



May, 2008

## Be A “Cracker Jack” Coach

It's baseball season. Teams are playing, coaches are coaching, and the fans are streaming into the stadium. Watching or playing, everyone knows when it's time for the seventh inning stretch. It's time to stand up and sing “Take me out to the ball game, etc”. And one of our favorite lines includes “buy me some cracker jack”, that childhood favorite.

Cracker jack has come a long way. Today it's a candy coated popcorn treat as well as referring to being the best. And that's where you come in. You can be a “cracker jack” coach by keeping a few simple guidelines in mind.

### 1. **Become dissatisfied with your current skills.**

Growth for growth's sake is good. Those who want to achieve more say to themselves, “I want to grow. I want to be better. I am willing to do what it takes to get there.” Become dissatisfied with your current skill level and create an insatiable drive to do what it takes to improve your coaching skills.

**2. Visualize the benefits of new skills.** Keep them at the forefront of your mind. Ask, “What good will come out of my increased ability? How will it help me to help my clients?” The answers to these questions act as the carrot, moving you forward.

**3. Understand your weaknesses.** If you want to improve, start with an area that you consider “not- my-best”. Take some time to consider what could be improved if you took time to focus on it. Find resources that can help you. Making improvements, even incrementally, will give you confidence to continue to work on areas “less than your best”.

*Seeds of change:*

***“Be not afraid of changing slowly; be afraid only of standing still.” ~Chinese Proverb***

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and should take about 5  
minutes or less to read.  
A small price for knowledge!

**4. Stretch yourself.** Set goals that will help you sharpen and focus your strengths. What areas do you excel in? What would it take to be even better? Balance your need to improve a weak coaching area with improving skills that have helped you in the past. You will consistently improve in all areas and have more to offer to others.

**5. Commit time each day to improvement.** It may take some time before you see the improvement you want. The key is to focus on steady improvement over time. Take it one day at a time. Even five minutes a day equals over a half hour a week, over two hours a month! Keep track of your time and you will be amazed at your new level of success.

**6. Hire a coach.** Take your own advice. People come to you because you provide a needed service. You know how to help them. In turn, hire a coach to help you accelerate your progress. Working with a coach will give you support, additional resources and ideas, and provide objective feedback when you need it. Having coach will spur you forward.

**Bonus tip:** Keep the end in mind. As your skills develop and grow, notice how your new confidence attracts those who want to experience the same for themselves. People love to be inspired by their coach!

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