.

Organised

A top grassroots football coach will always come prepared. Every session should be set-up at least 15 minutes before the players arrive, so that when they arrive it is clear what is expected of them. You will also have the proper equipment for the session, so your learning goal can be achieved i.e you cannot teach 4 verses 1 passing and receiving without any cones to layout the area.

A top grassroots football coach will also gradually progress each session every week. You cannot develop top players by teaching a different topic every week, they have to be linked. If your topic is dribbling then you should aim to teach that technique for the next 3-4 sessions, gradually increasing content every week until they understand the where, why, when and how to use the skill.

A Good Communicator

You must learn how to get message across in a way that is digestible for player's. A grassroots football coach must make sure their players understand how they want them to play. If your players are not sure on what you want from them, then you will not get the performances you expect.

The best coach's tend to say less during the game and use clear demonstrations when they need to get their point across.

If in doubt always show.



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Enthusiasm

The best coaches I have worked with, were very enthusiastic when coaching. A coach with great enthusiasm can engage their players a lot better than one who isn't. Young player's will respond to your methods much quicker when they see the enthusiasm through everything you show or say.

It show's great belief in your coaching methods, and if it looks like you believe then your player's will more likely share your faith.

Appearance

As the coach, you must always come dressed appropriately. I have seen some coaches at grassroots level turn up to sessions in their jeans and baseball cap, you cannot expect your players to take you seriously if you don't take things seriously.

Your appearance should be as consistent as everything else that you do at the club. If you have a club track suit that every player is expected to wear, you should be wearing it too. If you happen to have assistants who help run the team they too should be taking their appearance seriously.

Always Learning

The best grassroots football coach will never stop learning the game. Even some of the most experienced coaches around the world, never stop reading books, watching other coaches, going to football matches and taking courses. You should never think that you know everything about the game and stop, because this is when you've lost. This is when other teams start to work you out, or produce players that are more skillful and tactically sound then yours.

In order to stay ahead in the game you must make time to self educate yourself.

Never make excuses



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A big reason many football coaches don't succeed, is that they never think about what they can do differently. A lot of coaches are very quick to blame everything else, instead of looking at their own approach to the game and making small adjustments.

If your players aren't getting what you want from them, don't instantly assume that it is their fault for not understanding. Instead you should think, what can I do to help my players understand me better? how can I set up my sessions in way that will make it easier to get my message across?

This is why it is important that you always stay a student of the game, because if you don't how will you find the answers to these questions?

I don't believe we can never find the time to learn new methods. Some of the most successful coaches out there tend to have the least amount of time compared to others and despite this they always make time to better themselves.

Be Approachable

A grassroots football coach should always make their players feel comfortable around them. You don't need to make the players fear you to win their respect. Using fear tactics will more likely make them reject your methods, instead of embracing them.

Instead good coaches create an environment that encourages the players to express themselves. With the right philosophy in place your players will still understand that there are boundaries, but feel they can come to you when needed.

Engages The Players

The best coaches know how to keep their players engaged throughout the session. Using humour will help your players see the lighter side of you. This helps engage the players and encourages them to please you to win your approval.

Along with humour good coaches can produce engaging football sessions from the warm up to the small sided game. Every player should be involved throughout the coaching session, this should include the following:

- Making decisions throughout.
- Many touches of the football.



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- Every part of the session is realistic to the game.

To keep your players engaged nobody should be standing in lines waiting for their turn.

The Players Come First

Without doubt the players development should always come before winning. Placing importance on winning trophies over improving players will only hinder the players development.

If this means your players lose more, than that is the sacrifice you must take. Believe me, your players learn more failing trying to do the right things then winning playing long balls all the time. This should be clear to everyone from the beginning and the coach needs to make sure everyone is consistent with this philosophy.



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Development of the Manager	<p>DBS checked</p> <p>Safeguarding course</p> <p>Introduction to first aid course</p> <p>BT Playmaker free 4.5 hours (anyone involved as a volunteer needs to do this course)</p> <p>FA Introduction to coaching course (online course) Cost £100 (this is refunded by the club straight away)</p> <p>Ideally the Manager is to do this course prior to September.</p>
Team admin	Registration of players with the club and payment plans.
Arranging the games	<p>The club will enter the teams into the league.</p> <p>The league will arrange the games.</p> <p>The Launton teams need to confirm with the other teams on the arrangements i.e. kick off times.</p> <p>If games need to be re-arranged, you will need to liaise with the other team and the league.</p>
Training	<p>Normally 1 hour during the week to suit the Manager. For the younger teams this is normally earlier in the day 5.30 – 6ish start.</p> <p>We have lots of training plans as a club, which we will share with the Manager they will also get lots of information from the FA level 1 course.</p> <p>Eventually the Manager will want to do their own thing as they know the team far better than any other Manager.</p> <p>I would always recommend have a 12 week schedule to cover player development, otherwise you might not fully develop the players.</p>
Match day	<p>Home games (will be played near Bullingdon prison)</p> <p>Setting up the pitch (home games)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Goals will need to be moved to position (simple and easy enough, and make sure the parents help doing this).• Corner flags.• Respect barrier to be put up.



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	<p>Referees (home games)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• At the younger age group, managers and parents normally referee the game. So these people will need a basic understanding of the game, but the main thing is to keep the game flowing and look after the safety of the players. <p>FA matchday app</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Certain information is also required by the league and this is done by the FAs matchday app. It's a bit clunky but simple enough. <p>Notifying the league of the result</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This is done by a simple text (2-3) <p>Managing substitutes etc</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Having 2 people to prep and prepare subs I would say is essential. <p>Games</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Normally 2 games (15mins each half). <p>Arrangement of the team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• This is up to the manager, but normally done via WhatsApp.• Its key to ensure all players get equal game time, we do this by tracking games played and in what position.
Kit	<p>All kit will be provided to you</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• First aid kit• Balls• Training equipment• Bibs etc• Kit
Tactics and knowledge	<p>These are not essential but they do help.</p>
The club	<p>The club will have a few meetings in the season managers meetings, AGM etc. Ideally you would attend these meetings.</p>