

Team Selection

Emphasis: Hidden Strengths

Purpose: This resource is created to provide an alternative perspective of team selection and the route to success. Sometimes coaching team sports requires us to look at the team as a whole, rather than a number of individuals, when making selection decisions.

We walk away knowing, sometimes the key to success is noticing and recognising the players you'd quickly dismiss

Example

One year I was selecting a squad for a school football team. We had lost all our attackers from the previous year so I was on the look-out for new talent. At the trials I saw two girls who didn't have the best footwork, but I could tell that they had great awareness of each other; they seemed to know where the other would run to and how to anticipate a pass between them. There was another player who had obvious shooting ability – any other coach would have picked her up quickly. However, I chose the two girls who worked well together. They ended up being in the Starting Eleven and tied for the top goal scorers in the league that year.

Through this experience, I realized the path to success isn't always obvious. Sometimes looking at a player's attitude and drive is more important than just looking at skill.

Rationale

There are a number of reasons why people play sport – however, one of the chief goals of playing either an individual sport or a becoming involved in a team, is to win. And winning feels great – whether you are a coach or a player. It's the outward result of all the background research, planning, team motivation and training.

Team selection is an important part of the process and trials help you pick the best players for your team. But, if you've been coaching for some time, you'll know that raw talent doesn't mean you'll win, especially if individual players lack teamwork, a positive attitude and a good work ethic.



We Succeed Together

We Succeed Together is the second strand of E Tū Tāngata and encourages us to redefine success. It doesn't take away from the fact that winning is important but it also recognizes that there are other ways your team can succeed together, even if you don't win on the day.

Thinking about this impacts even your selection process. It's worth considering the following attributes when putting your team together:

- Skill
- A good attitude
- Sportsmanship
- A willingness to learn
- Hard work
- Encouragement
- Service



Success requires that everyone in the team is valued; they need to know they are important members of the team and have a willingness to work together. Sometimes, it's the ones that don't shine on selection day that prove to be the most dedicated, hardworking players on the team. And, you often find that a team who encourages each other and works together behind the scenes is a team that performs well together on game day.