

IV. Promote and Establish a Basketball Philosophy. Develop a philosophy and document it.

Coaching philosophy

Today I want to share with you 10 of my favorite quotes that I know you'll love! I've always been a big fan of quotations and I know many other coaches are too.

Some of them can be used to motivate your players or even to inspire thought in yourself about the methods you use and the way you look at coaching.

First I'll list the quote, and then I'll share some of my thoughts on each quote underneath it.

Here we go!

1. I was proud when my wife Nellie told an interviewer, 'I never could tell whether John had a good practice or a bad practice, because he never brought it home' - John Wooden

A coach's professional/coaching life should not affect their family and life at home. This goes for a someone coaching a professional team or volunteering to coach a local team.

Don't let yourself come home after a mediocre or bad practice and make your family pay the price for it. Whether you have a good or bad practice or game, leave your emotions in the gym.

2. When analyzing your offense, you can't just go by whether the shot goes in. Did you get a good shot? - Jeff Van Gundy

A coach's job is to put their team in positions that give them the best chance to score.

This starts by knowing what each of your players is capable of and selecting an offense and a few set plays that fit your team.

Instead of worrying about whether the shot goes in or not; ask yourself, 'did I put my team in a position that gave them a good chance of scoring?'

3. Your greatness as a coach isn't tied to the greatness of your players. Anyone who thinks otherwise doesn't understand coaching - Jeff Van Gundy

How many times have you lost a basketball game while thinking you're a much better coach than the coach of the team that beat you?

My guess is probably a lot. Every coach does it. Especially in youth basketball.

As youth basketball coaches, we have to take ourselves out of the equation and remember that this is only about the players... not your ego.

In most cases, it's a bad idea to correlate your team's success in youth basketball with your ability to coach.

More often than not, the team with the better players will win.

4. To be a great teacher of the game you must study the game; know your craft and be proud of your knowledge; but never satisfied with your knowledge - Kevin Eastman

Never stop reading.

Never stop studying games.

Never stop seeking out knowledge.

Never stop asking questions.

Never stop learning.

Never stop striving to be a better coach.

The game of basketball is constantly developing at a rapid rate. There will always be new things to learn.

5. You can pick the captains, but you can't pick the leaders. Whoever controls the locker room controls the team - Don Meyer

One of the first things I try to do when I take on a new team is find out who the leaders of the team are.

The leaders are the players that the others look up to and follow. They won't necessarily be the best or the most responsible players on the team. Often they're players who are perceived as 'cool' by their teammates.

These are the players that the team will follow... not necessarily those that you select as captains at the start of the season.

If you can get the influencers/leaders of the team on your side early on, this can go a long way to having a much happier and more successful season.

6. Professional coaches measure success in rings. College coaches measure success in championships. High School coaches measure success to titles. Youth coaches measure success in smiles - Paul McAllister

If you're a youth basketball coach you shouldn't measure your success on the amount of wins that your team puts on the board.

A lot of coaches say development of players is the most important determinant of success in youth basketball... and while I agree that it's important, I wouldn't agree that it's the most important.

Is development really that important if your players hate coming to practice? Let's remember, the chances of your players going on to make a profession from basketball are very, very slim.

I'd rather take Paul McAllister's view and base youth basketball coaching success on smiles.

Are your players happy to be involved in your team? Are they excited to attend practice each week? Create an environment and culture that your players enjoy.

That's true success in youth basketball.

7. There is no substitution for hustle, and if you don't hustle there will be substitution - Tex Winter

You have to set a tone of intolerance for laziness right from the start of the season. Your players must know that if they aren't hustling on the floor, they should expect to get subbed out at the next stoppage of play.

Hustling includes taking charges, diving on loose balls, sprinting back on defense, playing tough defense, etc.

Play the kids who are willing to go to battle for your team. The players that are willing to do all the little things that give your team the best chance of winning.

Don't accept laziness. It can spread like wildfire through a team if you allow it.

8. Average players want to be left alone. Good players want to be coached. Great players want to be told the truth - Doc Rivers

How true is this? Think of all the players you've coached in the past...

I guarantee the ones that turned out to be the best players in the long-run were those that wanted to be pushed to their limits and told exactly how it is.

There will be others who may have started off as great players, but since they didn't want to be pushed or coached hard, they gradually let the competition catch up to them and surpass them.

9. It is not what you teach, but what you emphasise - Don Meyer

It's important for a coach to determine what they're going to emphasise throughout the season.

Coaches can't expect their team to excel at everything. I often tell coaches to pick 2 or 3 areas that they'll put much more focus on than others.

These 2 or 3 areas should be in line with your coaching philosophy and the strengths and weaknesses of the team.

For example, you might choose 'running back on defense' and 'rebounding' as the two main focuses for your team.

If you narrow down the focus like this, you can be sure your players will get the message and work super hard in both areas.

10. This is basketball, not figure skating. You don't get extra points for degree of difficulty - Bob Hurley

This is one of my favorite quotes of all time.

How often do you see today's kids putting the ball between their legs 3 times before making a move? Or throwing a behind-the-back pass when a chest pass would have been more than enough?

Make it a priority to teach your players that the simple and easy play is often the best play.

I hope you enjoyed these 10 quotes and they provoked some thought. But just wait... I want to ask a quick favor!

Reply to this email and let me know which of the 10 quotes was your favorite and why...

I love hearing other people's opinions on quotes since they can vary so much with my own. I look forward to hearing your thoughts!

Keep changing lives,

- Coach Mac@basketballforcoaches.com

Ps. If you want to read more basketball quotes I made a post including 501 of them that I bet you'll love!
[Check it out here.](#)