Sports Assistant

Training

Worksheet

**Lesson 2:** Working with athletes with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD)

**Sports Assistant Training**

Worksheet

**Instructions**

1. Read the definition of IDD.
2. How are people with disabilities similar and different from persons without disabilities?
3. Explore different communications methods.
4. Complete the activities in the worksheet.

**References**

* Special Olympics Quick Reference Coaching Guide
* Handout – Working with Special Olympics Athletes

**Intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD)** include many conditions that impact intellectual, physical, and/or emotional development. People who have an IDD may experience difficulties with major life activities such as:

* Language
* Movement
* Learning
* Self-help and problem solving
* Social and life skills

**Persons with IDD and persons without IDD are more similar than they are different.** Special Olympics athletes have the same goals, desires, and dreams as other athletes.

1. What are some other characteristics that both Special Olympics athletes and other athletes have in common?

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Everyone has strengths and weaknesses when it comes to learning. People with IDD may use different words, may need extra time in understanding and may learn at a different speed or in a different way. It’s important to understand the different ways we learn and how communication plays a role in that process.

1. What are your strengths and weaknesses when it comes to learning?

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1. How do you learn best?

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**Communication** is an important tool in teaching and training athletes with and without IDD. As a leader it is your responsibility to inspire and motivate others. To do so, you need to be sure your message is understood.

Communication requires:

* Speaking and listening
* Explaining wants and needs

**Communication and Sport Assistants**

* **How do you think people learn differently?**
* **What did your coach do to help you to learn? Or to help you and your teammates understand new tasks or instructions?**
* Did they ask you questions?
* Did the give you time to ask questions?
* Did they break the tasks into smaller parts (for example practicing a chest pass while standing in front of a wall, before practicing with a person and then practicing while moving).
* **What are the different ways in which your coach communicated messages?**
* Did they use verbal instructions?
* Demonstrations or Videos?
* Did they use images or pictures?

**Communication tools**

As stated above, everyone learns in a different way and has their own strengths and weaknesses when it comes to learning. Athletes with IDD are the same. To ensure that you are communicating effectively, you can use one or a combination of the tools below to help you get your message across.

**Think of examples where you have learned something by the methods described below. Write your example in the box on the right.**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Tool** | **Definition** | **Example** | **Your example** |
| **Use easy words** | Words need to be clear and have only one meaning. | WalkLookStopStandRun |  |
| **Use only a few words** | Give simple instructions with short sentences | “Go to the ball” |  |
| **Use pictures** | Use pictures either instead of words or to explain words in a visual way. |  |  |
| **Give step by step instructions****Pause between steps to be sure you are understood****Use as few instructions as possible to make your point.** | Give one instruction at a time. Wait for the person to complete it before you give the next instruction. Continue with this process until the entire action is completed. | * Take a ball out of the bag.
* Walk to the end of the court.
* Place the ball on the floor between your feet.
* Kick the ball
 |  |
| **Demonstrate by actions** | Perform the skill you are teaching to show the athlete how to do it. Demonstrations are also useful in helping to show where the skill is used and to reinforce a previously learned skill. | When teaching someone to dribble a ball, you should show the desired action by dribbling a ball yourself.  |  |
| **Give positive reinforcement** | To encourage good effort and attitude, be sure to give positive feedback throughout the training. Positive reinforcement should be specific rather than general.  | "**Good job Mary, your foot position was excellent there**" or "**good job Mary, you followed through just like we talked about**" - this means the athletes knows not only that they did well, but exactly WHAT they did well. |  |