



COACHING; THE LANGUAGE OF RECOGNITION

As she rushed through the office, Kacy Dillon, the divisional Director stopped briefly by Ian Brechin's desk, gave him the "thumbs-up" sign and said "Great job, Brechin, you did well!" She then sped off in the direction of her next meeting leaving Ian a little bemused. He was struggling with this new computer system and had just crashed it for the third time this morning. Was she being sarcastic or was she referring to the major deal he had just closed with what was to be the company's largest client. Hopefully the latter!

From time to time you can see examples where managers act as spectators. Their behavior; the words they use and their body language would not be out of place at a soccer or baseball match. They would be sitting in the stands chewing on a hot dog, swigging a beer and shouting criticism at the players (their staff) on the field. There is very little connection between the manager and the staff other than they happen to be sitting in the same building.

This image is used to highlight the profound difference between the 'manager as coach' and the 'manager as spectator'. A coach works individually with each of the players, helping them to overcome setbacks and obstacles to progress. They understand how their players respond to different types of motivation and how their family life and health affect their performance.

Most of all coaching is carried out on a very frequent basis. You don't wait for the big match to give your advice to the team in the way that the 'manager as spectator' does. You work really closely with everyone in the team to understand the strengths and weaknesses of your defense and your strikers before they have to be tested under pressure.

The Language of Coaching

Spectator language is full of demands; "Do this, do that, do the next thing." There is no time or space for discussion, experimentation and, god forbid, failure. Spectator managers need results and they need them now.

The language of a coach is significantly different. First of all the coach is an integral part of the team; more often found on the field than in their fur-lined office. Team language tends to contain the word "We" and you will hear a softer tone to the questions "How can we improve this? How can we make that happen faster, more accurately or more consistently?" It is a relationship of trust between two adults rather than a critical parent talking down to a child.

Ian Brechin's co-worker, Joanna Collins came to his assistance with the new computer system. "I've found some work-arounds that avoid crashing the system, let me show you." Then, almost as an afterthought she added "I hope you realize how proud we all are that you closed the Grossman deal, you'll need to share some of your trade secrets with the rest of us." Ian smiled, wondering why Joanna's piece of recognition seemed more valuable than Kacy Dillon's.

<https://blog.granted.com/>