

15 NEUROINCLUSIVE COACHING TIPS

1

Assume competence.

Believe every athlete can learn and succeed when provided with the right supports.

2

Demonstrate before you explain.

Many athletes process visual information more effectively than lengthy verbal instructions.

3

Build predictable routines.

Consistent practice structures reduce uncertainty and cognitive load.

4

Provide advance notice of changes.

Whenever possible, let athletes know when drills, schedules, or expectations will change.

5

Use clear, concrete language.

Replace vague phrases like "work harder" with specific actions such as "keep your knees bent during the landing."

6

Offer processing time.

Pause after giving instructions instead of immediately repeating or rephrasing them.

7

Give athletes choices.

Small choices — such as selecting a warm-up station or recovery activity — can increase autonomy and engagement.

8

Focus on strengths first.

Recognize what the athlete is doing well before introducing areas for improvement.

9

Create visual supports.

Whiteboards, diagrams, checklists, and demonstrations can reinforce learning.

10

Reduce unnecessary waiting.

Long lines and extended downtime can be challenging for many athletes. Keep athletes moving and engaged.

11

Normalize accommodations.

Present accommodations as tools for success rather than special treatment.

12

Watch for signs of sensory overload.

Changes in behavior may reflect environmental demands rather than a lack of motivation.

13

Offer movement breaks.

Short opportunities to move or reset can improve attention and regulation.

14

Partner with parents and caregivers.

Parents and caregivers have valuable insight into strategies that help their athlete succeed.

15

Celebrate progress, not just performance.

Recognize effort, learning, resilience, teamwork, and personal growth alongside results.

ALL
OF
US
ATHLETICS

Neuroinclusion in Sports