

# Great Coaching Podcast Transcript

- Positive -

(Series 1 Episode 4)

## Voices of the Podcast

**Intro / Outro Theme:** Craig Blain, UK Coaching

**Narrator:** Charlotte Potterton, UK Coaching

**Guest:** Wendy Russel, Hockey Coach & UK Coaching Ambassador

**Coach Developer:** Alan Rapley, UK Coaching

## Podcast Transcript

**Guest: Wendy Russell**

I think you should always go in with the kind of, active constructive, “how can ‘we’ work together towards getting you where you want to go” because as a coach, I want my players to be the best they can be and hopefully they know that I am invested in them.

**Intro Theme:**

This is the great coaching podcast. A series dedicated to exploring the Great Coaching Principles from UK Coaching. Episode 4 Positive.

**Narrator: Charlotte Potterton**

## Great Coaching Podcast Transcript

### - Positive -

(Series 1 Episode 4)

Being able to create a positive experience is a crucial aspect of holding a session that people keep coming back to. In this episode we hear from hockey coach Wendy Russell a champion of inclusive coaching, about the importance of bringing positivity into your coaching and the impact this has both on you as a coach and the people attending your sessions. It was interesting to hear from Wendy what positive meant to her.

#### **Guest: Wendy Russell**

Coaching I think is all about supporting the athletes and the players in front of you, and that is massively about making sure that the environment and what you are doing is a positive experience for both you and the athlete or the players in front of you. So, you've got to be constructive, optimistic, confident and approachable, but then the 'doing part', so what the session looks like has to be a good learning environment, because if it's not positive, I don't think it can be a good learning environment for the athletes or the players in front of you.

#### **Coach Developer: Alan Rapley**

## Great Coaching Podcast Transcript

### - Positive -

(Series 1 Episode 4)

Hi, I'm Alan Rapley a Coach Developer from UK Coaching. It is important to reflect on the positive aspects of your coaching and make time to understand your strengths, and how these will impact others. I will be providing some reflective questions to help you make sense of the conversations you will be listening to.

How can positivity enhance the learning environments you create for your participants?

#### **Narrator: Charlotte Potterton**

It is clear then that being positive has the benefits of creating a constructive learning environment for everyone involved, so why is being positive so important in coaching?

#### **Guest: Wendy Russell**

It has to be a positive environment otherwise I don't think athletes necessarily learn in environments that aren't like that. So, the environment for me, includes the coach, the practices and the feedback you give the players or the athletes in front of you. You have to also

## Great Coaching Podcast Transcript

### - Positive -

(Series 1 Episode 4)

make the environment so they are not scared to fail, because as they say “you always learn by your mistakes” and so therefore, if it’s a positive environment then they are not afraid to make mistakes, they’re not afraid to give things a go, because they feel that the practice is set up that way, you’re there for them to allow them to make mistakes. You’ve also got the feedback aspects, and the type of feedback you give has to be positive as well.

#### **Coach Developer: Alan Rapley**

How do you gain and give feedback to enhance positivity within your sessions?

#### **Narrator: Charlotte Potterton**

As this is an important aspect of establishing an enjoyable and memorable experience, I was keen to find out from Wendy, what strategies she uses to bring positivity into her sessions?

#### **Guest: Wendy Russell**

## Great Coaching Podcast Transcript

### - Positive -

(Series 1 Episode 4)

I this year have tried to ban the word No! So, stopping using sentences that begin with the word “No”. I found it quite difficult at the start. So, not saying, “No, I don’t want you to do it that way” or “No, you need to change the way you’re doing that”. I am still trying to work on my practice and session design, so that my players when they’re playing hockey feel confident to make mistakes. But it has to be engaging as well, I think fun sessions, players then don’t mind making mistakes. I love playing random games, and they don’t see that as, in their minds it’s not training, it’s a fun game, but in my head I know they’re learning. One thing I am really trying to work on, is the kind of feedback I give them. So, using ‘Active Constructive Responding’ to try and help them be more optimistic and problem solve within the session as well.

#### **Coach Developer: Alan Rapley**

What are the different ways you bring positivity into your coaching sessions?

#### **Narrator: Charlotte Potterton**

## Great Coaching Podcast Transcript

### - Positive -

(Series 1 Episode 4)

While these strategies may be familiar to some coaches, other coaches may not have similar experiences to draw upon. I asked Wendy to suggest some advice for coaches who like to take a similar approach to get started or would simply appreciate some insight from another coach.

#### **Guest: Wendy Russell**

I would say start with small things, don't try to change everything you do in a coaching session from what you are used to. Make small changes. I think the barriers I've had, I share that with my players. I believe there is no such thing as a barrier, I think it's a different approach. So, make sure if you think, "oh I don't think I'm going to be able to do it, this is so difficult I'm not going to be able to do it", there are so many people you can ask if you are struggling. But also, reflect, because I want my players to have a positive experience and be there, but I'm not so positive on myself, when I reflect on my sessions, and that is one thing I've massively learned, is don't be frustrated and look back. Actually, think, "for me, this is the positive I have taken out of my session." Do small things but also don't be too hard on yourself.

## Great Coaching Podcast Transcript

### - Positive -

(Series 1 Episode 4)

#### **Narrator: Charlotte Potterton**

Coaches like Wendy make an active decision to create a positive coaching environment for the people who attend their sessions. We have discussed the affect this can have on the people who come to your sessions, so what affects does this have on the coach?

#### **Guest: Wendy Russell**

I think if it's a positive environment, everyone is just having fun. And the more fun you have, the more you want to go back as a coach. Me personally, I am a massive advocate that everyone should have some experience of coaching. Because what you get out of it as a coach is just as rewarding as the players. Turning up in the freezing cold in the middle of winter - because my sport is played through winter, outside, when it's VERY VERY cold! – and you kind of think “oh, do I really want to go?”, but because you're having fun you don't realise it, and they're having fun, and therefore the whole environment is a more positive and engaging experience.

#### **Coach Developer: Alan Rapley**

## Great Coaching Podcast Transcript

### - Positive -

(Series 1 Episode 4)

How can you make time to reflect on how your own coaching has a positive impact on your own wellbeing?

#### **Narrator: Charlotte Potterton**

And finally, I had to wonder if this approach can be applied to all aspects of a coaching session. For example, should a coach still be positive - and can they still be positive - if they have to communicate negative feedback.

#### **Guest: Wendy Russell**

As a teacher, I looked at something call Active Constructive Responding which is about giving feedback to students, written feedback, and as a coach I was like, “how can I apply this verbally?” and I am a massive fan of it. You have four different types: 1) the ‘Walking Wounded’ – so as a coach when you’re giving feedback you’re like, “no, no, you’re doing it all wrong, why are you doing that, what have I told you?” You can get parents who stand on the side line going, “no, you’re doing it all wrong, why are you doing that?” And that automatically to me was the players in front were scared of doing something wrong. Or they didn’t want to turn



## Great Coaching Podcast Transcript

### - Positive -

(Series 1 Episode 4)

up the next week in case they tried something new and got it wrong. I call the players who have that type of coach 'the walking wounded' the coach who is just negative all the time. You've then got 2) 'Passive Destruct', which is the coach who kicks bottles, shakes their head or tuts under their breath and again that is a negative environment for the players as they pick up on that and see that. You then have 3) the 'Passive Constructive' which are what I call 'the faithful followers' so they're the coaches that go, "Well done" to their players and "good effort well done" but there isn't any real reason why that was good or where to go next. Players like that, they get a buzz off a coach going "yeah that was brilliant" – "I don't know what I did well, but yeah OK, I'll take it." Then you got 4) the 'Active Constructive Feedback' so that's where you kind of go, "Well done, I really like the way your feet were in that position, that was really good" but then you follow it up with a question, so, "How do you feel?". So, if they missed a shot on goal, but you can still say, "brilliant I really liked the way that your hands were on the stick, how do you feel about the fact that you missed?" or "How did you approach that?" so you basically engage them in the conversation. I don't think you can ever give a player negative feedback straight away,

## Great Coaching Podcast Transcript

### - Positive -

(Series 1 Episode 4)

because there is always something that they do well on. So, if you put that in there, it makes them engage in a two way conversation and then you can address – I wouldn't say it's negative feedback necessarily – it's more constructive, just to improve their technique a little bit. I don't think there is necessarily a negative slant on feedback. I think you should always go in with the kind of, active constructive, “how can ‘we’ work together towards getting you where you want to go” because as a coach, I want my players to be the best they can be, and hopefully they know that I am invested in them.

### Outro Theme:

This has been the Great Coaching Podcast from UK Coaching. If you would like to find more episodes on the great coaching principles, search for the Great Coaching Podcast on the UK Coaching website [ukcoaching.org](http://ukcoaching.org).