



EBA Coaching Development & Education Program

Mission Statement: The Ephrata Baseball Association is committed to cultivating adult volunteer managers, coaches, and instructors through a [coaching development and education program \(see more\)](#) designed to teach consistent, effective instructional practices that are safe, fundamentally-based, and skill-appropriate for the overall instructional well-being of its participants.

EBA believes that these five qualities embody the type of manager, coach, and/or instructor that our Coaching Development & Education Program is committed to cultivating:

C – Comprehension

O – Organization

A – Attitude

C – Communication

H – Hustle

Comprehension

Comprehension of the fundamental skills, rules of play, and organizational goals and objectives of the program is a coaching requirement of EBA. Simply stated, managers and coaches must understand the basic elements; the what's, why's, and how's of coaching baseball at the level they are coaching at in order to be effective.

To assist our managers and coaches in learning the fundamental skills of the game, EBA has adopted "Baseball's Forgotten Basics," a field manual and instructional DVD, for every coach to use as their primary reference source. Every adult volunteer who wishes to enter our Coaching Development & Education Program receives a free copy of this manual at our

initial certification clinic. EBA has also taken a committed approach to providing all of our managers and coaches with year-round instructional and administrative support for learning and applying fundamental baseball instruction drills and skills under supervision from advanced instructors at the EBA training facility. Training initiatives prior to the season include safety training, as well as a variety of continuing educational opportunities focused on skill instruction that include an open invitation to all high school varsity baseball practices.

Organization

As volunteers, our managers and coaches are providing the participants of our program with a priceless service. All of these adults are devoting their time and energy to assist EBA because they enjoy working with children and enjoy baseball. However, good intentions often provide little assistance when it comes to tackling some of the more difficult aspects of certain job requirements. Organizing a dynamic practice that fully engages players on a regular basis requires proper planning, a variety of fun and safe drills, and the aforementioned knowledge of the fundamentals needed for skill improvement.

Due to the increased difficulty of this task, EBA has made a commitment to providing our volunteers with dynamic practice plans while affording them the ease and comfort of organizing those plans with a simple click of the mouse or by book marking pages in their coaches' manual. We recognize that after a long days work, most of our adults do not have the time or energy to effectively plan a practice. However, we also recognize that our participant-base, the kids, deserve a well-organized, structured practice and game plan that is both efficient and effective to the players' overall development and enjoyment of the game. Beginning this year, all of our certified managers and coaches will have access to successfully-proven practice and game day management plans via the EBA website, as well as reference materials in their coaches' manual.

Attitude

Attitudes drive behavior. Your [body language](#) is a result of your mental attitude. By choosing your attitude you get in that mood and send out a message that everyone understands, consciously or unconsciously. And, almost always, you have a choice as to what attitude to adopt. It is important that the adult component of EBA - parents, volunteers, and especially our managers and coaches, understand that children are very perceptive when it comes to interpreting the attitude of adults and that, because of this, we are role models for our children. Consequently, the

attitude we choose, and display, often determines whether we are perceived as positive or negative role models.

Therefore, our organization has taken the “Power in Positives” approach to training and managing the adults that make up EBA. As part of our Coaching Development & Education Program, we are advising our managers and coaches on how to use positive and encouraging tones when providing instruction at practice and during games; how to be aware of body language and non-verbal messages; how to avoid confrontation with umpires, opponents, and parents; and how to handle competition in a manner that *always* focuses on the positives, including what areas need improvement and how to learn from losing. Our approach stands by the quote, “A positive anything is better than a negative nothing.” We are hoping that this positive energy becomes injected and then circulates throughout our entire organization leading to a positive experience for everyone.

Communication

Unfortunately, possessing knowledge about something does not always translate into being able to teach others about that same subject matter. If you wish to share your knowledge with others, you must understand how to be a skillful communicator. In other words, how you convey a message, verbally or non-verbally, usually determines how well your audience will receive it.

Recognizing that managers and coaches are the most vital link in making each participant’s experience a success, EBA is providing managers and coaches with a variety of support opportunities for becoming more effective and dynamic communicators, and ultimately better instructors, through a series of clinics and reference materials. Our organization has also adopted four principles for communication for our adult volunteer managers and coaches to follow in all circumstances: Be Positive; Be Honest; Be Direct; and Be Consistent. As long as our adults live by these four principles, we feel that they can become more effective communicators when dealing with just about any situation, including how to be successful instructors; how to team up with parents; and how to deal with the occasional “bad call” by the umpire.

Hustle

In the true spirit of being positive, EBA has chosen to interpret one of the few definitions of the word “hustle” that can be viewed favorably. Why not? Baseball has done the same. Hustle can be used to reference an aggressive, energetic approach that demands maximum effort. In fact, “hustle” is synonymous in baseball for “trying your best.” *“The outfielder hustled after the ball, holding the runner to a long single.”*

While Major League Baseball gives out the “Heart & Hustle Award” annually to the player who not only excels on the field, but also “best embodies the values, spirit and tradition of the game,” EBA has taken a similar approach toward encouraging managers and coaches to embrace their opportunity to impact our youth by exuding an enthusiasm and energy that clearly demonstrates that they are willing to give a “little extra” in order to make a “big difference.” We believe that if our managers and coaching take pride in their own “hustle,” the players will follow suit, and in the end it will be the “effort that counts.”