



STEP Curriculum Session Plan- Non- Verbal Communication

Theme: Non-Verbal Communication in Sport

Focus: Body language, eye contact, emotional awareness, teamwork

Duration: 60 minutes

PACER Mosel: The PACER model... Plan, Approach, Coach, Environment, Review, is a simple but powerful framework that helps coaches design purposeful sessions, deliver them effectively, and reflect on their impact to support player development and consistency across our Charity.

Plan

Session Intention:

To help participants understand and use non-verbal communication effectively in sport and how important the skill is in life, including body language, eye contact, emotional awareness, and teamwork.

Coach Planning Prompts:

- Who are you coaching today? What's their current awareness of non-verbal communication?
- What does non-verbal communication look like in your sport?
- How will you make it visible and meaningful in your session?
- How can you help players "read" each other better during games or challenges?
- How will you encourage players to reflect on how they communicate without words?
- What silent signals or gestures are already used in your team or sport, and how can you build on them?
- How will you support quieter players to express themselves non-verbally

Approach

Coach Delivery Prompts:

- How will you set **expectations** for silence and gesture-based communication?
- What strategies will you use to keep participants **engaged** without speaking?
- How will you model non-verbal cues **clearly** and **consistently**?
- Coach the curriculum built on **PYD**.
- Show **genuine interest** in their lives beyond sport.
- Provide **consistent support** and **encouragement**.
- Be a positive **role model**.

Coach

1. Welcome & Silent Warm-Up (10 mins)

Objective: Set the tone for non-verbal interaction

Activity:

- Coach leads a silent warm-up using only gestures and movement.
- Players must follow without verbal cues.
- Include mirroring exercises in pairs (i.e., one leads, one follows)

Life Skill Focus: Observation, focus, empathy

2. "Gesture Relay" (10 mins)

team for life

Objective: Practice giving and receiving instructions non-verbally

Activity:

- In small teams, one player receives a task (i.e., dribble through cones, pass sequence)
- They must communicate the task to teammates using only gestures.
- Teammates complete the task based on the interpretation.

Reflection Prompt:

- “What made the gestures clear or confusing?”
- “How did you feel when you had to interpret without words?”

Life Skill Focus: Clarity, interpretation, leadership

3. “Silent Team Challenge” (20 mins)

Objective: Build teamwork and strategy without speech

Activity:

- Set up a small-sided game!
- No talking allowed, teams must use hand signals, eye contact, and movement to play.
- Rotate roles: captain, strategist, motivator, all non-verbal

Reflection Prompt:

- “How did your team adapt?”
- “What did you notice about your own body language?”

Life Skill Focus: Teamwork, adaptability, emotional control

4. “Emotion Freeze” (10 mins)

Objective: Explore emotional expression and recognition

Activity:

- Coach calls out emotions (i.e., frustration, joy, confidence)
- Players freeze in a pose that expresses that emotion non-verbally.
- Others guess the emotion and discuss how it shows up in sport.

Life Skill Focus: Emotional intelligence, self-awareness

5. Cool Down & Reflection Circle (10 mins)

Objective: Reinforce learning and emotional regulation

Activity:

- Silent stretching led by a player using gestures.
- Reflection circle:
 - Use gesture cards or thumbs-up/down to respond to questions like:
 - “Did you feel heard today?”
 - “Did you learn something new about how you communicate?”

Coach Notes

- Avoid speaking during activities, use gestures, visual aids, and modelling.
- Encourage players to reflect on how they felt and what they noticed.
- Use silence as a tool for focus and deeper learning.

Environment

- Have you created a space where silence is respected, and gestures are valued?
- Are players supported in trying new ways to communicate?
- Is the session inclusive for different learning and communication styles?

- Did you celebrate achievements?

Review

- What did you learn about your participants' non-verbal communication today? What will you carry into your next session?
- Which players seemed most confident using gestures or eye contact, and why?
- How did silence affect the way players worked together?
- Were there moments where non-verbal cues helped solve a problem or improve teamwork?
- How did players respond when communication broke down, what did they do to fix it? How can you support this?
- Which activities helped players become more aware of their own body language?
- What would you change next time to help players go deeper with non-verbal communication?