

HOW TO GET
ATHLETES
to listen



7 techniques that will
get your athletes to
listen to you.

Byron Rausenberger

Not quite sure if this ebook is right for you?

See the description below to see if your level matches the content you are about to read.

Introductory

Introductory content is for coaches that are new to the subject of feedback. This content typically includes step-by-step instructions on how to get started with this aspect of giving feedback and its fundamentals. After reading it, you will be able to execute a basic feedback strategy related to the topic.

Intermediate ◀ • • • • **This ebook**

Intermediate content is for coaches that are familiar with giving feedback, but have only the basic experience in executing strategies and tactics. It includes step-by-step instructions on how to execute tried and tested strategies for giving rock star feedback.

Advanced

Advanced content is for coaches that are, or want to be experts on the subject. In it, we walk you through advanced features of this aspect of feedback and help you develop complete mastery of the subject. After reading it, you will not only feel ready to execute strategies and tactics, but also to teach others how to be successful.

How to Get Athletes to Listen

by Byron Rausenberger

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Byron focuses on how to help sports programs provide more value to their customers, and in return, grow their businesses. Byron is an avid reader of positive psychology and business books in general.



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Introduction

As a coach, our job is to help athletes improve. We do this by giving them feedback on where they stand skill wise and what they need to do to improve.

But as we all know, the feedback is only useful if the athlete listens to it. Unfortunately all too often our feedback goes unapplied because our athletes are talking, goofing off, or day-dreaming.

So how do you get athletes to listen to your feedback? You first have to build Rapport with your Athletes. Rapport is just another word for Trust and Integrity. This makes sense right? Why would an athlete choose to listen to you until they knew that you were trust worthy and had their best interests in mind.

Fortunately, just like their are fundamental to learning new sport skills, there are also fundamentals to learning how to build rapport. With that said, we are going to go over the 7 most effective ways to build rapport with your athletes.

Personal Story



My favorite coach when growing up was a 65 year old man named Coach Alfred. He was about 53 years older than me, but the amazing thing was that he seemed to be just like me. He used cool young words like Rad and Narly. He gave me the nickname, Byronator, after the hit movie Terminator. And he listen to and got excited about my love of video games. Specifically Super Mario Brothers 3. I improved more in that year than the previous 3 years combined. Until writing this book, I always wondered why this coach was able to get the most out of me. Now I realize that he was incredibly gifted at building rapport with his athletes.

7 Ways to Build Rapport

1

Take an Interest in your Athlete

One of the easiest ways to build rapport is to take an interest in your athletes. How do you do this? First, ask them questions. Ask them what they like to do when not playing sports. Ask them what their favorite food is. Ask them what TV shows they like to watch. Second, when you do find out what they like, keep asking them questions. Dig deeper and ask them, for instance, why they like Mac-n-Cheese. Find out what flavor of cheese they like best on their Mac-n-Cheese. Find out how often they eat Mac-n-Cheese. Finally, research some cool facts about Mac-n-Cheese that you can share with them next time you talk. For example, did they know that there is a restaurant in New York City called Supermac that only serves Mac-n-Cheese. How cool would it be to eat there.

2

Listen 70%. Speak 30%.

This somewhat is a subcategory of number 1. In order to take an interest in your athletes, you have to hear what they have to say. And the only way to do this is to Listen. If you listen more than you speak, you will be amazed at the amount of rapport you will build with your athletes.



Warning: *If you speak 70% of the time, 2 things will happen.*

- 1) *Your athletes will stop listening to what you are saying.*
- 2) *You will lose rapport with your athletes.*

3

Speak Their Language

It is proven that a person is more likely to trust another person who speaks their same language. This not only applies to types of languages like Spanish versus English. It also applies to Jargon. For instance, if you are coaching a bunch of 12 year olds and you use the Old School word Narly, the 12 year olds are not that likely to relate to you. But if you use a more current word like Sweet or Epic, the 12 year olds are going to think that you are alright. That you are one of them. You are someone that they can relate to and trust.

4

Mirror Your Athletes

I am sure all of you reading this have been to a bar and witnessed a first date. You can probably tell immediately if the couple is hitting it off. Why? What gave it away? Mirroring. A couple that is hitting it off will tend to use the same gestures, speak in the same tempo, and use the same tone of voice. This is called mirroring. Couples that are not hitting it off will not mirror each other. Coaches can use this same principle to build rapport with their athletes. If you are talking with one of your athletes, and they speak fast, you can build rapport by matching their speed of speaking. Same applies if one of your athletes likes to speak with one of their hands on their hips. Do the same and you immediately start to build rapport.



Warning: *There is a fine line between mimicry and mirroring. Make sure you are gradual when mirroring. Don't strictly copy everything they do. The plus side is that if you are really connecting with an athlete, your subconscious mind will automatically mirror their actions.*

5

Use Their Favorite Word

Guess what a person's favorite word in the entire world is. Give up? It is their name. People love to hear the sound of their name. A coach who is GOOD at building rapport knows and utilizes this Technique. They find every way possible to incorporate an athlete's name into their conversation. What does a coach who is a MASTER at building rapport do? They take it one step further and create an empowering nickname which incorporates the athlete's name. For instance, Awesome Adrian, Byron the Beast, or Timmy the Terminator. When you give an athlete a nickname like this, they are compelled to listen and apply your feedback.

6

Recognize Them

Who doesn't like to hear praise? Answer, No One. One of the quickest ways to establish rapport is to recognize something the athlete did well. The key is that the recognition has to be specific. Praise like Good Job is way too general and will actually have the reverse affect. The athlete will know you are just trying to flatter them because you did not mention specifically what they did well. Your recognition has to be very specific. For instance, "You controlled the ball perfectly on that last pass. Keep it up!"

7

Smile

90% of all communication is non verbal. This means that a majority of what you say to establish rapport with an athlete never gets communicated. So one of the easiest ways to communicate nonverbally is to smile. People inherently want to connect with happy people. It is no different between a coach and an athlete. Athletes want to be around happy Coaches. So make sure that you smile every chance you get.



Remember, before you can get your athletes to listen to your feedback, you first have to build up enough rapport. So how do you know if you have established enough rapport in order to give feedback? Here are 3 ways to tell.



3 Ways to Tell if you have Established Rapport

1

Your Athletes Mirror You

One of the easiest ways to see if you have established a high level of rapport with an athlete is to notice if they are mirroring you. When you adjust your posture, do they adjust in the same way? When you start to speak quickly, does their speech quicken? When you nod your head, do they nod their head? There are thousands of mirroring queues that you can look for to determine if you have established enough rapport.

2

Your Athletes Are Very Agreeable

When you have established a sufficient amount of rapport with an athlete, the athlete will become very agreeable. This is a good thing because only agreeable athletes will listen and apply your feedback.

3

Your Athletes Start to Ask You Questions

When you get an athlete to start asking you questions, you know you have built up a large amount of rapport because they trust what you have to say. But remember as we discussed earlier, before they will start to ask you questions, you first have to ask them questions and then listen 70% of the time to their answers.



Conclusion

Congratulations!

You now have the skills necessary to build rapport. Now you can start to give feedback that your athletes will listen to and apply.

Here is a great ebook that analyzes how the greatest coaches in the world give feedback.



If you would like more information on how to give better feedback to athletes, please contact me at:

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