

Roles and Responsibilities of a Coach

The coach takes on one of the most important roles in S4D. The coach is the one who will be in direct contact with the youth participants and will not only have an impact on the individuals themselves but also on their communities. It is therefore essential to **be aware of the many roles and responsibilities that a good coach must fulfil** and how to successfully convey these to future instructors as a course facilitator.

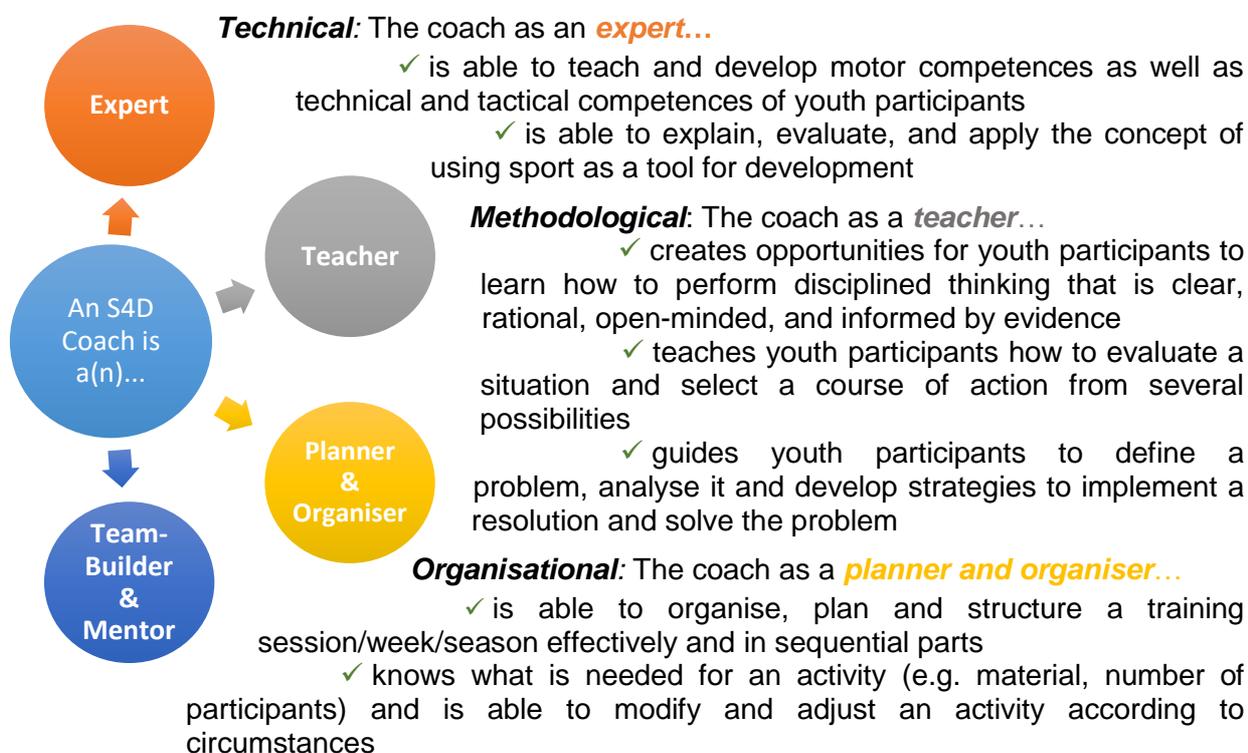
As always bear in mind that there are five main principles and that S4D can only develop its full potential if all principles are taken into account and applied.



The Roles of a Coach

An S4D coach should not only be able to improve the sporting skills of youth participants but more importantly **ensure that all four dimensions (cognitive, social, sport and physical) are developed** during S4D training sessions. For more information on this topic, see the basic course on *Multidimensional Development*.

Based on a modern understanding of teaching, there are four competence areas which a coach must constantly balance to ensure a successful training session. Above all, **an S4D coach must always act as a role model on and off the pitch**. That includes taking responsibility for the youth participants as well as the willingness to continually learn and grow as a coach and as a person. Furthermore, creativity and adaptability are important skills for coaches in order to design S4D training sessions according to the needs of the participants and respective context. If applicable, coaches can take on further responsibilities within their community besides coaching S4D training sessions.



Social: The coach as a **team-builder, mentor, friend and advisor...**

- ✓ allows youth participants to develop and maintain a mindset of solidarity that supports ideas, values, and activities of others
- ✓ provides opportunities for youth participants to express their opinions and involves them

- actively during training sessions
- ✓ empowers youth participants to acknowledge human dignity as the basis of living together, as well as protecting physical and psychological integrity

Further competences that an S4D coach should possess can be found on the ‘Sport for Development Resource Toolkit’ website under: [Essentials – S4D Competences – Coach Competences](#), and under: [Tools For Your Practice – S4D Teaching and Learning Materials – Palestinian Territories – Manual ‘Kicking youth competences’](#) (p. 13-15).

The coach must be able to take on many different roles. The appropriate roles must always be chosen according to the sociocultural context in which the S4D activities take place and must be based on the training participants. While the **coach must always act as a role model**, additional functions may depend on the participant’s age group. However, roles are not exclusive. The coach should always take on all of the necessary roles while bearing in mind the most important ones, which are displayed in the text box.

Primary Role according to the Age Group

- **Under 9:** Entertainer
- **9-12:** Teacher
- **13-16:** Expert
- **Over 16:** Friend

The Responsibilities of a Coach

One of the main responsibilities of an S4D coach is to **promote and enable the balanced, long-term development of youth participants**, taking into account physical, psychological and personal needs.

Furthermore, the coach must **ensure ongoing participation and satisfaction of the youth participants** by offering a challenging and diverse set of activities.

In order to achieve these targets, the following tables offer some important guidelines that a coach should adhere to when interacting with youth in a sport for development setting. These guidelines should be extended according to need.

☺ Try to implement...
✓ Involving participants in the planning and decision-making process
✓ Making participants aware that conflicts may occur and help them solve problems proactively
✓ Facilitating open discussions and the voicing of opinions
✓ Planning and evaluating coaching sessions

☹ Try to avoid...
× Excluding participants from decisions or rejecting their ideas
× Pointing fingers or shouting when conveying criticism
× Making the participants the target of your criticism – instead, focus on actions/behaviours
× Treating participants differently or unfairly

It is also the coach’s responsibility to be aware of and **prevent any kind of abuse or misuse of youth participants**. This includes physical, emotional and sexual abuse as well as neglect or bullying. Agreeing on a **code of conduct** with the participants may be a useful tool in order to prevent such behaviour and to create a sense of ownership among the youth. A sample Code of Ethics can be found on the ‘Sport for Development Resource Toolkit’ website under: [Tools For Your Practice – S4D Tools for Implementing Activities and Events – Guidelines – Guideline ‘Code of Ethics Coach-Player’](#).