



Impact Skills Academy **Guidance Notes**

All,

Small group and private coaching sessions are a great way to help build a players confidence and skill set. Delivered well they are a great tool to aid development.

This delivery area is one of which we will look to make a stand-out program at Impact. The following detail represents some general notes and tips that have been gathered by others thru delivery.

Each coach is expected to place high emphasis on the design and delivery of quality sessions. The players and families signing up are placing on us a trust to ensure a progressive and challenging learning environment.

We also believe that for our coaches this area can be one of substantial personal reward.

Introduction and General Notes

ISA sessions are of course completed with a reduced number of players. It is key that you are extremely well prepared for session delivery.

The standard expectation is that equipment should be fully in place prior to player arrival to allow discussion with players as they arrive regards previous games / training sessions and the players thoughts as to how they are doing and what they should work on.

We tend to be working with players who are highly motivated, I would recommend frank conversation with parents prior to a player joining sessions to communicate that practice between sessions (as assigned weekly) is imperative and that these sessions are for serious players – while players may be of different ability and age, they must have a positive attitude towards building their skills.

Where working with a new group it is recommended that you run an assessment session with 4 or 5 base skill sets reviewed. From then on the coach is looking to set activities that are right on the edge of players capabilities, pushing them to listen, observe others, practice and progress. It is of course imperative that the coach puts plenty of thought into session design to achieve these goals.

More info on next page...



Session Format

Similar to a regular coaching session:

- Skill Development / Introduction of Technical Points
- Skill Refinement
- Perform with pressure and / or in tandem with another skill
- Complete practiced skill(s) in a competitive scenario
- Debrief and assignment of at home practice activity

The majority of skill introduction will begin early with communication starting off quite generic in respect to the technical pointers to be targeted. Instruction should gradually get more specific to the player and how they are performing the technique thru the session.

The debrief at the end of the session will allow an interactive discussion with players as to the technical points required for the skill, with review between the player and coach as to an individuals strengths and areas for focus.

While building in skills from past sessions may be relevant, it is key that the instructor looks to be bold and purposeful in regard to the day's theme being taught. It is better for players to master one or two specific development targets than moderately work on 4 or 5. The coach should be driven to ensure the player leaves with a very clear understanding and ability to perform a technique.

Theme Recommendations

Should a coach be working to the Impact Skills Cards then the themes to be taught include:

- [Defending](#) / [Ball Striking](#) / [Ball Mastery](#) / [Finishing](#) / [Juggling](#)

It will be at the coach's discretion as to program and theme design.

Standard options see the coach moving from topic week to week or perhaps working on a theme for 2 weeks prior to moving on.

The coach may allocate time at the start of the session for the players to display their practiced skills from previous week assignments.

For those using Impact Skills Cards, they are set up to see practice targets written on the back. The cards work in having 5 levels with players initially receiving a full set of Level 1 cards. When the coach is happy the specifics can be regularly performed by a player then the coach will award a level 2 card for that theme.



Use of the cards will typically require the coach to design their sessions with consideration to the attainment targets on the cards. Players are encouraged to attach cards to their backpack.

Challenges

The design of a quality session with multiple progressions is key to a high level provision in this area. Sessions must be flexible to match the number of players you have arrive on the day and in some cases the coach may need to join in to be the one to apply pressure or competition.

The benefit of small group sessions is that players will either have: a player or three to compete against, players of similar age and ability; and players they can teach something to (a great way to reinforce learning) or look up to and emulate.

When bringing players in to sessions the coach should consider the age and ability of an incoming player and of course evaluate for safety.

It has tended to be the case that you will have a group of players with different strengths, this is a major positive for sessions as players can gain great benefit from watching others try to perform a skill.

The main ways of learning (in order of likely retainment) are listening, watching, doing and teaching. Players working to support each other to get better can be very effective.

Suggestions

- Be over-prepared. Have a quality session plan and have various backup activities drawn up in case you decide they are needed.
- Bring the energy, it is needed!
- Work hard and push your players hard – these sessions are clearly advertised as for players who want to get better. Hold them to account.
- Plan your equipment setup – whether it be stations or a master grid where you remove pieces a bit at a time.
- There should be minimal downtime during sessions for equipment setup purposes. Water breaks are a great time for discussion with players.
- Be a quality role model – players benefit from having someone take an interest in their development. Small group sessions allow this and with reduced player numbers provide an easier time for the player to get to know the player (rather than in full team sessions). Try to watch the player in a game, talk to them, work with their parents to discuss next step targets and recent attainment.
- Build confidence, the chance to provide regular specific guidance to a player is precious – do so appropriately and build your players up. Ultimately their progress reflects on your coaching.