



Double-Goal Coach® Job Description

TO: All Coaches

DATE: _____

FROM: _____

RE: What We Expect of You

You are the most important person in our organization. You determine the kind of experience our athletes have with sports. We are committed to the principles of Positive Coaching. We expect our coaches to be "Double-Goal Coaches" who want to win and help players learn "life lessons" and positive character traits from sports. The following is what we expect from you during the coming the season.

1 Model and teach your players to Honor the Game. Teach the elements of ROOTS – Respect for: Rules, Opponents, Officials, Teammates, and one's Self.

- Appoint a parent to be "Culture Keeper" for the team.
- Share with your players' parents your desire for them to Honor the Game.
- Drill Honoring the Game in practice.
- Seize teachable moments to talk with players about Honoring the Game.

2 Help players Redefine what it means to be a "Winner" in terms of Mastery, not just the Scoreboard:

- Teach players the ELM Tree of Mastery (Effort, Learning, and bouncing back from Mistakes).
- Use a "Team Mistake Ritual" (like "Flushing Mistakes") to help players quickly rebound from mistakes.
- Reward effort, not just good outcomes. Look to recognize players for unsuccessful effort.
- Encourage players to set "Effort Goals" that are tied to how hard they try.
- Use Targeted Symbolic Rewards to reinforce effort and team play.

3 Fill your players' Emotional Tanks.

- Use encouragement and positive reinforcement as your primary method of motivating.
- Strive to achieve the 5:1 "Magic Ratio" of 5 positive reinforcements to each criticism/correction.
- Schedule "fun activities" for practices, so players will enjoy their sport.
- Use the "Buddy System" to teach players to fill each other's Emotional Tanks.
- Develop "player coaches" by asking for player input and asking rather than telling them what to do
- Learn to give "Kid-Friendly Criticism" so players will be able to hear it. Criticize in private, "Ask Permission," use the Criticism Sandwich, avoid giving criticism in non-teachable moments.

4 Have Conversations during Team Meetings with your players at every practice and every game.

- Review Honoring the Game, the ELM Tree and the Emotional Tank throughout the season.
- Remind players about these three concepts before and after every game.
- Ask questions and encourage players to speak and contribute during team meetings.
- Use the Winner's Circle after a game to reinforce the positive things players did.

At the end of the season we will survey your players and their parents to give you feedback on how you did at implementing these Positive Coaching principles during the season. We will share the results with you. Thank you for all your time and effort!

I agree

COACH SIGNATURE

DATE



PCA Parent Pledge

Please read, initial each item, sign and return to the coach or appropriate official.

1. I pledge to get my child to practice and games on time. I understand that it can be embarrassing for my child to be late and that I may be putting him/her at risk by not providing adequate time for warm up. I will be on time to pick up my child from all games and practices. This shows respect for the coach, and it tells my child that he or she is my top priority. _____
2. I pledge to use positive encouragement to fill my child's Emotional Tank because athletes do their best when their "Emotional Tank" is full. I understand that fewer than 1% of youth sports participants receive college scholarships and that the top three reasons kids play sports are a) to have fun, b) to make new friends, and c) to learn new skills. I understand that the game is for the players, and I will keep sports in the proper perspective. _____
3. I pledge to reinforce the ELM Tree of Mastery with my child (E for Effort, L for Learning and M for bouncing back from Mistakes). Winners are people who make maximum effort, continue to learn and improve, and do not let mistakes, or fear of making mistakes, stop them. I understand that mistakes are an inevitable part of any game and that people learn from their mistakes. I understand that children are born with different abilities and that the true measure is not how my child compares to others but how he/she is doing in comparison to his/her best self. _____
4. I pledge to "Honor the Game." I understand the importance of setting a good example for my child. No matter what others may do, I will show respect for all involved in the game including coaches, players, opponents, opposing fans, and officials. I understand that officials make mistakes. If the official makes a "bad" call against my team, I will Honor the Game and be silent! _____
5. I pledge to refrain from yelling out instructions to my child. I understand that this is the coach's job. I understand that games are chaotic times for children trying to deal with fast-paced action and respond to opponents, teammates and coaches. I will limit my comments during the game to encouraging my child and other players for both teams. _____
6. I pledge to refrain from making negative comments about my child's coach in my child's presence. I understand that this plants a negative seed in my child's head that can negatively influence my child's motivation and overall experience. _____

I will honor the PCA Parent Pledge in my words and actions.

Parent's Signature

Print Child's Name

Parent/Guardian Letter



To: Parent/Guardian

From: _____ Date _____

This is an important document about the upcoming season. Please take the time to read it carefully. Thank you.

Our organization is committed to the principles of Positive Coaching Alliance and against a “win-at-all-cost” mentality. PCA calls a Positive Coach a “Double-Goal Coach®.” A win-at-all-cost coach has only one goal – to win. A Positive Coach shares that goal (wants to win) but has a second goal that is even more important – to use the sports experience to help young people learn “life lessons” and positive character traits that will help them be successful throughout their lives.

Help us promote the three PCA principles which have the power to “transform youth sports so that sports can transform youth.” The three principles, explained in this letter, are:

- 1 Redefining “Winner,”**
- 2 Filling the Emotional Tank, and**
- 3 Honoring the Game.**

1 REDEFINING “WINNER”

In professional sports (which is entertainment), there is only one goal – to have the most points at the end of a contest. However, in youth sports (which is education), there is a second goal: to produce young people who will be winners in life.

To help our children get the most out of competitive sports, we need to redefine what it means to be a “winner.” Winners are people who:

- Make maximum effort.
- Continue to learn and improve.
- Refuse to let mistakes (or fear of making mistakes) stop them.

This is called a Mastery Orientation. PCA says that the Tree of Mastery is an ELM Tree where ELM stands for **E**ffort, **L**earning, and rebounding from **M**istakes.

If our athletes keep these things in mind, they will develop habits that will serve them well throughout their lives.

There is an added benefit. Athletes who are coached with a Mastery Orientation tend to have reduced anxiety and increased self-confidence. And when athletes feel less anxiety, they are more likely to have fun playing their sport and to do better!

Here’s how you can help:

- 1** Tell your child that it’s OK to make a mistake.
- 2** Let your child know you appreciate it when he tries hard even if unsuccessful.
- 3** Ask rather than tell. Try to get your child to talk about her play rather than telling her what you think about it. Ask open-ended questions to get her to talk (e.g., “What was the best part of the game for you?”)
- 4** Recognize that Mastery is hard work. Let the coaches criticize your child’s play. Tell your child you are proud of him regardless of the outcome of the game.

2 FILLING THE EMOTIONAL TANK

Research shows that the home team wins about 60% of the time because of the emotional support a team receives when it plays in front of its own fans. Like gas tanks in cars, athletes have "Emotional Tanks" that need to be filled to do their best.

There will be times when you need to correct and criticize. Research has shown that a "Magic Ratio" of 5:1 (praise to criticism) is ideal. Help us achieve this Magic Ratio with your child.

Here's how you can help:

- 1 Your #1 job is to fill your child's Emotional Tank. Encourage him regardless of what happens in the game.
- 2 Try not to give your child a lot of advice (which after a tough game can seem like criticism, which drains a person's tank). Remember, it's difficult to do well with a low tank. When she makes a mistake, you might say, "Don't worry. Let's get the next one. You can do it." After tough losses, it's often helpful to acknowledge feelings of disappointment. For example, you might say "I can imagine you must be disappointed to have lost."

3 HONORING THE GAME

Honoring the Game gets to the ROOTS of positive play, where ROOTS stands for respect for

- Rules: We don't bend the rules to win.
- Opponents: A worthy opponent is a gift that forces us to play to our highest potential.
- Officials: We treat officials with respect even when we disagree.
- Teammates: We never do anything that would embarrass our team on or off the field.
- Self: We live up to our own standards regardless of what others do.

- 3 Use the "3-Pluses-and-a-Wish" technique. Before you give advice, find three good things about your child's performance. Phrase the advice as a wish:
 - *You really tried hard in the game today (Plus #1).*
 - *I also saw you filling your teammate's Emotional Tank after he made a mistake (Plus #2).*
 - *And that play you made toward the end of the game shows how much you are improving (Plus #3).*
 - *I wish you wouldn't get down on yourself when you make a mistake.*

If you can't come up with three pluses, don't say the wish because then it may drain his emotional tank rather than fill it.

- 4 Remember the Magic Ratio*. Praise your child about 5 times for every time you criticize. If you do, she will be better able to hear your criticism without becoming defensive.

* *It's called the Magic Ratio because great things happen when we get close to it with our children.*

Here's how you can help:

- 1 Let your child know that you want him to Honor The Game. Discuss the meaning of each element of ROOTS with your athletes.
- 2 Be a good role model. Honor the Game when you attend games. Cheer both teams when good plays are made. If, in your opinion, an officiating mistake is made, be silent! Use this as an opportunity to think about how difficult it is to officiate a game perfectly.
- 3 Encourage other parents to Honor the Game.

The Positive Coach Mental Model

Mental models have power. They affect how people see, think, and behave. If one were to characterize the prominent mental model for coaching, it might be called "win-at-all-cost." PCA believes this needs to change.

As part of Positive Coaching Alliance's strategy to transform youth sports, we have developed the Positive Coach Mental Model and will promote it until it becomes the industry standard for youth sports. Extensive academic research constitutes the foundation for the Positive Coach Mental Model. Please read through the Positive Coach Mental Model [Research Summary](#) to learn more. The Positive Coach Mental Model is consistent with the National Standards for Athletic Coaches developed by the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE).

The Double-Goal Coach PCA believes all youth sport coaches should be "Double-Goal" Coaches. A win-at-all-cost coach has only one goal: to win. He or she is concerned primarily with teaching skills and developing strategy designed to win games. A Positive Coach is a "Double-Goal Coach" who wants to win, *AND* has a second goal: to help players develop positive character traits, so they can be successful in life. Winning is important, but the second goal, helping players learn "life lessons," is more important. A Positive Coach puts players first.

Positive Coach Mental Model There are three major elements to the "job description" of a Positive Coach. A Positive Coach:

1. Redefines "Winner"
2. Fills Players' Emotional Tanks
3. Honors the Game

1. **Redefines "Winner"**

A Positive Coach helps players redefine what it means to be a winner through a mastery, rather than a scoreboard, orientation. He sees victory as a by-product of the pursuit of excellence. He focuses on effort rather than outcome and on learning rather than comparison to others. He recognizes that mistakes are an important and inevitable part of learning and fosters an environment in which players don't fear making mistakes. While not ignoring the teaching opportunities that mistakes present, he teaches players that a key to success is how one responds to mistakes. He sets standards of continuous improvement for himself and his players. He encourages his players, whatever their level of ability, to strive to become the best players, and people, they can be. He teaches players that a winner is someone who makes maximum effort, continues to learn and improve, and doesn't let mistakes (or fear of mistakes) stop them.

2. **Fills Players' Emotional Tanks**

A Positive Coach is a positive motivator who refuses to motivate through fear,

intimidation, or shame. She recognizes that every player has an "Emotional Tank" like the gas tank of a car. Just as a car with an empty gas tank can't go very far, a player with an empty emotional tank doesn't have the energy to do her best.

A Positive Coach understands that compliments, praise, and positive recognition fill Emotional Tanks. She understands the importance of giving truthful and specific feedback and resists the temptation to give praise that is not warranted. When correction is necessary, a Positive Coach communicates criticism to players in ways that don't undermine their sense of self-worth. A Positive Coach strives to achieve a 5:1 "Plus/Minus Ratio" of praise to correction.

A Positive Coach establishes order and maintains discipline in a positive manner. She listens to players and involves them in decisions that affect the team. She works to remain positive even when things aren't going well. She recognizes that it is often when things go wrong that a coach can have the most lasting impact and can teach the most important lessons. Even when facing adversity, she refuses to demean herself, her players, or the environment. She always treats athletes with respect, regardless of how well they perform.

3. **Honors the Game**

A Positive Coach feels an obligation to his sport. He understands that Honoring the Game means getting to the ROOTS of the matter, where ROOTS stands for respect for:

- **Rules**
-
- **Opponents**
-
- **Officials**
-
- **Teammates**
-
- **Self.**

A Positive Coach teaches his players to Honor the Game. He loves his sport and upholds the spirit, as well as the letter, of its rules. He respects opponents, recognizing that a worthy opponent will push his athletes to do their best. He understands the important role that officials play and shows them respect, even when he disagrees with their calls. He encourages players to make a commitment to each other and to encourage one another on and off the field. He values the rich tradition of his sport and feels privileged to participate. A Positive Coach realizes that one of the most difficult times to Honor the Game is when the opponent is not, and he reminds his players to live up to their own highest standard (respect for self). Ultimately, a Positive Coach demonstrates integrity and would rather lose than win by dishonoring the game.