



Dear Coach Fantastic,

I am a coach in my club and all of our coaches meet on a monthly basis to discuss any issues but one of the main topics that keeps coming up is how to get our players to work hard and not be 'lazy' in training. I see our teams being coached every evening in our club and they do everything that is asked of them but for some reason the coaches perception is that they are not training like teams in the past would have. How can I assist in changing this mentality in our club coaches and create the optimal environment for learning for all our players? **(Peter, Na Fianna)**

Hi Peter

This is a very common topic that appears to be discussed all over the world in every sport and in every club with coaches asking "How do I get this generation of players to work hard?" The first thing that coaches need to realise is that our players today are capable of things that people would only ever have dreamed of in the past and they have access to information around the world including the training methods being utilised by many of the top coaches. This alone is ensuring that our players are striving to have access to the best resources possible.

Now anyone can access anything, anytime, anywhere, and for free. Players, and their parents, can now access the same information that coaches can. The difference with this information is how the coach will put it into practice. Successful coaches must create learning environments where players learn through problem solving, decision making, being engaged and excited by learning experiences and by collaborating with coaches and their team mates on making training stimulating, effective and efficient.

Therefore you need to encourage the coaches in your clubs to involve the players, listen to them and move away from the mundane practice of the coach telling and the players doing. Players want to be challenged and understand the reasons behind doing certain activities. If your coaches continue to set up drills and games etc. in the same way for every session your players will of course seem to lose interest and therefore appear 'lazy'. Think about it – in today's world players are living their lives learning fast and collecting information at an incredible rate so they will lose interest when given 15 minutes of the same drill presented in the same way over and over and over. And your coaches will think they are 'lazy'!!

So the secret to success with your coaches is to understand the players they have in front of them. They are learners – capable of learning more and learning faster than any other previous generation. They are not afraid of hard work; they are afraid of boredom. Your players are capable of learning more in a shorter time frame and therefore your coaches need to find ways to engage them.

I hope this provides some information and opens the minds of the coaches in your club!

Coach Fantastic