



The Secret to Coaching Success: How Long is a Piece of String?

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Everyone's looking for coaching secrets.

Have you ever asked someone an open question and had them answer, "how long is a piece of string?"

Guess what? There is an answer to this question.....

How long is a piece of string?

And that answer is "A Piece of String is Twice as Long as it is from one end to the middle". And so it goes with coaching. Experienced coaches are often asked "piece of string" questions by young coaches desperate to learn the coaching secrets of the sport and the mysteries of the "masters". Some of the most common "piece of string" questions asked by young coaches are:

- ≈ How many training sessions should we do each week?
- ≈ How do you know if an athlete is really talented?
- ≈ What's the favorite drill?
- ≈ What's your favorite training set?
- ≈ How much gym work do your athlete do?

Because, as a young coach, you believe the secret to success lies somewhere in the combination of training sets, periodization, programming and workload management. In other words you believe the secret to success is a "what" – it is a thing you can see or read, copy, replicate and achieve the same level of success as the "whats" originator: that there's a bunch of coaching secrets you can look-up, find, buy, borrow or steal and you'll become the coach you dream of becoming.

Short cut – quick fix mentality: Everyone's looking for Coaching Secrets.

What are the top-selling sporting products on the market???

Sports Equipment and Sports Supplements / Sports Nutrition products!

Why?

Because they offer "innovation" without real thought or creativity, performance enhancement without hard work and competition success without discipline. They offer – what most of the world craves – a short cut to success and an easy solution to performance problems.

If you want to become a great coach, a coach who is recognized as an innovator, a coach who is lauded as a leader, a coach who is seen as taking their sport to an unprecedented level of performance, forget the "whats".

There is no piece of equipment – there are no sports nutrition products – there are no short cuts – which can take you from coaching mediocrity to coaching mastery. Concentrate on the “who” – as in who you are – who you really are and the “how” – how you can commit to continuous improvement and how you can ensure your athletes are engaged with you and your coaching program.

The “whats” in the sports business and in life generally are transient fads; they are temporary.

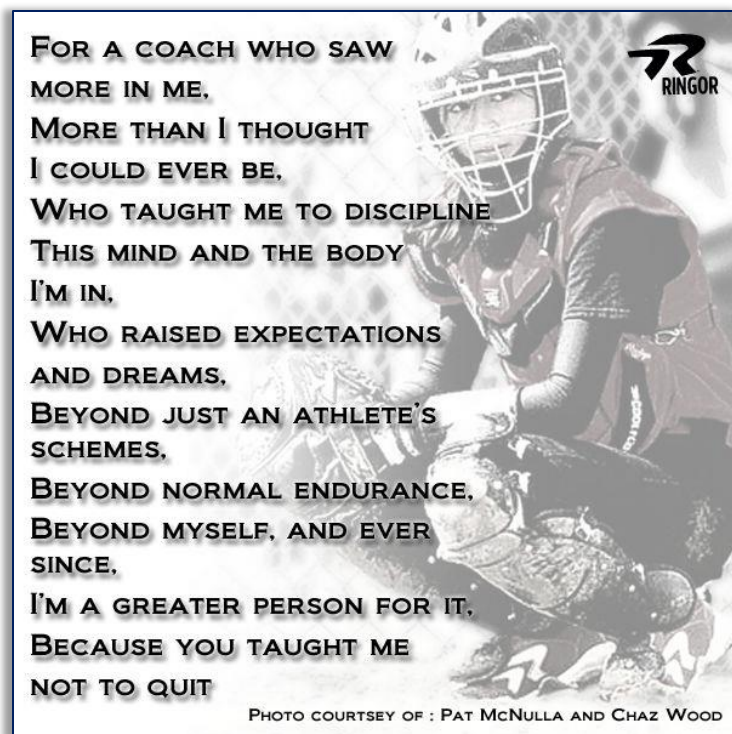
This year the sales reps are pushing protein powders, next year it’s isokinetic strength machines, the following year its float tanks...every year we get a procession of the latest and greatest in quick fix, easy answer, fast solutions which without exception, over promise and under deliver.

Look at what has come and gone as the optimal training tool in recent years...heart rate monitors (now just a secondary workload measurement tool), lactate analysers (huge questions over what lactate even is or does), creatine (just as many studies find no benefits as do find something), altitude (almost totally discredited as a training aid of any real significance), Pilates (still no clear link between the Pilates practice room and performance in elite competition)...yet in their day, each of the false idols of sports performance were marketed as the ultimate in athlete preparation.

And...what’s worse...young coaches (and even the not so young) “fell” for the promises offered by these practices and changed their coaching philosophies in an effort to tap into what was heralded as the next big thing.

What do you stand for as a coach? Coaching Secrets or For Something more?

There is a great old saying...“if you stand for nothing, you will fall for anything” – if you are not sure of your coaching philosophy or do not have a BYBY attitude (be yourself – back yourself) then you are susceptible to any fad, gimmick, trend, smart marketing and advertising campaign promising tempting but unrealistic sports performance enhancement.



So what is the “secret” – how long is the piece of string?

We all know what the secret to success is – it is so obvious it has no right to be even called a secret...here it is for free.

Work harder, more consistently than anyone in your sport in the world ensuring that you commit everything you have – physically, mentally, technically and tactically to every training, recovery and competition experience.

These are not the coaching secrets...they’re common sense.

The best gym in the world will not make an impact on a team with a poor performance culture, who turn up late, who have poor discipline off the field and who are not totally committed to living excellence in training and preparation.

Spending thousands of dollars on sports nutrition products do not make up for a poor attitude, a bad technique, a lack of skill and a sloppy recovery program.

Yet, in the next 24 hours, tens of thousands of sports people around the world will spend millions of dollars on sports equipment and sports nutrition products seeking a performance advantage which in all reality does not exist – or if it does exist, is a short-term solution.

I have lectured, presented and met with sports coaches all over the world for the past 20 years.

When question time comes around, I have never been asked, “Wayne, how can I develop a real confidence in my abilities, a strong coaching philosophy and an attitude where I embrace continuous improvement, innovation and excellence in everything I do” – No-one ever asks this – is it that no one really wants to know the real secret to success?

But if I had a dollar for every time I got a question like “What do you think of creatine” or “What is your view on Pilates” or “What is your experience with xyz training equipment” I would have somewhere close to \$19,576,671 dollars.

But there is an answer to all your performance questions – you already know how long the piece of string is – you always have.

The greatest people in the world are unique, they dare to be different, they take risks, they do it first – they believe in themselves – they back themselves.

The answer to all the questions you have about your coaching is staring back at you from the mirror every morning – not in some coaching magazine – it’s right in front of you.

