

# GABRIELE

## FITNESS & PERFORMANCE



## WORKOUTS OR A TRAINING EXPERIENCE?

*By Vince Gabriele MS, CSCS*

It is really great that our industry has grown so much over the past several years. More information is at our disposal than ever before. Young athletes are getting bigger, stronger and faster and are training with sports performance coaches all the time. Ten years ago when I was in high school there were very few athletes hiring trainers to improve their speed and strength. With the increase in the number of professionals in our field how many of them actually really make a difference in the lives of the athletes they train? As a coach, you can show up and run a few kids through a bunch of cone drills to make them tired, but have you educated them on what they are doing and why? Can we really consider this being a performance coach - or just a person that tells kids to do drills. The reality is that we are in a very good position to help young athletes not only in sports but in life. Think of the coach that you had that always brought out the best in you. Now think of the one that just yelled at you for doing it wrong and offered no explanation of how to get it right. Which coach are you? The following are few ways to bring your business to a level above putting athletes through workouts and offering them an experience that will last a lifetime.

- **Hold Your Athletes Accountable.** Every athlete that trains with us is required to purchase and bring a foam roller to every session. This teaches responsibility. If you train athletes in groups(which you definitely should be doing for many reasons) bringing the foam roller represents an accomplishment to each kid in that group. If one athlete out of 6 does not bring their roller, the feeling they will have when all their friends are rolling and they are just standing around will usually cause him to never forget it again.

Have each of your athletes open an email account. Have them send you what they are eating, workouts they did on their own or just how they did in their last game. This shifts the training experience towards them and takes it away from their parents making them do something to get out of the house. They are doing something for themselves. If a parent calls you to schedule an appointment, tell them to please have their son or daughter call you to schedule their own appointment. I have done this for years and have never had a parent say no. Just make sure to do this only with athletes that drive themselves. Certain situations require parents to drive their kids in which you should take the call.

- **Educate Your Athletes.** One of the best compliments you can get from a young athlete is when they tell you “I want to do what you do after college.” Educating your athletes about their body, nutrition and why they are performing a specific task increases their experience. Every workout should have a main teaching point. This puts an emphasis on a particular skill and gives them a better opportunity to understand it. Quizzing your athletes while they are performing core stability exercises is a great way to make the session fun and at the same time reinforce teaching points you made earlier in the workout.
- **Create A Weekly Message.** We call ours the “Weekly Bolt.” Every week come up with a lesson about life, nutrition, training, hard work, teamwork etc. Go to the book store and buy a bunch of leadership or motivational quote books. Try to put a story with every word you use for that week. For example, if your message for a specific week is Hard Work, tell a story about a professional athlete that came back from a career ending injury and eventually made it back to the Pro Bowl. Your athletes will look forward to this and will learn many valuable lessons along the way. One of my favorite Books to draw from is “Train To Win” By Martin Rooney.

There are thousands of coaches out there who teach the pro shuttle drill, show athletes how to squat or get their athletes in great shape. If you have chosen to make this great field your profession you have the opportunity to make a positive impact on a young athlete's life every time they see you. Do your athletes look forward to training with you? Are you giving them something to look forward to? We all want our athletes to get great training results but why not deliver an experience along with improving their performance. Be the coach your athlete will remember and think about positively when he is old. Maybe the lessons you teach him will be relayed to his children. This is the opportunity you have and there is no better time to start than this afternoon.