General Points

- Identifying the reasons why we define a working with a person as difficult.

- What are your reactions to difficult people?

- Is the problem one of personality or behavior?

- Assessing mountain and mole hill issues – are they worth trying to do something about?

- Developing a plan to bring about change.
  - What’s the real issue?
  - What’s the reason?
  - How can I best bring about change?

- Re-evaluate the plan on a regular basis
Sample Game Plans

Low Confidence
- What’s blocking confidence?
- Set multiple goals for success
- Honest feedback

Analytical – What’s the root of the problem?
Behavioral – Reward progress
Cognitive – Positive self-talk
Developmental – Creating a safe environment

Negative Attitude
- Why low self-esteem?
- Positive peer pressure
- Develop leadership

Analytical – History of hurt, disappointment?
Behavioral – Teach the skill to see cup as half full
Cognitive – Crisis equals opportunity
Developmental – Differentiating between the attitude and the person

Not Living Up to Potential
- How long has potential existed?
- Family pressure?
- Is emotional maturity the same as physical maturity?

Analytical – Fear of failure, fear of success?
Behavioral – Modeling/imitation
Cognitive – “I’ll cross that bridge when I get to it.”
Developmental – Developing sport as one part of overall identity
Perfectionist

- In sport, work, or everything?
- Self-demanding or are demands from others?
- Should s to choose to

**Analytical** – Fear of loss of control
**Behavioral** – 3 steps up, one step back
**Cognitive** – How can I learn? Improve?
**Developmental** – Striving for perfection vs. perfectionism

Lack of Motivation

- Motivation changes over time
- 51% rule
- 1/3 1/3 1/3

**Analytical** – What’s “covering up the passion?”
**Behavioral** – Find consequences that matter
**Cognitive** – Switching hats
**Developmental** – Is sport, work still meaningful?
Behavior Change

Analytical
- What you see isn’t always what you get.
- Try to identify what’s the real issue.
- Good for introspective, reflective people.

Behavioral
- Just do it.
- Use of the carrot and the stick, cause and effect.
- Good for people who see things in black and white, and who need clear do’s and don’t’s.

Cognitive
- I think, therefore I am.
- Assumes that thoughts have a significant impact on performance.
- Good for thoughtful, logical people.

Developmental
- The person is maturing every day.
- Emphasizes creating an environment for personal, athletic, and professional growth.
- Good for sensitive people.

2005 EATA
Working With Difficult People
Player/Team/Work Goal(s):
  Short-Term Goals (Daily/Weekly)
  1.
  2.

  Mid-Term Goals (Monthly)
  1.
  2.

  Long-Term Goals (Season/Off Season)
  1.
  2.

Strategies To Attain Short-Term, Mid-Term, and Long-Term Goal(s)

Identify Ways To Evaluate Attainment of Short-Term, Mid-Term, and Long-Term Goal(s)
January 10, 2005

Player/Team/Work Goal(s): Improve Self-Confidence

Short-Term Goals (Daily/Weekly)
1. Identify specific practice/game/work situations where confidence is high and where confidence is low.
2. Identify reasons for lack of self-confidence (fear of failure, expectations, a relationship, perfectionism, etc.).

Mid-Term Goals (Monthly)
1. Increase the frequency of positive self-talk messages and decrease the frequency of negative self-talk messages.
2. Staying positive more often when feeling frustrated and after bad plays/work experiences.

Long-Term Goals (Season/Off Season)
- Be able to maintain self-confidence in a consistent way.
- Have a game plan to maintain self-confidence during good times and bad.

Strategies To Attain Player/Team/Work Short-Term, Mid-Term, and Long-Term Goal(s)
Analytic: Identify what’s blocking self-confidence and practice positive self-talk.
Behavioral: Chart the frequency of negative self-talk in specific practice/game/work situations.
Cognitive: Identify positive affirmations to say to oneself in order to bolster self-confidence. (Today is my day, I am a champion, etc.)
Developmental: List the right lessons from practice/game/work experiences so that one can learn and improve from them.

Identify Ways To Evaluate Attainment of Short-Term, Mid-Term, and Long-Term Goal(s)
Analytic: Have the person keep a daily log related to self-confidence. Does he/she report feeling self-confident more of the time?
Behavioral: On a 1 to 10 scale, have the person chart her/his daily self-confidence in specific practice/game/work situations. Is there improvement from week to week?
Cognitive: Is the person consistently (on a daily basis) following a routine of verbalizing positive affirmations before and during practices/games/work?
Developmental: Is the person applying the right lessons from his/her past experiences to the present?
FOR FURTHER READING:


**Feeding The Young Athlete.** Cynthia Lair. 2002

**Heads Up Baseball: Playing The Game One Pitch At A Time.** Ravizza & Hanson. 2000

**Coaching The Mental Game.** Harvey Dorfman. 2003

**The Mental Athlete.** Kay Porter and Judy Foster. 2003

**The 5 Dysfunctions of A Team.** Patrick Lencioni. 2004

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**Psychological Dynamics of Sports.** Diane L. Gill. 2002

**Raising A Healthy Athlete.** Douglas G. Avella and Theresa Foy DiGeronimo. 2002

**Sport In Contemporary Society, An Anthology.** D. Stanley Eitzen. 1999

**Sports Psyching.** Thomas Tutko. 1998

**Visual Athletics: Visualization For Peak Sports Performance.** Kay Porter and Judy Foster. 2001
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Educational Workshops

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Joel H. Fish, Ph.D., Director

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Educational Workshops              Programs For All Skill Levels

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The Sport Psychologist.  www.humankinetics.com/journals

Psychological Bases of Sport Injuries.  David Pargman. Fitness Information Technology, Inc.  1999

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