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STEP Curriculum Session
Plan Template: Participant
Autonomy

Building Confidence





- Who am I coaching
- What STEP skill are we working on
- What do I know about the STEP Skill
- How will I coach it in my session



- What technical or tactical skills are we working on
- What biological areas am I developing in my participants
- What competition phase are we in

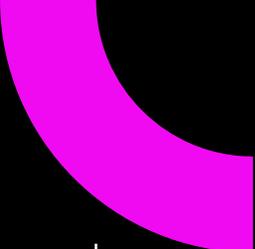
- Coach the curriculum built on PYD
- Create Developmental Relationships
- Learn about each young person as an individual
- Show genuine interest in their lives beyond sport
- Provide consistent support and encouragement
- Be a positive role model

- Coaching behaviours - GS principles
- Turn mistakes into learning opportunities
- Ask questions that promote reflection
- Connect activities to life skills
- Encourage peer teaching and mentoring
- Use of praise
- Player-led sessions
- Problem-solving through play

- Design Inclusive Environments
- Ensure all participants feel valued
- Adapt activities for different skill levels
- Rotate leadership opportunities
- Celebrate diverse contributions
- Facilities, equipment
- Time
- Crowd

- Review as part of the session/ in real time
- Participant review

- What went well
- Even better if



Duration: 60–75 minutes

Focus: Empowering participants to make decisions, reflect, and lead

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.

Intention: To create an environment where participants feel empowered to make choices, take initiative, and reflect on their own development, fostering autonomy within both the session and the wider programme.

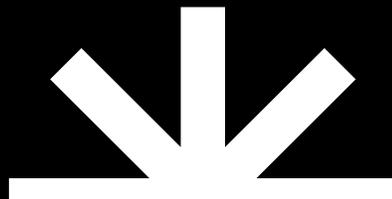
Plan

Things to think about: Who are you coaching? What does effort over outcome look like in your session? What behaviours do you want to notice and reinforce (i.e. persistence, trying new things, supporting others)? What do you know about the STEP Skill? How will you praise effort in your session?

Approach

- Coach the curriculum through a Positive Youth Development (PYD) lens, empowering young people to take ownership of their learning and development.
 - Create opportunities for choice, allowing participants to influence how they engage with tasks, roles, and challenges.
 - Rotate responsibilities and roles, giving all young people the chance to lead, decide, and shape their experience.
 - Support self-directed progress, encouraging individuals to set personal goals and reflect on their own journey.
 - Encourage peer-to-peer collaboration, where participants co-create, problem-solve, and make shared decisions.
 - Get to know each young person as an individual, understanding what autonomy looks like for them and how they prefer to learn.
 - Show genuine interest in their perspectives and preferences, reinforcing that their voice matters in shaping the session.
 - Provide consistent encouragement for independent thinking, especially when young people take initiative or explore new approaches.
 - Model autonomy-supportive behaviours, demonstrating flexibility, openness, and trust in participants' ability to lead their own development.

Session Intention



Coach

Welcome & Ownership Circle (10 mins)

- Begin with a short circle where participants share one thing they want to work on today.
- Coach introduces the theme of autonomy and explains that participants will have choices throughout the session.
Ask: "What does taking ownership of your learning look like today?"

Choice-Based Warm-Up (10 mins)

- Offer 3 warm-up stations (i.e., agility, coordination, reaction). To progress this on you could ask participants to think of what they would like to run for the stations before the session.
 - Participants choose which station to start at and rotate freely.
 - Encourage peer-led warm-ups, assign a few participants to lead each station.

Skill Exploration with Options (20 mins)

- Present 2–3 skill challenges or drills with different levels of difficulty or focus.
 - Let participants choose which challenge they want to work on.
- Encourage them to set a personal goal for the activity (i.e., "I want to improve my timing").

4. Game-Like Scenario with Tactical Autonomy (20 mins)

- Set up a small-sided game or scenario with flexible rules.
- Allow participants to co-create or modify rules (i.e., scoring system, team roles).
 - Midway, pause and ask teams to reflect and adjust their strategy.

5. Reflection & Goal Setting (10–15 mins)

End with a group reflection:

"What choices did you make today?"

"How did those choices affect your learning or performance?"

"What's one thing you want to carry into the next session?"

Optionally, use journals or a shared reflection board.

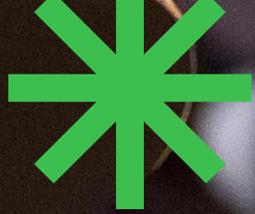
Coach Behaviours to Model

- Use open-ended questions
- Offer meaningful choices (not just superficial ones)
 - Validate participant input and decisions
- Step back to allow leadership and peer collaboration
- Encourage self-assessment over coach-led evaluation





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Environment

- Create a space where players feel safe to make choices, take risks, and express preferences.
- Avoid overly controlling behaviours or language that limit freedom.
- Build in options for how players engage (i.e. roles, strategies, groupings).
- Let players choose how they approach tasks or reflect on their learning.
- Ensure choices are real and meaningful, not just superficial.
- Allow room for player-led adaptations or spontaneous ideas.
- Avoid rigid drills or overly scripted sessions that limit creativity.
- Use open-ended tasks that invite exploration and problem-solving.
- Ask open questions that prompt reflection and decision-making.
- Encourage players to set personal goals or intentions.
- Be a facilitator rather than a director—guide, support, and step back when needed.
- Trust players to make decisions and learn from them.

Review

- Did the session feel open and flexible?
- Were players encouraged to make decisions and express preferences?
- Was autonomy visibly supported and respected throughout?
- What choices did participants have during the session (e.g. roles, strategies, groupings)?
- Were those choices meaningful and relevant to their development?
- Did players take up those opportunities, and how did they respond?
- Did you ask open-ended questions and invite player input?
- Did you step back when appropriate to allow autonomy?
- What will I adjust to better support autonomy next time?
- Are there participants who need more scaffolding or encouragement to take ownership?





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