Beyond the final score.

How I coached. What I noticed. What I will change.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE — ALL PEOPLE, EVENTS AND RESULTS ARE FICTIONAL

Football · Senior development team · 12 September 2026
Opposition: Riverside Athletic · Result: Draw, 2–2
My coaching self-rating: 3/5 — Average; a judgement, not an impact measure.

01 The Match — my intention

I wanted players to recognise when to build short and when to play beyond the press, without depending on my touchline instructions. My intention was to give one clear pre-match cue, then use questions at suitable stoppages rather than direct every decision.

What happened?

We conceded after losing possession in our defensive third at 18 minutes. I immediately shouted three different instructions. Before half-time, I asked the captain what space the opposition were leaving. At half-time, players identified two options and agreed a short cue: "See the space."

We drew 2–2. In five second-half restarts sampled by my assistant, players selected an option without another instruction from me in three. This is a small observation sample, not proof of a lasting change or a measure of the whole match.

02 Your Response — emotions and decisions

Before kick-off I felt confident. After conceding, anxiety about the result made me more controlling. My repeated instructions competed with the independence I said I wanted. I paused, asked my assistant to monitor my communication and returned to the agreed cue.

At full-time I felt relieved. I need to avoid allowing the equaliser to make my coaching seem better than the evidence suggests.

WHAT MAKES THIS A USEFUL REFLECTION?

The coach states an intention, describes observable behaviour and separates coaching quality from the match result. First-person language keeps responsibility with the coach.

Examine my contribution.

Use evidence to question your explanation—not just confirm it.

03 The Individuals — my contribution

My useful contribution was creating a half-time discussion in which players named the options before I added my view. My weakest contribution was the burst of instructions after conceding. I had asked for independent decisions but behaved as if I needed to make them all.

After the discussion, I used the agreed cue and waited longer. My assistant noted fewer additional instructions from me. That is evidence of a change in my behaviour; the effect on players still needs checking.

Who influenced the match and my coaching?

Captain: Helped the group agree the cue. I heard their view first and may have treated it as everyone's view. Next time I will invite a second perspective before settling on a plan.

Substitute: Asked for clarification after a hurried briefing. I repeated the instruction but did not ask them to explain their role back to me. I cannot assume my message was understood.

Assistant coach: Recorded the five restarts and challenged my claim that I had "stayed quiet". Their notes included two extra instructions that I had not remembered.

What might explain the observed impact?

Player-led choices in three sampled restarts are consistent with my intention, but other explanations remain: the opposition pressed less intensely, players adapted through experience, or the available space became easier to recognise. I cannot attribute the change to my half-time questions alone.

REVIEW MY PREVIOUS DECISION

Previous action: Ask a question, then wait before adding my answer at three planned stoppages.
Follow-through: Partly — I managed this at two of the three.
Evidence: My assistant noted that I answered my own question at the first stoppage; players spoke first at the other two.
Outcome: Still in progress. I changed my behaviour inconsistently, and the observations do not yet establish its impact.

Make reflection actionable.

One change I can test in training and revisit after the next match.

04 KEY LESSON

If I want players to make decisions, my communication must leave them room to think. I need to judge my coaching by what I do and what players show—not by the score.

1 **REPEAT**

Keep the player-led half-time discussion and the shared cue, “See the space.”

2 **CHANGE**

At an appropriate stoppage, ask one open question and wait at least five seconds before adding my view. Intervene immediately when safety or welfare requires it.

3 **NEXT ACTION**

Rehearse this question–wait routine in a pressured training game. Ask my assistant to observe three planned stoppages and sample the next five restarts.

4 **WHEN**

Training on 15 September 2026; apply the routine again at the match on 19 September and review afterwards.

5 **SUCCESS SIGNAL**

At all three planned stoppages, I allow the waiting time and hear a player response before giving my answer. In at least three of five sampled restarts, players choose an option without another instruction. Record pressure level and exceptions.

DEVELOPMENT ACTION / PENDING

Test the question–wait routine and collect the observations.
Due: 15 September 2026. Planned, not yet completed.

At the next review, compare follow-through and evidence with both signals. Keep, adapt or stop the approach. These are practical targets for this example, not validated benchmarks.

PRAXIS: REFLECT ON YOUR INTENTIONS. EXAMINE YOUR IMPACT.

Use Matchday to review the match, your response and your contribution. Set a five-part decision, track the action and return to the evidence. This guide follows the app’s reflection structure; it is not a literal app export or evidence of app effectiveness.