

# Positive

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positive (adj.) - constructive, optimistic, or confident.

positive (noun) - a good, affirmative, or constructive quality or attribute.

## **Coaching**

For over four decades, I have been coaching the 'Beautiful Game' and I am just realizing I could have done a much better job.

Nearly every week I am the instructor for one of US Soccer Grassroots courses, presenting the same material over and over again. If you want to know something I don't mind it because it keeps reinforcing lessons I wish I had learned forty years ago.

As I looked back at the way I was coached and how I coached it was based on looking for mistakes and correcting them. Both me and my players learned lessons, but could it have been done in a better way? My answer is yes.

Instead of correcting mistakes maybe I should have been looking for examples of players doing things right and applauding them. They have just painted a good picture for everyone to see. So let's rewind it and show it again and explain why it was a good decision and well executed.

Let's look at this from the perspective of the player. Instead of always being corrected in front of my peers, I am now being praised by my coach for my play. Warm fuzzies instead of cold pricklies. The player gains confidence.

A coach's attitude should also be positive. Instead of dwelling on the negative, you need to be optimistic and constructive. You should be putting confident thoughts into your players. Yes, your players are going to make mistakes and your team are going to lose games. Dwelling on these negatives is not going to make your team better. A positive attitude and environment will make the experience more enjoyable for you and your players.

## **Player Interaction**

Positivity can go far in making a team. I have a rule with my teams that only positive comments between teammates. Negativity breaks a team apart. However, a coach or a player getting on a player is not always negative. It may sound negative the way it is presented but it can be an effective teaching moment to help the team and individual. Receivers of the message need to get thicker skin and the player or coach delivering the message may need to work on their delivery so that it is not so harsh. The truth is positive but how it is delivered may determine if it is received and understood.

When a player makes a mistake, they need to be built back up. They don't need to be told they messed up by a teammate or coach. They are already aware of it and probably dwelling on it. A positive comment to that player may bring back their confidence and a positive focus.

## **Conclusion**

Being positive can be one of your most effective qualities as a coach. It can help you in building a strong team and quality players. Being more positive can help your coaching, your ability to deal with adversity, and the environment you create, and can make a difference in the end product – your team. Positive attitudes and responses breed confidence and productive results.

**STAY POSITIVE!**