



Upper York Minor Hockey Association

Coaching Profiles and Expectations for Head Coaches and
Assistant Coaches

The minimum expectations and role of a Head Coach with the UYMHA are defined as follows:

Head Coaches:

- Serve as the official spokesperson on behalf of the team and the UYMHA.
- Coordinate the delegation of responsibilities to the assistant coach(es) and manager.
- Plan on and off-ice activities in consultation with the assistant coach(es).
- Coordinate player evaluation and selection in conjunction with the assistant coach(es).
- Plan implement and control pre-game preparation and communication plans to the team and parents.
- Prepare a proposed or potential budget at the time of try-outs and then communicate a proposed budget to parents when the team is picked or at the beginning of the season.
- Prepare and communicate a budget to parents' half-way through the season and then again at the end of the season.
- Design the practice plans in consultation with the assistant coach(es).
- Coach the team in all games and practices.
- Establish rules for the team and oversee the supervision of the players.
- Submit a year-end report to the UYMHA which contains the following information:
 - a) evaluation of player's performance,
 - b) evaluation of team's performance,
 - c) outline of practice plans and game strategy, and,
 - d) recommendations on how the program can be improved.
- Report to the UYMHA through the Association mentor or designate.
- Possess a strong hockey background in playing, coaching and evaluating.
- Possess a strong interest and commitment to child/athlete development.
- Have the ability to work with fellow coaching personnel.
- Demonstrate leadership and positive communication at all times.
- Have the ability to communicate on and off-ice requirements to players and parents in a respectful, positive, manner.
- Are available to meet the time requirements for coaching.
- Are certified to coach at the level indicated by Hockey Canada, Branch and the Association.



The minimum expectations and role of an Assistant Coach with the UYMHA are defined as follows:

Assistant Coaches:

- Assist with player evaluation and the player selection process.
- Assist with planning, organizing and conducting practices.
- Assist with pre-game preparation.
- Assist with the operation of the team during the games.
- Assist with scouting and evaluation of opponents.
- Assist with the supervision of players off and on the ice.
- Assist with the formulation of the game plan.
- Submit a year-end report to the head coach containing player observations.
- Report to the head coach
- Possess strong hockey background in playing, coaching and evaluating.
- Possess strong interest and commitment to child/athlete development.
- Have the ability to work with fellow coaching personnel.
- Demonstrate leadership and positive communication at all times.
- Have the ability to communicate on and off-ice requirements to players and parents in a respectful manner.
- Are available to meet the time requirements of coaching.
- Are NCCP and Speak Out certified at the level indicated by Hockey Canada, branch and Association

WHAT IS A COACH?

A good coach will be concerned primarily with the well-being, safety, protection and future of the individual player. There must maintain a balance between the development of the individual player's skills and the social, emotional, intellectual and physical needs of the individual.

Within the limits of their control, coaches have a responsibility to ensure as far as possible the safety of the players with whom they work.

In minor hockey, teaching is given great importance. While strategy and tactics are still required, there is the added responsibility of teaching fundamental skills and the rules of the game, encouraging individual and team skill development, providing a fun and safe environment, developing character, teaching physical fitness and possessing the ability to communicate in a positive manner.

The following will serve as a general outline of the various components of coaching and the minimum expectations within each component.



SKILLS OF A COACH

The skills of a coach are divided into 2 groups:

TECHNICAL SKILLS:

Hockey skills - The ability to play the game and the knowledge about the game.

Administrative skills - The ability to plan, organize, execute and evaluate.

Learning skills - The ability to research, understand, retain and recall information.

BEHAVIOURAL SKILLS

Communication skills - The ability to listen, watch, speak and write effectively.

Leadership skills – The ability to act as a role model for players and assistant coaches and deliver feedback, both positive and negative, to players, the UYMHA, parents and referees, in a constructive, professional and rational manner.

ROLE OF A COACH

The primary role of the coach is to teach, guide and help players. The secondary roles are to evaluate, recruit and mentor players and others. The effectiveness of a coach is dependent on **5**

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES:

- *Conduct & ethics*
- *Knowledge of the game*
- *Communication skills*
- *Leadership skills*
- *Resourcefulness*

These five personal attributes - conduct & ethics, knowledge of the game, communication skills, leadership skills and resourcefulness are the qualities that each coach must possess in order to be able to be a successful UYMHA hockey coach.

Conduct & Ethics

Ethics are the primary trait of a coach. They are revealed in the behavior and will dictate how a coach conducts himself. Before taking on a coaching role, coaches must be clear on their own ethics. This will help answer two questions:

What do I believe in as a coach? 2) How should I act as a coach?

Coaches must respect the rights, dignity and worth of every human being and their ultimate right to self-determination. Specifically, coaches must treat everyone equitably and sensitively, within the context of their activity and ability, regardless of gender, ethnic origin, cultural background, sexual orientation, religion or political affiliation.



Coaches must treat opponents with due respect, both in victory and defeat, and should encourage their players to act in a similar manner. A key role for a coach is to prepare players to respond to success and failure in a dignified manner.

Coaches must accept responsibility for the conduct of their players and themselves, and discourage inappropriate behaviour in training, competition, and away from the arena.

Coaches should not drink alcohol before coaching so that it would affect their competence to coach, compromise the safety of the players or obviously indicate they had been drinking (e.g. smell of alcohol on breath).

Coaches shall refrain from all manner of personal abuse and harassment of others, whether verbal, physical, emotional or sexual, and shall oppose such abuse and harassment at all levels of hockey.

Knowledge of the game

Increased knowledge of the game is vital to successfully building confidence, understanding strategy, inspiring and sharing knowledge and love for the game with players. Taking advantage of the various coaching skills courses, clinics and seminars can be helpful in increasing players on ice awareness and game understanding. Even those coaches who have solid coaching credentials and have played the game since their own childhoods should be constantly open to learning new techniques.

If a coach wants to teach players game-related skills, they must be creative and be able to put together attractive and novel practice exercises. A coach's ability to teach means that they should be able to see details and correct mistakes and communicate the importance and role of the individual player. A coach's ability to demonstrate, provide accurate comments and feedback, and change the drill on the spot if needed is also important to the learning process of the players.

Communication and Leadership Skills

In any discipline, a great team is made of up quality leaders, effective doers and supportive followers. Hockey teams are no exception to that.

For most hockey teams:

- The leader is the head coach.
- The doers are the assistant coaches.
- The followers are the hockey players.

We define leader, doer and follower as follows:

LEADERS : The individual who accepts full responsibility for the team. There can only be one person who has the final say.



DOERS : The individual(s) who shares in the responsibility to carry out the strategies and plans.

FOLLOWERS : The individual(s) who execute on the plans.

In most cases, it is up to the head coach to hire a staff of assistant coaches. Together, they select players and goalies to form a team. Another one of his/her duties is to create a season plan that will help develop the players. Together with the head coach, the assistant coach teaches and guides the players through the plan. His main role is to provide input by sharing his knowledge and expertise to the head coach, other assistant coaches and players.

Role-Specific Coach

Today more than ever, coaches are learning that this game requires proper teaching ratios in order to be effective. Having one coach to do it all can be strenuous on the coach and not very helpful for a player. From a young age, players need encouragement and guidance for proper skill development. Also known as assistant coaches, these role-specific coaches provide explicit and precise teaching for a player.

For example, a coaching staff can be comprised of:

- Goalie Coach
- Forward Coach
- Defense Coach
- Special Teams Coach
- Strength and Conditioning Coach
- Power Skating Coach

It is vitally important that a coach choose a coaching staff that respect the basic principles of ethics and conduct set forth by the Head Coach.

In summary, communication and leadership are demonstrated by the Head Coach through activities such as: goal setting, planning, communication, problem solving, decision making, conflict resolution and effective frustration management including discipline, personal trust enhancement, team spirit and fun.



Resourcefulness

A good coach will use a variety of tools and resources to aid them throughout the season.

Tools for a coach are very subjective. What one coach considers an asset, another will believe to be a hindrance. Coaches will often continually evaluate the effectiveness of the tools they use and introduce new tools and resources to the players as needed. A good coach is always seeking new ways to teach.

The primary tools for coaches are:

TEACHING TOOLS: *These constitute items that will help explain the message that a coach is trying to convey in meetings, before games and practices. **Examples:** white boards and markers, chalk boards and chalk, TV & video, computer programs, hand-outs, play books, speeches and internet.*

STATISTICS: *These are the facts about games or practices. **Examples:** individual, team and league statistics.*

ON-ICE: *These are the tools that are needed in a practice or game. **Examples:** skates, stick, track suit, gloves, pucks, cones, tennis balls, tires, chairs, clip board, coaching card , "PowerPen".*

RESOURCES: *These are tools which can be places or people to help make a coach's message more effective. **Examples:** gym/dry land training centres, conditioning coaches, meeting rooms, other coaches, mentor, parents, sponsors.*

GUIDANCE FOR COACHES

Section 1 - Preparation and Planning

"To be prepared is half the victory," Miguel De Cervantes

If this is the case, then why doesn't everyone plan? Probably because most of the time, it seems like an enormous effort. The following is a simple three- step process to effective season planning.

1. Define - Where are we today?

- Take an inventory of what you have today. Write down the resources (people, places and things) that are available to you.
- Find out what type of schedule you have, where your games will be played and who can help out or who has been committed to being a part of the team.
- Make notes of the history of the team.



2. Decide - Where do we want to be and by when?

This is where you will set the expectations for yourself and your team. You will set SMARTER goals:

- **S**pecific
- **M**easurable
- **A**chievable
- **R**ational
- **T**ime-sensitive
- **E**xciting
- **R**ewarding

You will create a vision for your team to help you focus in the down times and re focus in the exhilarating moments.

3. Decipher - How do we get there?

PLAN! PLAN! PLAN!

Napoleon Hill said, "Reduce your plan to writing. The moment you complete this, you will have definitely given concrete form to the intangible desire."

Nothing could be truer. As a coach you get ideas, you learn things and you get de-railed. Having a written plan gives you a place to go to when you need to focus and see your next steps. Planning with the end in mind will help you see clearly what needs to be done along the way. It makes it clear in your mind and easier to communicate.

4. Communicate – How do I inform players and parents of the plan?

A common challenge for coaches is determining the best ways in which to communicate goals and plans to both parents and players. Experienced coaches know what works for them, however, as the players mature – or the level of expertise of the players is higher – the expectations of the coach's communication methods can increase.

Some suggested strategies for managing communication with parents:

- a) Plan for a start-of-season meeting with parents to explain your goals for the team.*
- b) Introduce your coaching team and explain to parents what each coach brings to the players insofar as experience, training or enthusiasm.*
- c) Set the stage at this meeting for how you will manage communication before and after games. Will you allow parents in the dressing room before games? Will you require a "24 hour cooling off rule" for parents who may be upset after a game? Will you communicate through emails? Newsletters? How are changes to schedules communicated?*



- d) *Share your philosophy about coaching – and clearly state your expectations of conduct from the players and parents. Some coaches will provide players with a list of “Rules” or “Goals” that are agreed-to at the beginning of the season. Players read the goals and sign their name to the commitment.*
- e) *Use this meeting to get questions and feedback from parents, too. If you are coaching a very young team, some families may be new to hockey. They will rely on the coach to keep them informed through the season. The coach needs to define how that will happen.*
- f) *Find ways to continually reinforce team and individual goals with your players. Players count on the coach to help keep the goals in sight.*

Setting the stage at the beginning of the season with both parents and players will lessen the chances that misunderstandings will happen throughout the hockey season.

Hockey is an emotional game, as we Canadians know, and keeping a clear, honest and respectful path for parents and players to communicate their issues will successfully manage those emotions in a planned manner.

Section 2 - P.O.I.N.T Technology

"So, what is your point?" Regardless of the level of hockey you coach, the following strategy will teach you how to be effective in your role as coach. You will become clearer in delivering your messages because you will now be able to articulate your thoughts. The feedback you receive will confirm that your players understood the message. Your team and those around you will want to listen to you.

The P.O.I.N.T Technology is a system created by Kevin V. Huhn. Here are the five steps to making your P.O.I.N.T.:

- Plan** *Write it down. This is the first step to being clearly understood.*
- Organize** *Prioritize by order of importance. The second step is to make sure you know what you want done first, second, third and so on from your plan in the first step.*
- Implement** *Do what you said you needed to do. The third step is one of the most important ones. Take your written plan and act upon it. A plan is nothing if it is not followed.*
- Nurture** *Empower and Encourage. Think of implementing like planting a seed in the ground. It takes fertilization and water to help it. Tell your team that it will be a great experience and you have confidence in them.*



Track it

Journal the results. Whether your point was in a speech or in a skill teaching practice write down what happened. Note reactions, comments and your feelings. This will provide valuable input and lessons for your next plan.

The point is: Make your P.O.I.N.T. Be clear!

Coaches are always encouraged to increase their coaching skills by researching, trying out new ideas and continually assessing the success of their ideas with the players.

A good coach leads from his love for the game, his desire to teach the game's skills to young players and his interest in community involvement. Use the available resources of the Association, OMHA and Hockey Canada to continually improve your skills and abilities, and, find new ways to enhance the team experience with the players you coach!

"Putting on the same jerseys doesn't make a team. You're still just a collection of individuals until you find a common goal."

Harry Sinden on Team Canada (1972)

