

# *Helping Coaches Teach and Athletes Learn*

*“Collaborating with coaches to improve human performance through applied sport science”*

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Why don't they listen?  
and  
We did this yesterday!!!



# How do we learn?



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Our feedback is designed to encourage reflection



# Facilitator vs. Instructor

Instructional Approach	Rate of Change	Permanency of Change	Pressure Resistance
Direct Instruction	Fast	Weak	Weak
Guided Discovery	Moderate	Strong	Strong
Free Play	Slow	Moderate	Strong

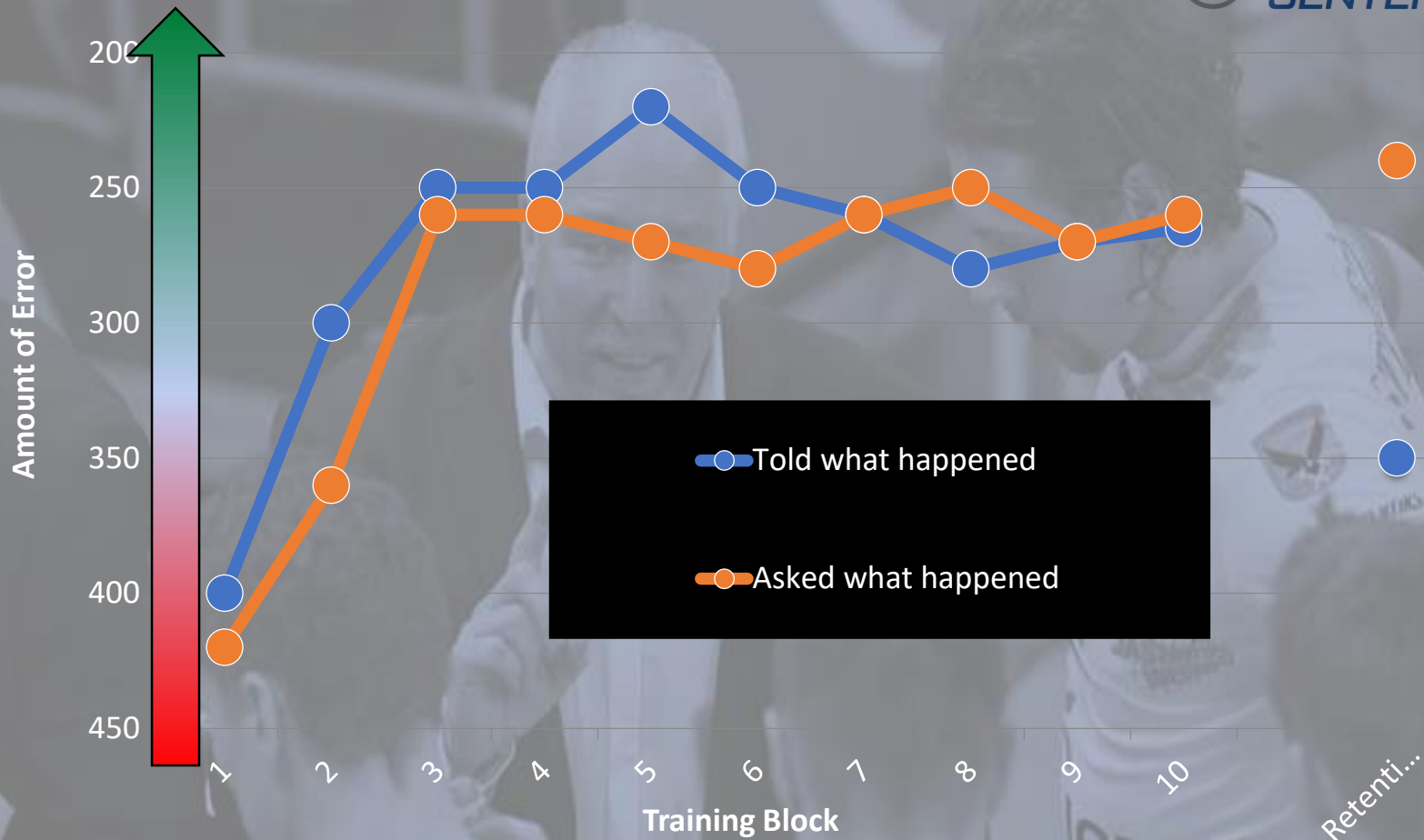
Getting people to do what you say is not teaching,  
and doesn't work in the long term



"Tell me and I forget.  
Teach me and I  
remember. Involve me  
and I learn."

-- Benjamin Franklin





*Knowledge is having the right answer  
Intelligence is asking the right question*





*“A good teacher can never be fixed in a routine. Each moment requires a sensitive mind that is constantly changing and constantly adapting. A teacher must never ask their student to fit his favorite pattern. In fact, a good teacher protects pupils from the coaches own influence. A teacher is never a giver of truth; they are a guide, a pointer to the truth that each student must find for themselves. I am not teaching you anything. I just help you explore yourself”*

- Bruce Lee



*“The fish thing...”*

Am I telling you my solution to a problem or am I helping you find your own solution?





How often  
should a coach  
give feedback?



# How many comments would (should) a coach make in a 3 hour session?

## Head Coach comment count in a 3 hour training session

448	673	365
624	342	312
348	438	673
487	499	502

*It's not bad... but just encourages you to think about how much information you are giving out.*

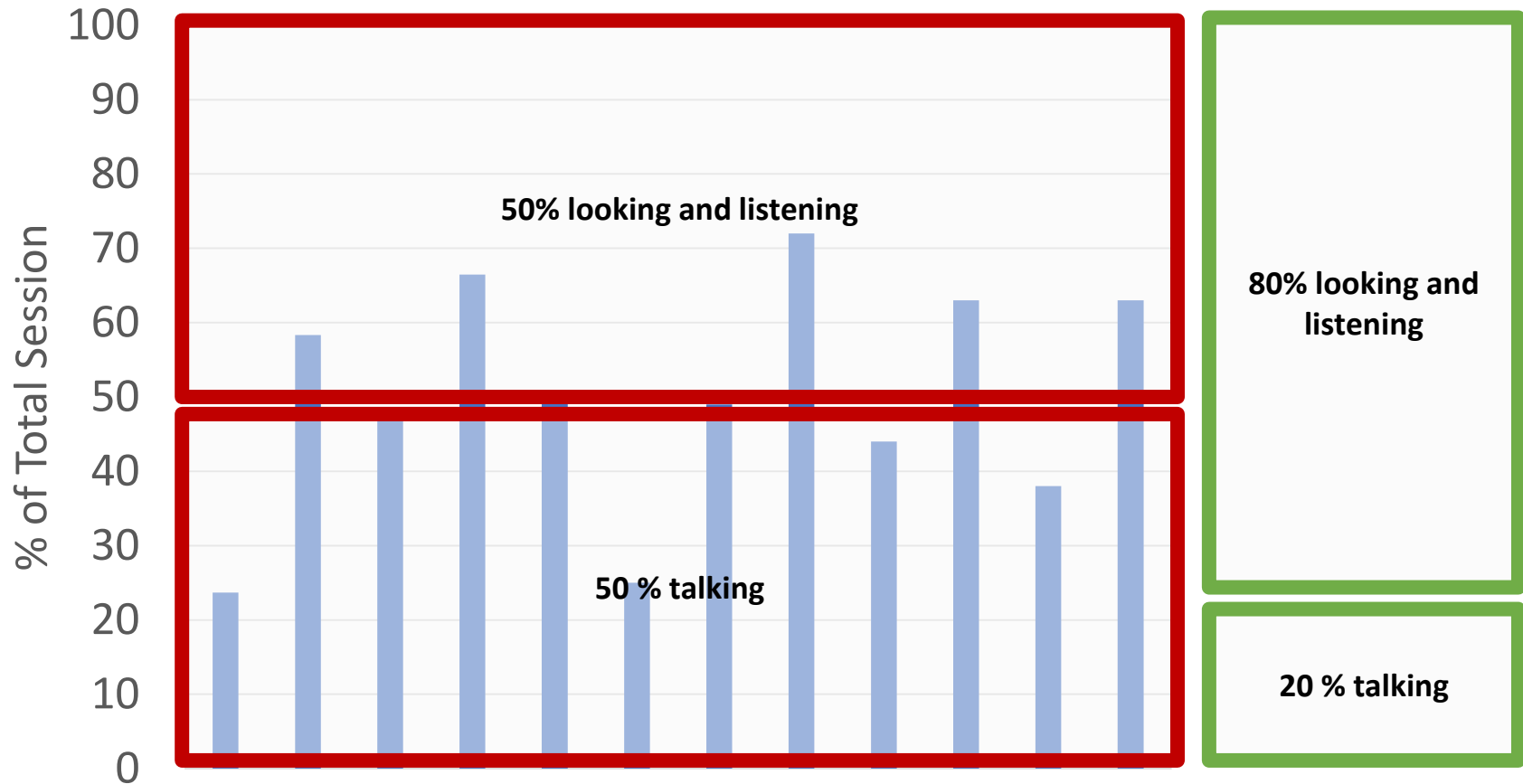


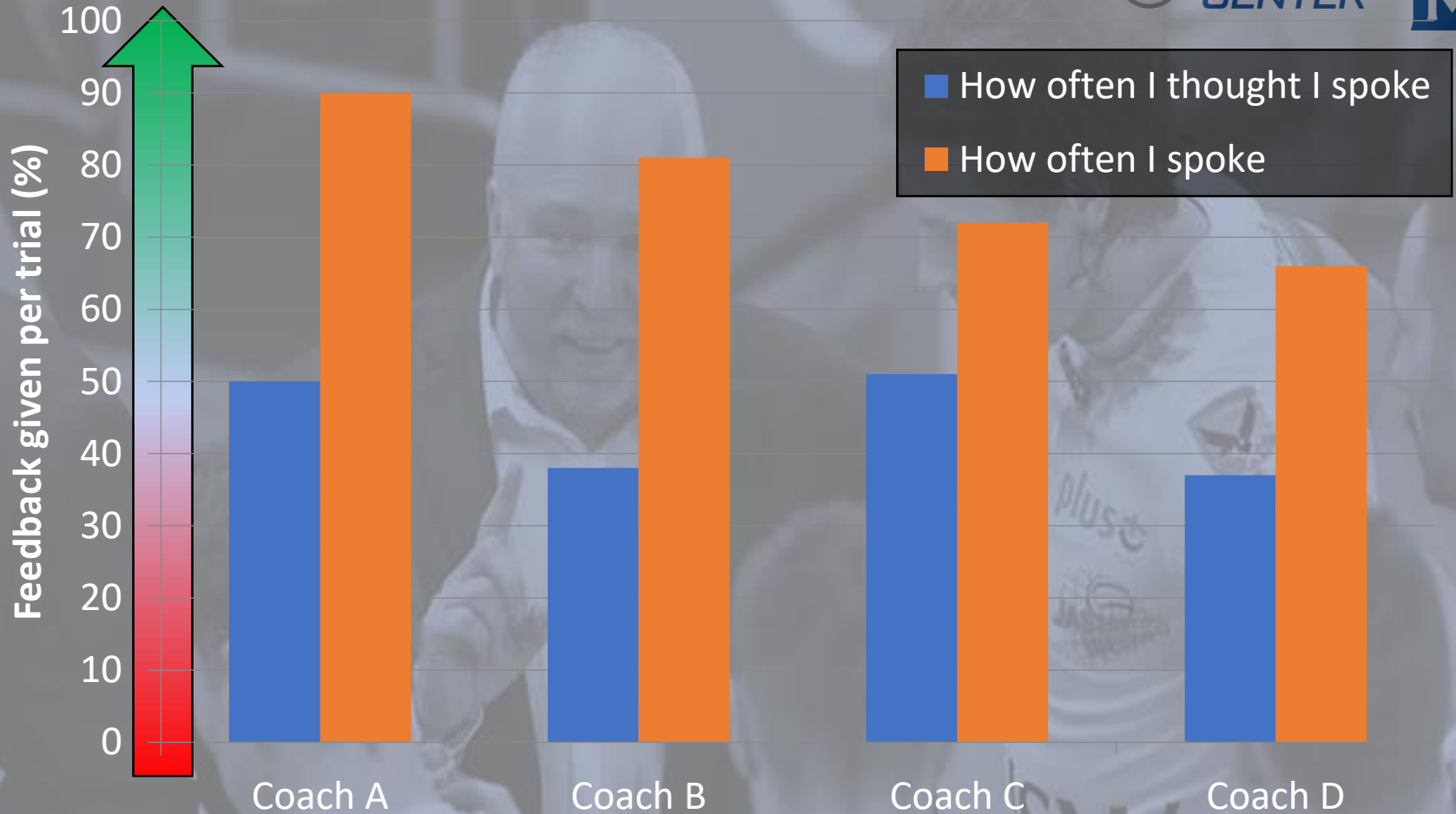
*“The most important thing in coaching is communication. But it’s not what you say, it’s what the athlete absorbs.”*

*- Red Auerbach*

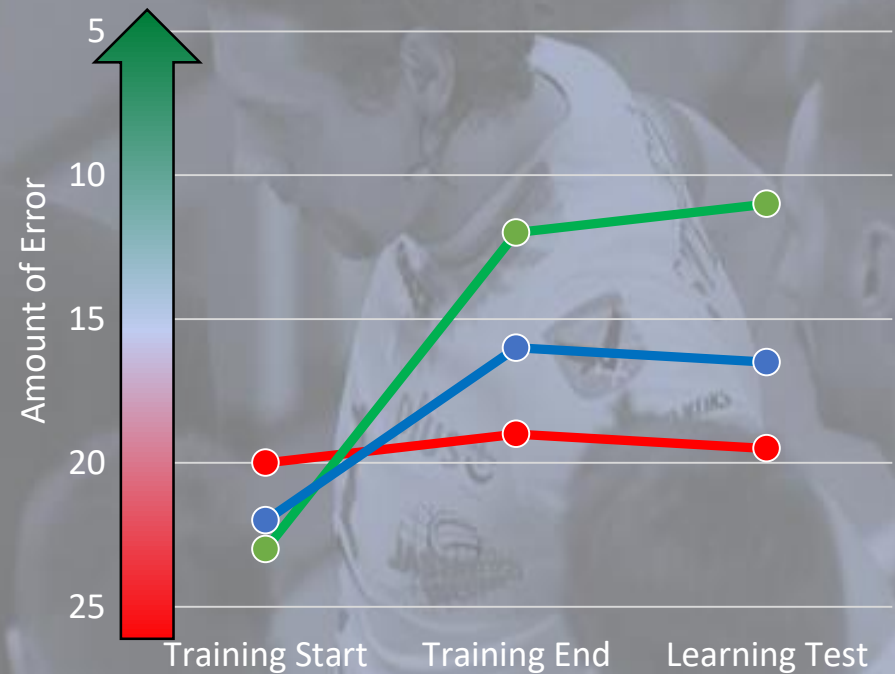
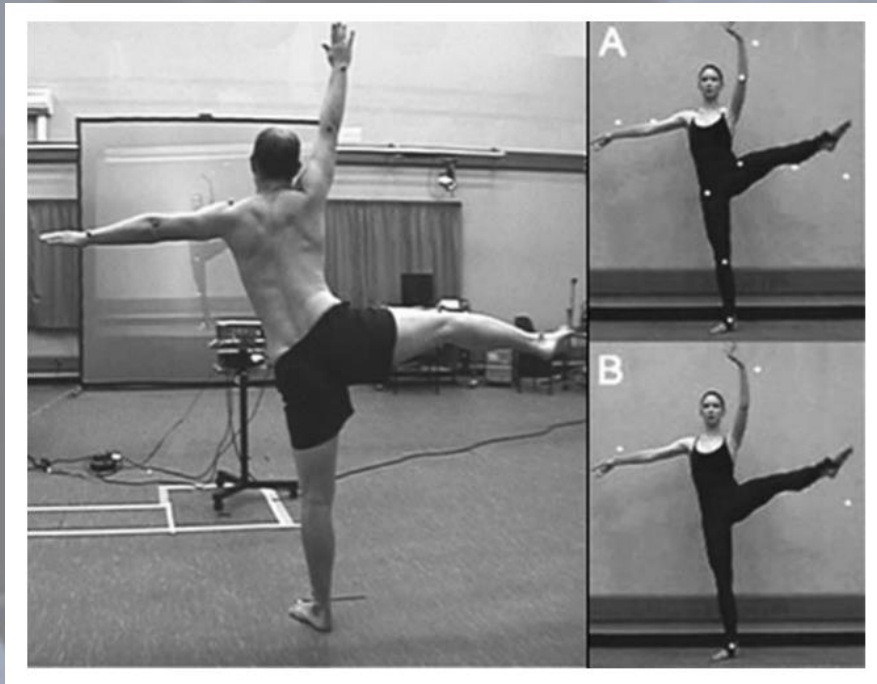


# Coach Talk Time









- Full Feedback
- Reduced Feedback
- No Feedback



Given the opportunity athletes will find their own solution



# Caroline Buchanan: Our first meeting

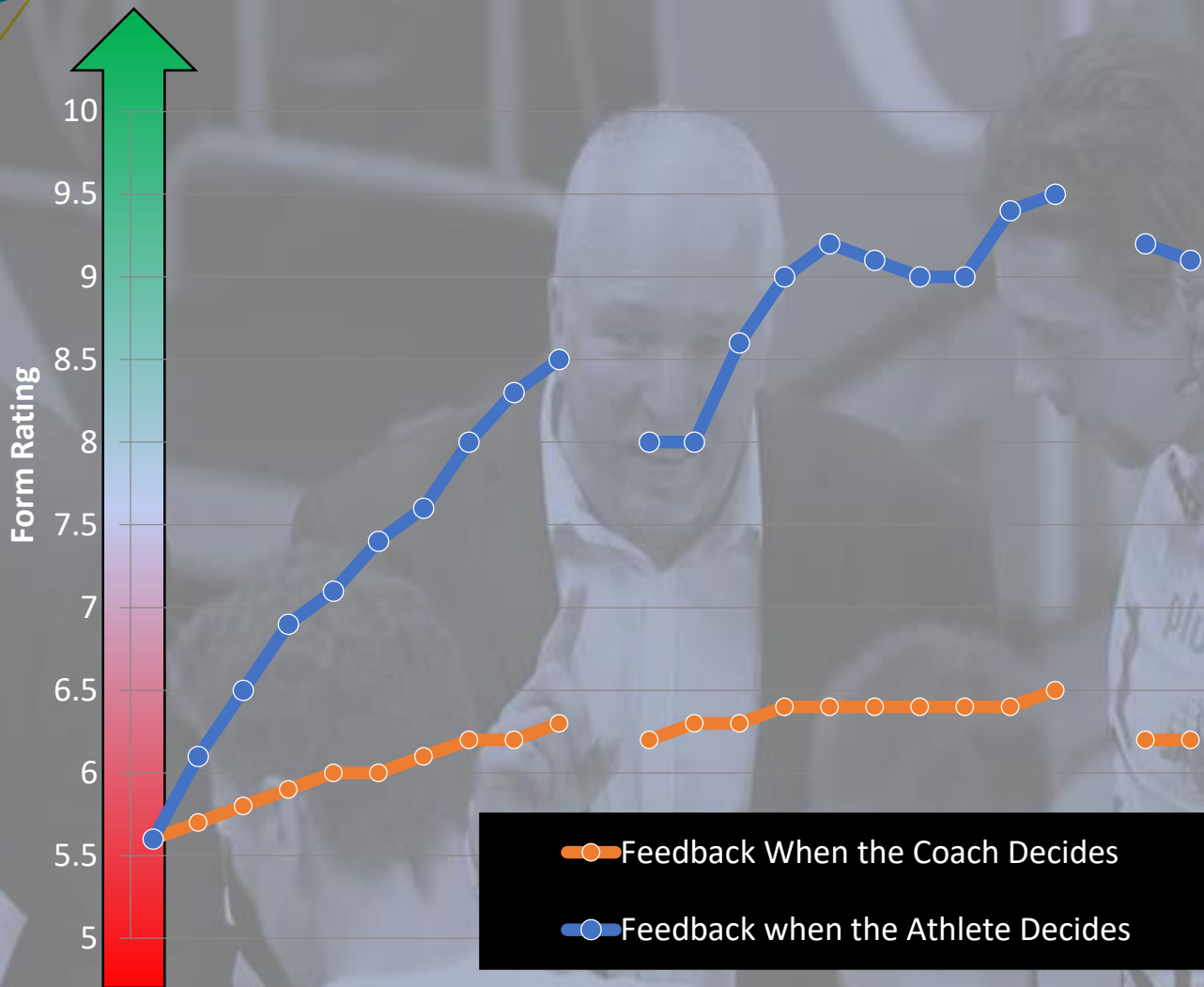


*"I was not looking forward to meeting you. They told me a skill specialist was coming and I thought, oh no, I don't want someone to make it more complicated than it already is."*



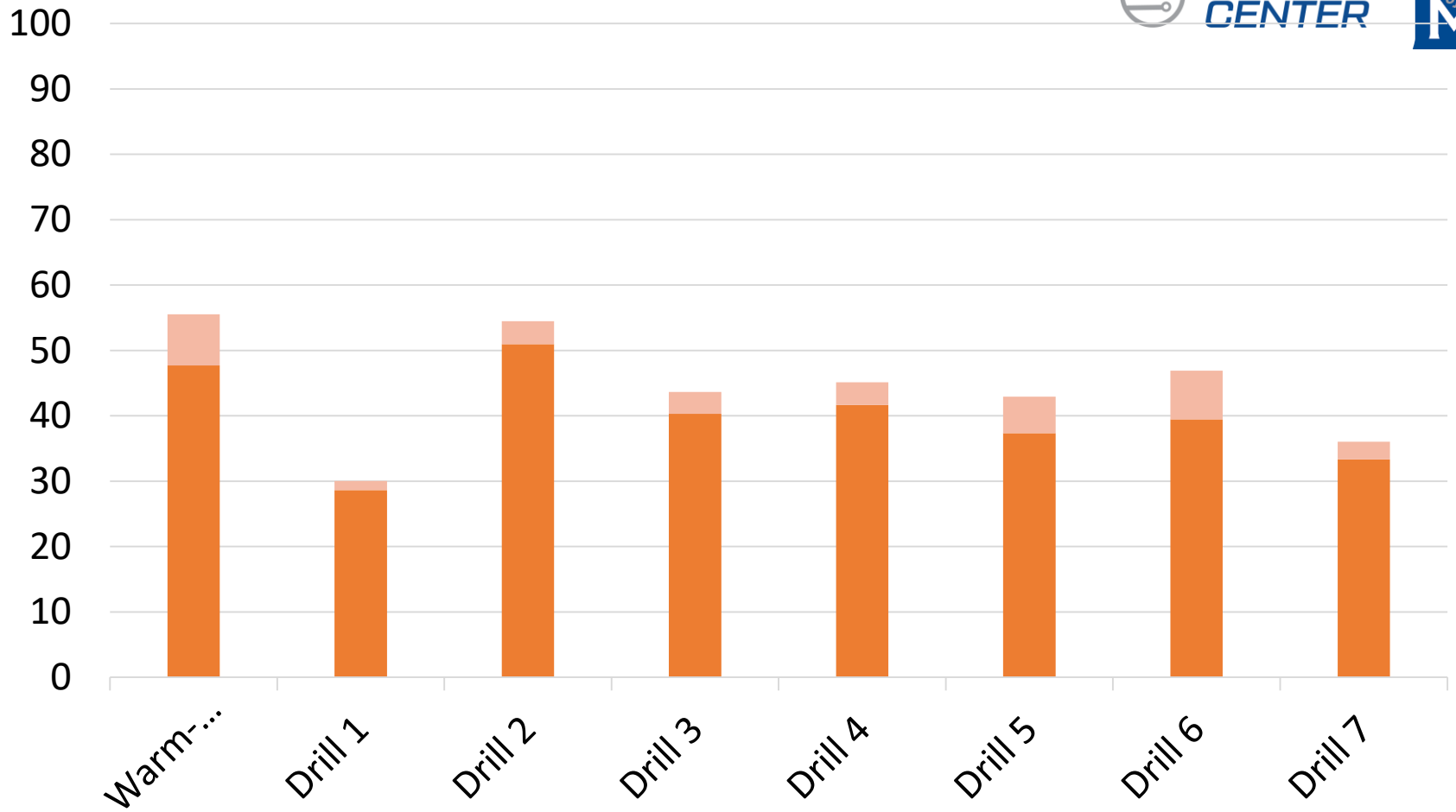
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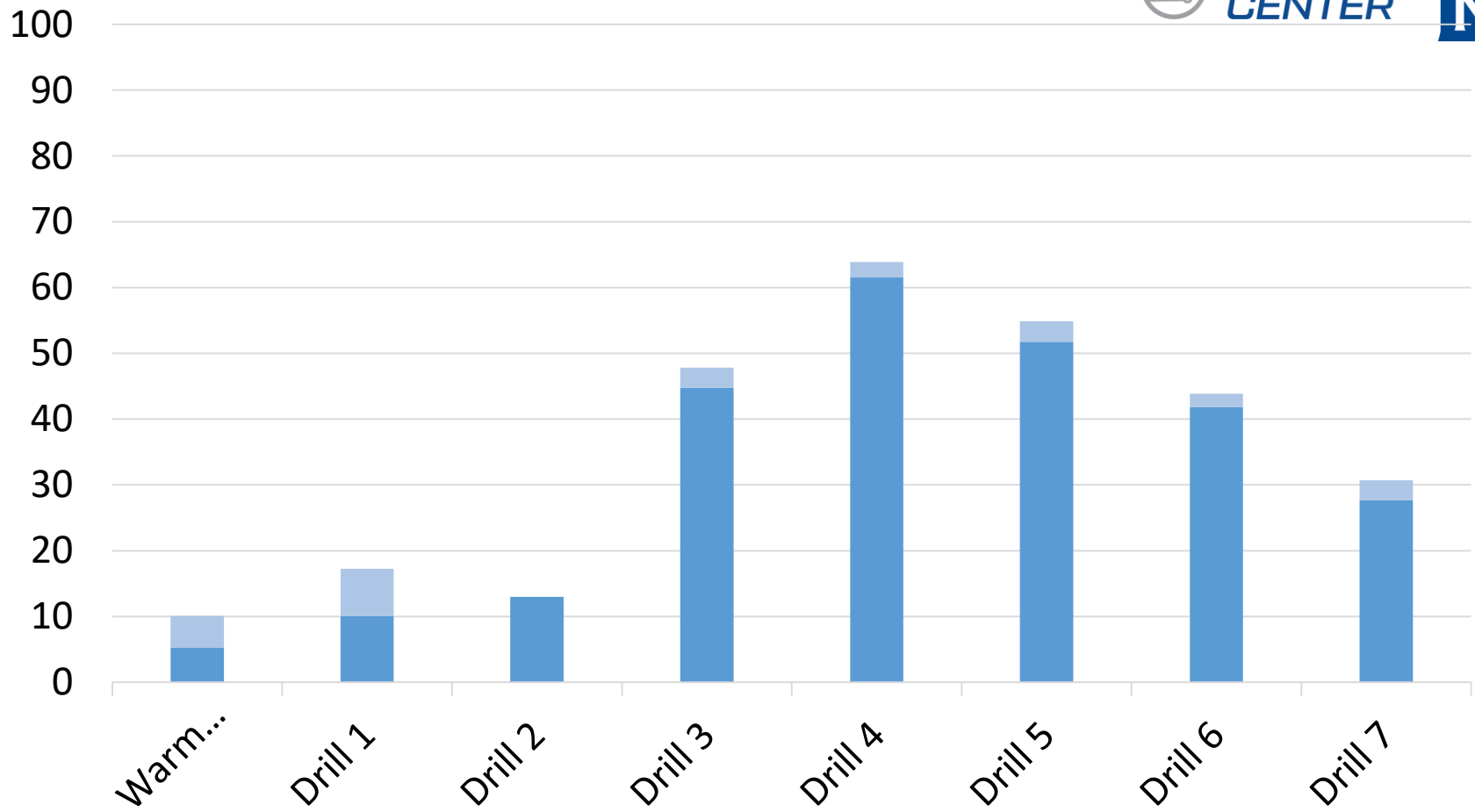
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Training Block	% of Total Requests
1	9.1
2	9.8
3	10.5
4	9.4
5	6.9
6	5.4
7	2.5
8	3.3
9	1.1
10	4
11	7.6
12	6.2
13	7.2
14	4
15	1.4
16	2.9
17	2.2
18	2.5
19	1.1
20	2.9







*“Coaching is not in the feedback. Coaching is in the timing of the feedback. It is choosing the moment when the feedback will have the greatest impact. It may not be giving any verbal feedback at all, but instead allowing the player or team to learn the lesson by themselves. It is allowing the errors that lead to learning. It is about trusting the athlete.”*

*- Mark Lebedew*



If you are looking to reduce the amount of feedback, stop talking while they are doing....

Schmidt (1997):

*Concurrent feedback degrades both the learning (as has been found in earlier studies) and the motor programs in more rapid tasks*

Sigrist et al. (2013):

*Terminal feedback was most effective. And while concurrent feedback fostered an improvement in training performance, this saw a decrease in the learning and retention of the skill.*







# How long should a piece of feedback take?



## What 26 seconds of feedback sounds like...

*“Ugh! oh boy, that wall yeah, that wall, are you two in line? okay you’re shifting a little bit make sure you stay glued side by side, okay were all sideways were all like rolling this way and then to go that way we are all completely sideways, okay to get our bum up there and then when we snap to the helicopter. I need the weight in the heel of the foot of the straight leg so that our tailbone comes up and I get a completely dry helicopter, and then use our muscles to keep our heel on our bum”*

## What 10 seconds of feedback sounds like...

*What count do you move on? (Athlete response) Okay, so what are we going to do when we put the music on?”*

If the purpose of feedback is to change behaviour...which one is easier for an athlete to enact?



## What 17 seconds of feedback sounds like...

*“Okay not too bad, at all, this wasn’t quite the beginning I meant. I kinda meant here but beginning of the figure beginning of the routine I’ll let it slide. Kazia just really early here before this, only person I just saw this beautiful leg, it was high I’ll give you that just out of place, what position should we be in here? Okay so what should be on the surface? Shins not knees, and your whole feet sticking out, every single one”*

## What 8 seconds of feedback sounds like...

*“Okay Kirsten you know who you have to be in line with at the end? (Athlete response) yeah okay can we take it back from where we started today. Like this afternoon”*

If the purpose of feedback is to change behaviour...which one is easier for an athlete to enact?

# Feedforward...

(not feedback)



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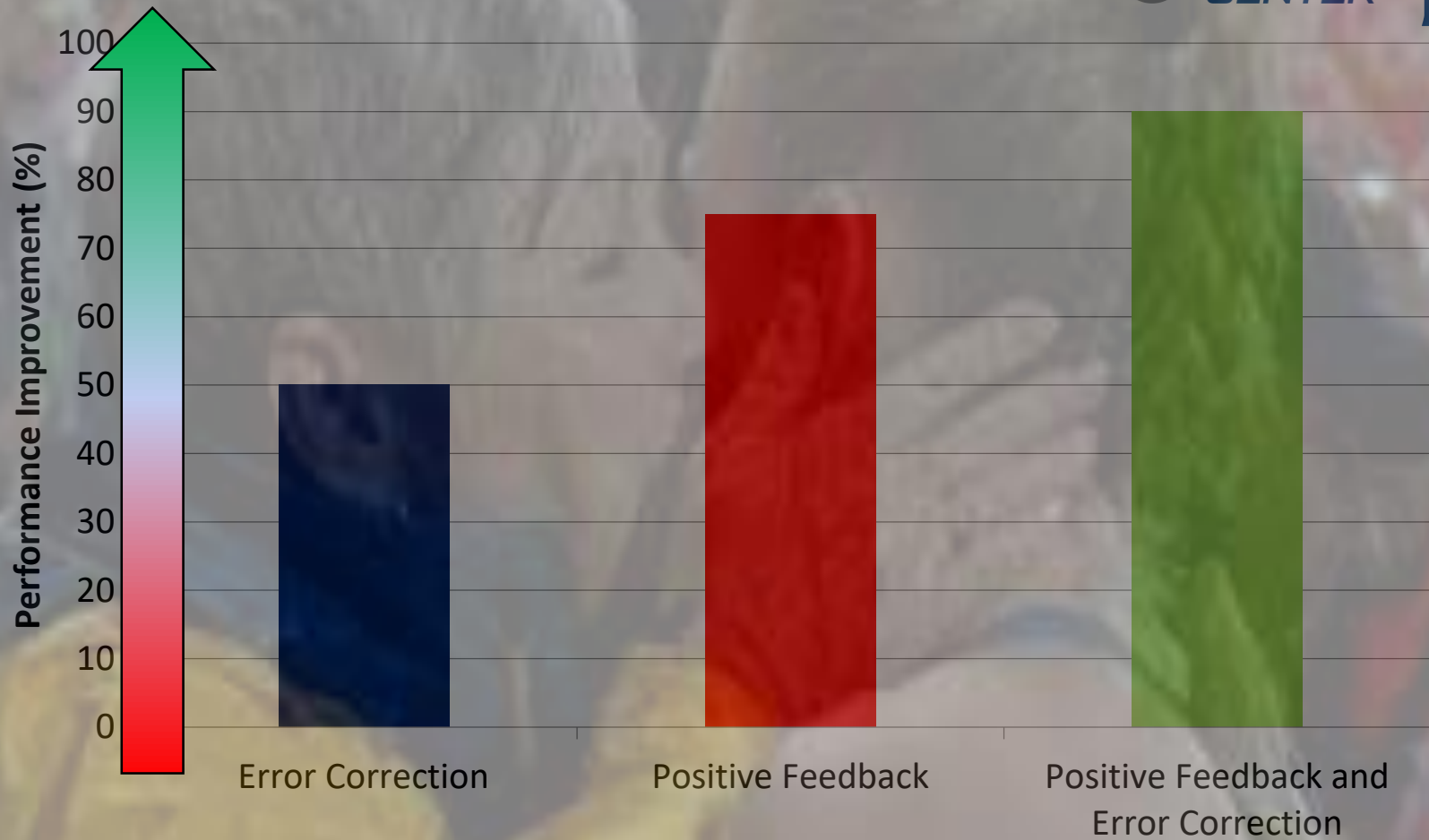
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 Sir Alex Ferguson is shown smiling and holding the Premier League trophy. The trophy is a large silver cup with a gold crown on top, and it is surrounded by red and white scarves with the letters 'BAY' visible. The background is a blurred stadium filled with spectators.

Sir Alex Ferguson was asked:  
“If the average coach says a hundred words, how  
many should a great coach say to his players?”

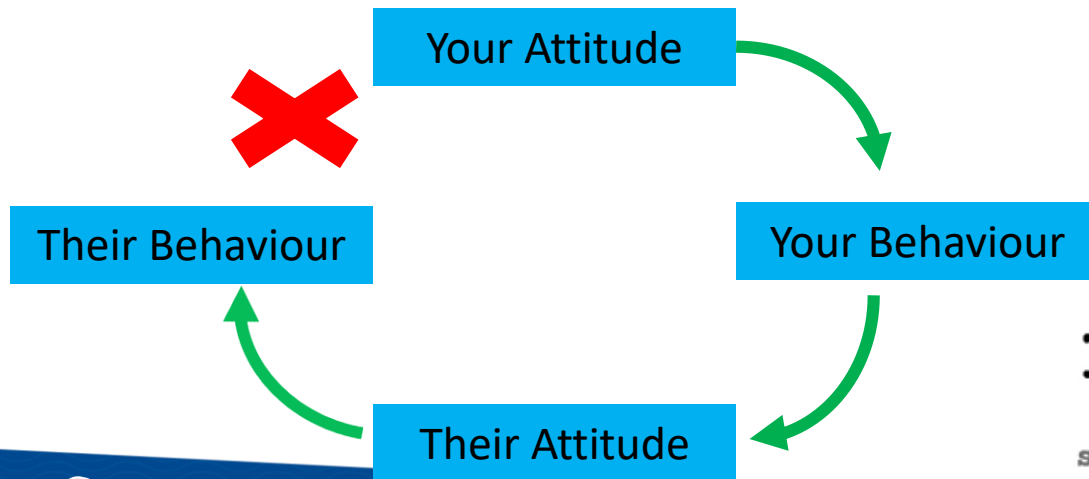
He replied “ten words – fewer if possible”







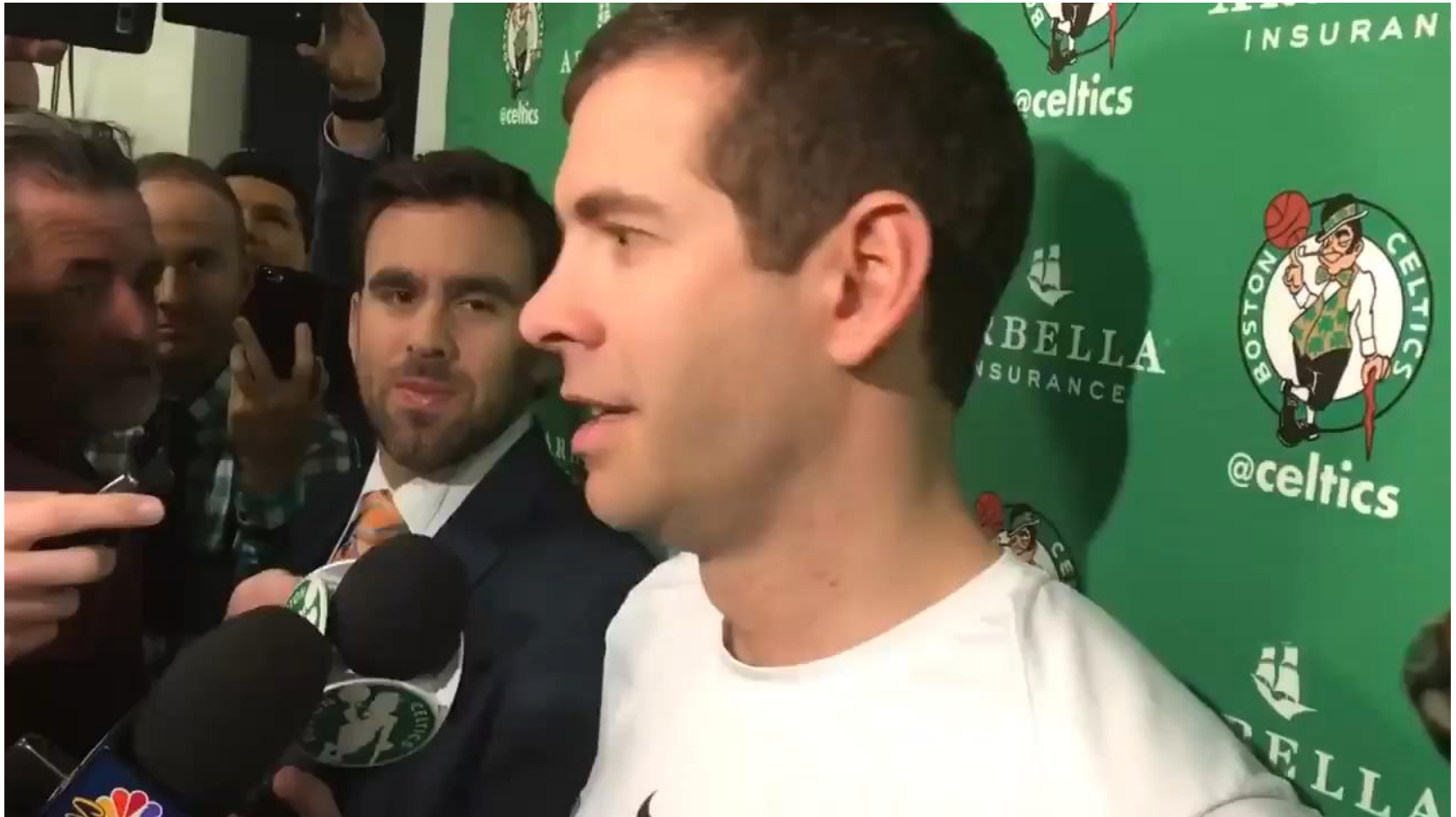
If we truly believe people are capable of amazing things we must show it at all times



## Emotional Contagion

the tendency to feel and express emotions similar to and influenced by those of others.









# Feedback Summary

Feedback is a tool to facilitate reflection and learning

The more you use it the less effective it becomes

So use it wisely

Encourage athlete ownership and engagement

Ask more questions

Be positive

Am I telling you my solution to a problem or am I  
helping you find your own solution?



# Self-Reflection Questions

- How often do I speak at training?
- How many times I ask questions?
  - How many times is the answer not 'yes' or 'ok'
  - How many times do I truly listen to the answer
- Can I shorten my feedback?
- Can I be more 'genuinely' positive?
  - Positivity with specificity
- Can I increase focus on the next effort rather than the past?
  
- Can I redesign my training set-up to reduce instructions
- Can I change my drill to give the feedback required
- Can I get athletes to design the training



*“Coaching is more than pointing out faults of technique. Coaching is about more than having athletes listen to you. Coaching is about guiding athletes through change.”*

*- Anonymous*

