



ORGANISING A GROUP

Establishing routines

By establishing routines and giving the responsibility for maintaining the routines to the participants, the coach can devote more time to nurturing the sport skill development of the players.

Coaches should:

- establish set-up and put away systems for the equipment and facility that participants can assist with. These must be supervised by the coach
- use consistent warm-up and warm-down routines
- set up areas and equipment in advance for specific elements of the program
- ask more experienced participants to help the less experienced ones
- have a consistent routine for moving between coach instruction and activity, to reduce management time. If the players know where to go, how quickly they need to be there and what behaviour is expected of them on arrival, then more time can be devoted to activity.

Engaging participants

The following strategies can be used to engage participants:

- **Voice and expression** – by varying voice quality and volume to suit the situation coaches can gain the participants' attention, and add qualities such as excitement, concern and annoyance.
- **Eye contact** – by maintaining eye contact, the coach can personalise things, give the impression of confidence, and add expression to the message.
- **Signal for attention** – some coaches use a whistle and others use a variety of commands. Whatever the method, it should be loud and different and gain attention.
- **Ask questions** – questioning and discussion techniques shift the focus from the coach to the participant. The participant takes on some responsibility and becomes more involved in the learning process.
- **Praise and compliment** – sincere and equitable praise and compliments to the group and individuals provides incentive and motivation to participants.
- **Quality instructions** – combining clear brief instructions with demonstrations helps the coach to maintain the interest of participants. One of the most difficult things for many coaches is limiting instructions to one or two key points and then returning to the activity.
- **Increase participation** – long lines of participants waiting for a turn, and 'adult games' with large playing areas and large numbers of players on each team greatly reduces the opportunities for players to be actively involved and the level of enjoyment for participants.

