

**Topic:** The Rule of 3

**Link:** [https://coachreed.com/podcast/coachingcode/the\\_c0ach1ng\\_c0de-ep17-revolutionary-rule-3/](https://coachreed.com/podcast/coachingcode/the_c0ach1ng_c0de-ep17-revolutionary-rule-3/)

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**What is the purpose of the Rule of 3?**

- It tells coaches when to intervene and when to shut up
- How to develop effective behaviors
- Athlete-centered way of developing effective learners
- To develop effective communication of players

**Interesting take on the job of a coach:** Not to correct athletes, but to observe them solving problems themselves.

**Non-negotiables:** The parameters/responsibilities identified by the athletes for the coach before the first session even starts. By allowing players to define these things themselves, sessions will make a lot more sense to a lot more players much more quickly. Allowing players to define the parameters and responsibilities of the coach is the opposite of the coach saying, "Okay, let's let them figure it out."

- Two-way communication
- Coach listens as much as speaks
- Allow the athletes to own their experience
- Ask the athletes: What does a successful training session look like to you?
- Give the athletes permission to tell you, the coach, that you are talking too much
- How would a coach go about identifying these "non-negotiables" with his/her players?

**Two rules of 3:**

1. For behaviors
2. For learning

**The Rule of 3 for Behaviors:**

- **The Rule of 1: Player monitors his/her own conduct**
  - Managing estate: The athlete owns his/her own behavior. He/she is aware of his/her state, chooses to manage the state, and makes choices.
  - Pursuing excellence: The first thing the coach asks the player to do is pursue excellence in every moment. Excellence is defined as doing the best you can with what you have in the present moment.
  - Committing 100%: The second thing the coach asks of the player is to commit to decisions. As coach, you should remind the athlete that you will never be upset as long as you make choices and commit to them. If the athlete does not commit to a choice, we will never have something to review and talk about.
- **The Rule of 2: Player Intervention (Players monitor the conduct of others and intervene)**
  - Players should recognize when another is "unacceptable" according to the above mentioned elements

- Intervening players may go out of their way to “get the targeted athlete back to acceptable.”
  - Intervening players should communicate effectively
    - Effective communication has the desire to impact
    - Consider what is best for the other person
    - Be authentic: Make sure you are managing your own estate properly if you are going to intervene with another person
  - **Note:** At the beginning of the season, as coach, give your players the ability to stop and call timeouts and resets. You don't want this to happen too often, but you can allow them to do this at the beginning so that they learn how to and become comfortable communicating with each other.
- **The Rule of 3: Coach Intervention**
    - If rules one and two are not happening correctly, then we as coaches intervene to have a positive influence on the players involved.
    - Our aim is to never get to 3

### Why use the Rule of 3?

- If you repeat or say something too much, players will not learn to think for themselves. Instead, they will learn that that can always rely on the coach to tell them what to do.
- Players and teams need to learn how to confront and work through challenges themselves in sessions so that they can do it in games as well.

### Using the Rule of 3 to manage training sessions:

- The goal is to get pressure in training sessions just high enough so that we never have to go to step #3.
- If we arrive at step #3, it means that we must reduce the pressure to make training more effective at step #1.
- The player intervention aspect of step #2 can actually be a good thing! We want players to have to work through situations with each other so that they are prepared to do it in the mayhem of a match. If your training sessions never get past step #1, they may be too easy.

### Use the Rule of 3 to evaluate your players:

- Who learns individually best?
- Who intervenes well with others?
- Who requires intervention most often?
- These observations will help you identify the leaders of your team, those who most often require additional assistance, and the special bonds and relationships amongst players within your team.

**Pre-brief: Begin every training session by identifying the commander's intent and explaining, or better yet, letting the players explain what a successful session looks like so that they better understand from the start the journey that they are on and the mission they have to accomplish together!!!**

### How to intervene as a coach (step #3):

- **A simple questioning sequence:**
  - Did you commit?
  - What happened?
  - What was the difference between what happened and what you wanted to happen?
  - What would you change, if anything?

- **Tiered discussion:** If players are struggling to show they understand a concept, you may need to stop and talk about it.
  - **1) Small groups discussion:**
    - Divide players into small groups.
    - Give them a time limit (30-seconds)
    - Instruct players to 1) reflect on what success in the session should look like, 2) identify the problem, and 3) come to a solution.
    - Athletes should feel comfortable asking for the coach's help.
  - **2) Big group sharing:**
    - All players come together.
    - Coach nominates someone randomly from each group (so that everyone is forced to engage in the small group discussion and be prepared for the big group discussion) to share their conclusions.
  - **3) Coach-guided conclusion:**
    - **Player first, player last:** Although guided by the coach, this final part of the break should begin and end with a player speaking.
    - Coach puts him/herself on the clock (30-second max)
    - How should the coach guide the conversation?
      - If the players say the right thing, end the conversation and ask them to show you.
      - If you don't understand their answer or they provide limited detail, ask for an example or more explanation.

**The Alex Miller Scenario:** What happens if a player answers a question correctly, but does not show you?

- Ask the player, "When did you realize that your choice was wrong?"
- Follow-up: "Why did you not change your behavior at this moment?"

**Important reminder:** Anything we want players to apply in a match scenario, we must consistently cover in training.