A volleyball team is closely related to its coaches who play important roles in the evolving of a team style, the cultivation of its technical skills and even in achieving the final results. However, the function of a coach varies according to the level of a team. With the improvement of the team’s technical level, the key players become more and more important but nothing can deny the leading function of a coach in a team.

What is the function and the moral principle of a coach? These questions mostly concern volleyball researchers. Volleyball enjoys great popularity in China. Since 1980, the great victories of the Chinese women’s volleyball team in the world competitions have given impetus to the development of volleyball in China. The Chinese women’s volleyball team coaches drew from the experiences of advanced teams both at home and abroad making contributions to the development of volleyball. Based on my own experiences and from the development of the Chinese women’s volleyball team, I will summarize the functions and moral principles of a coach.

The functions of a coach:

When a volleyball team is organized, the main task is to foster the team style and achieve good results. Needless to say, the task of the coach is to raise the technical level of the team through meticulous ideological education and hard training, to strengthen the team so that they can strive for better techniques, demonstrate good sportsmanship and achieve good results. The coach must do research and fully understand his role which should guide his actions. Only in this way can he work with proficiency, getting twice the result with half the effort, and lead his team toward the goal.

The Chinese Volleyball Association has always put great emphasis on the coach’s function. They have repeatedly made it clear that the coach plays a leading role which enables him to give full play to his wisdom.
What role should the coach play, after taking charge of a team, to ensure its consistent progress? After full study and investigation, he should set the goal, make long-term plans for the team’s progress, and be a good designer of the team’s future.

A coach’s prior task should be to lead his team in striving for the goal he has set. And when they reach that goal, he should take the team’s objective situation into consideration and set a higher goal. My view is that the coach’s instruction and enthusiasm will stimulate the team’s progress. His great ambition and high ideals will point the way for the team, overcoming difficulties, leading them to victory.

In the world of volleyball teams rise and fall. There are many reasons for this. Perhaps the main one should be attributed to the fact that some coaches are short-sighted. They are likely to be dizzy with success and easily discouraged by failure, thus they lose their judgement in setting proper goals for the team. The establishment of correct goals will make the team’s future bright. The way to victory is always difficult. The coach should set forward, according to his team’s condition, detailed tasks for different periods and he should plan methods for rapid progress in training.

However, it is not difficult for coaches to set goals or create perfect training programs. But, as we all know, the coach works with the players, so his organizing and leadership abilities are tested. A coach must work patiently with players to bring every positive factor into play and make the players conscious of the goal. Meanwhile, the team style is very much associated with the coach as the team’s development is largely dependent on the strict management of the coach. In Chinese volleyball circles there is a saying, “for a team, three out of ten is training and seven out of ten is management.” In the course of management, a coach must set up rules for the players to follow. Only in this way can a coach carry out his plan and put it into action, otherwise, it would result in theorizing.

According to international volleyball methods, a coach must determine his technique, and through training, raise the technical levels to develop this technique.

In the international volleyball world, there are different techniques which coaches should combine with their own, and, thus, evolve their own style. The Chinese women’s volleyball team studied the techniques of teams from Europe, the United States and Japan, then formed a technical style of its own, creating an all-around attack and defense with varieties of techniques as its guideline. Only when the correct guideline is determined, can you have a definite goal.

In the course of training, a coach must create a training program which includes techniques, tactics, constitution and awareness. In technical training, the coach should put an emphasis on basic skills for combining purposes. In order for players to develop all-around, the coach should not overemphasize the attack or the defense. Tactical training must go hand in hand with the guideline forming its own tactics. Here I must emphasize that the essential lineup is most important. A coach should know his players well so he can effectively decide the lineup.
Meanwhile, directing and mock-up must be practiced in training. Constitution training is the positive factor in raising a team's level. The coach's function is to raise the team's level through concrete planning and training measures, emphasizing quick reactions and jumping abilities. These are important factors in determining the level of a team.

In a word, the coach's coaching abilities will directly influence the level of a team. A coach must study, and through rigorous training, put across his ideas to his players. The coach is the commander in the competition. The ultimate goal for a team is competition and getting good results. In competition, the coach, acting the role of a commander, tries to put his team in the dominating position. A coach should know his rival well in order to make the right decisions. The correct use of players will influence the development of a competition.

A coach is a coordinator for the team

When a team is in competitions at home or abroad, a coach must be able to predict the problems before they occur and solve them as quickly as possible. To sum up, a coach must be an ideological educator, a training director and an everyday life manager.

The moral principles of a coach

In order to achieve the function of a coach, the following principles must be brought together.
To be a coach, one must be ambitious and self-disciplined

In volleyball circles, we have seen excellent coaches who have this trait. Daimatsu Hirofumi, ex-coach of the Japanese women’s team, would forego the silver medal and go for the gold. After years of hard work, the Chinese women’s volleyball team captured the world championship. This was due to the goals the coaches and players set for the team. The coach’s ambition will influence the growth of a team. This does not mean if you have the ambition, you will win the title, but it is the basic principle.

A coach must get along with his players on a day-to-day basis, therefore his speech, behavior, and even his character will have a great impact on the players. In other words, the coach is a teacher and is always self-disciplined. Whatever he says should be effective and good for management. He determines the correct guideline and forms his own technical style. The coach must study developments of volleyball, taking height, constitution and techniques into consideration.

The Chinese women’s volleyball team’s maneuver has proved to be correct. First, the Chinese women’s volleyball team analyzed its own situation. They could not catch up with the
Europeans and Americans in height and they were not as quick as the Japanese, so they could not imitate those methods. This is how the all-around attack and defense with varieties of techniques came to be.

The coach must cope with the players - a collective which requires his abilities of leadership

If one is to manage a team well, one must establish a good cooperative relationship with the players. Since volleyball is a science, the coach must improve his volleyball theory in order to develop his coaching abilities. The coach is a program planner and also a supervisor whose professional abilities will influence the development of the team.

At present, volleyball is a competitive sport with many strong teams, each having its own playing style and characteristics. The coach should, with the purpose of improving and perfecting techniques, give attention to learning and developing the strong points of the other team.

In a volleyball competition, while there are many teams, there is only one champion. This means that there are setbacks and difficulties for the coach. The coach stands the trial of setbacks and losing, but he never withdraws before defeat. Of course, sometimes he will be greeted with flowers which is also a trial for the coach - especially before the grand victory.

After the Chinese women’s volleyball team won the grand victory in 1981, they did not rest on their laurels. They started again from the very beginning and were determined to win new victories in the future. They never conceded. This is why they captured so many victories in a row. As time goes on, volleyball is becoming more and more competitive and is constantly developing. Anti-development ideas are wrong. Therefore, the coach must fully realize that even the greatest victories are not perfect. He still has a long way to go in tactics. The coach should also be a tactics inventor and developer. History has shown us that any team who possesses new techniques and tactics must lead in volleyball circles. This requires the coach to think and apply boldly.

Lately psychological training has caught the attention of coaches. We all know players go through psychological changes due to stress and performance pressures. There are a lot of problems on a team and sometimes players, due to their lack of psychological training, tend to perform abnormally and all their hard training was in vain. The coach should give attention to psychological training so he can motivate his players so they will be in better mental condition for the competitions and will perform with good results.

The above are the moral principles a coach, especially a good coach, should possess. Certainly, there are other aspects which I have not mentioned. In a word, a coach must improve his and the team’s accomplishment and set forth the final goals.