

## How to be a successful coach? / Jak być efektywnym trenerem?

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*Most fencing masters have strong individuality and a strong belief that the school they represent is the best that exists, and an even stronger belief that without their teaching, their student will fall apart.*

Andrzej Wojeikiewicz

I present my ideas on fencing master's work and coaching philosophy in short paragraphs, each paragraph opening with an appropriate quotation, motto or proverb.

### **Knowledge by itself is power (*Francis Bacon*)**

The strikingly strange phenomenon in physical education and sport is the habit of many teachers and coaches of putting great emphasis on procedures, means and methods without analysis of their subject or given branch of sport and without clearly defining the goals of activities. It is very strange, because they choose methods and strategies not knowing enough about their sport... This is a model based on procedures. Much more sensible and useful is a model based on knowledge according to which we first collect as much information on our sport (its history, structure, rules, tactics, physiological and psychological considerations, sociology etc.), as possible then choose main goals and sub-goals, successive tasks, and objects. Knowing our sport very well, we may choose right goals and only then select right and proper methods to achieve consecutive tasks. A knowledge approach is thus much more logical and sensible, and it puts emphasis more on quality of training than mere quantity. There ought to be a strong interrelationship and unity of theory and practice, knowledge and practical skills, cognition and performance.

### **There is nothing more practical than a good theory**

This may sound paradoxical, but it is a very true statement. The knowledge of theory enables the coach to prepare sound programs, to conduct successfully the process of training, to assess the training effects, and to avoid many possible didactic and psychological mistakes. The fencing master should cultivate two approaches:

1. From theory to practice,
2. From practice to theory.

He conducts training/practice taking advantage of his knowledge and theory; then, conducting training, he watches his pupils, assesses the effects, watches carefully their actions in competitions, and draws certain conclusions, thus enriching his knowledge. His newly acquired knowledge he uses again in practice.

If names are not correct, language is not in accordance with the truth of things. If language is not in accordance with the truth of things, affairs cannot be carried on to success. Therefore a superior man considers it necessary that the names he uses may be spoken appropriately (*Confucius*).

To efficiently conduct training programs (lessons, assessment of training effects etc.), to communicate with pupils and other coaches, and to analyze the competitions, it is necessary to have a clear and well-defined terminology which includes names, definitions and classifications, component parts and objects of fencing training, fencing actions and their classification, forms and methods of training, didactic principles, structure of lessons, etc.

To look is not the same as to see, and to see is not the same as to perceive. We perceive really well only the objects that we know well and can give a name to. On fast and right perception depends our speed of reaction and our tactics, hence the great significance of having and using proper terminology.

The fencing master from his very first lesson must impart to his/her pupils correct, clearly defined terminology plus basic information on fencing, training, reaction, tactics etc.

Terms not forming a coherent system/classification, fragments of chaotic information etc. are like heaps of bricks in a brickyard: they become useful only when well-organized and put together in the form of a wall, bridge or house. The same goes for fencing terminology.

**We don't select champions; they select themselves by work, passion and determination to achieve the highest results (*Janusz Bednarski*)**

Nowadays it is very fashionable to assess the most important characteristics of a champion in a given discipline of sport - to profile the "model of a champion". In fencing this is futile and a waste of time and energy: one and only one type of fencer who wins competitions simply does not exist! Among most outstanding fencers, winners of Olympic Games/World Championships etc. we may find tall and short fencers, some very fast and some rather slow, extroverts and introverts, of different types of temperament, competitors representing various fencing schools, fencers of foreseen actions and fencers who like lightning-speed improvisation, offensive types and rather defensive types, etc.

Fencers who win great competitions are not without any weak points, without faults and errors. They are competitors who are strong and win because they have developed their assets, their strong points, their possibilities to the highest degree.

So, looking for a model of champion is a sterile occupation. There are, however, certain traits characteristic of great champions: high levels of motif of success, assertiveness, initiative, capacity for work, resistance to stress, and quality of attention. Champions may differ very much themselves and this is why fencing offers many different roads towards victory and success.

And one type of an ideal successful coach does not exist, either. General conceptions, training methods, ways of programming and conducting of exercises, educational influence on pupils of great fencing masters who produce outstanding fencers – all these are varied. There are however, certain common traits among the best coaches: love for fencing, love and capacity for strenuous work, an open mind and ability to introduce innovations, the ability to inspire and motivate their pupils, creative attitudes, and belief that their school is good and efficient.

**The coach's first duty is to make his pupil a fanatic (*Vitali Arkadyev*)**

I agree with the words of the great Soviet fencing master, although I understand that using the word "fanatic" really means an "enthusiast" of fencing. Very generally speaking, the effectiveness of human activities depends on two major factors:

1. Motivation and its direction and level,
2. Abilities.

Activities, of course, take place in a given environment and in various situations which also influence the outcome and effectiveness of our actions. In fencing training, both these factors (motivation and level of abilities/technique/tactics etc.) are strongly influenced by the fencing master. The coach should skillfully inspire and motivate his/her pupils, for without motivation one cannot expect any good results. This is why perhaps the most important duty of a coach is to motivate his pupils, trying to instill the love of fencing and the desire to learn as much as possible. In this respect, particularly important is **intrinsic motivation** enjoying the process of training and taking part in competition while attempting to improve one's knowledge and practical skills, without thinking of rewards. One should be very careful in applying extrinsic motivation (money, rewards, privileges etc.) because in extrinsic motivation only its informative function has a positive effect: when prizes, awards etc. indicate the fencer's social status, competence, acceptance, or appreciation. The control aspect of extrinsic motivation may play a negative influence ("you train and compete because you must; we pay you for this".) To achieve outstanding results, fencers must above all be lovers and connoisseurs of their sport.

**The main task of a coach is teaching (*Arle Selingen*)**

This statement complements Arkadyev's words. Arkadyev stresses the importance of motivation while Selingen, a very successful volleyball coach, stresses the importance of skills

and abilities. Both these factors have a decisive influence on the process of training, its effectiveness, and competition results.

Contrary to what some coaches think, conducting the process of training (coaching) is mainly a matter of teaching and, of course, learning. A fencing master teaches in practically everything he does: introducing new sensory-motor skills, demonstrations of fencing actions, verbal explanations and instructions, giving new information about tactics, developing pupils concentration of attention, setting goals and tasks, etc.

In fencing, and many other sports and activities, teaching often is based on creating situations in which effective learning occurs. In gymnastics and other closed-skill sports, the athletes learn mainly how to correctly execute a movement or a set of movements according to a previously established pattern and program. In fencing and other open-skill sports an athlete, after having learned the basic form of various strokes, learns to choose the right stroke in constantly changing tactical situations during lessons, training bouts, and competition. So the fencing coach must constantly create situations forcing his/her pupils to react, to take decisions, to choose the appropriate action. So, "mechanical" execution of a given fencing stroke is not enough.

In teaching and perfecting pupils' technique and tactics the coach must not only explain, instruct and give lessons, but also encourage pupils to watch, observe, think, draw conclusions on their own, e.g. analysis of one's own technique and tactics, assessing the level of energy (physical) fitness, analysis of competitions, etc.

In teaching we may distinguish two main didactic forms:

1. Proper teaching (pupil learns new skills),
2. Perfecting (pupil perfects already acquired skill).

Proper teaching is connected mainly with the cognitive processes plus motivation; the perfecting is connected mainly with motivation plus cognition.

Even at the highest level of fencer's training, the master should constantly introduce something new and interesting: not only perfecting known skills and abilities, but introducing some new skills and abilities. This is an extremely important point. Training consisting only of repetition of known skills and abilities becomes boring, leads to fatigue and staleness, and does not develop new possibilities. The process of training, if done with the right amount of proper teaching, new skills, new situations, new tasks - is more interesting, more emotional, more challenging, develops cognitive processes, and enhances the motor educability. It also keeps away boredom and mental fatigue.

#### **A good teacher is always the most diligent pupil (*Maxim Gorky*)**

In order to teach well, one must know a lot. A good coach must always try to increase his knowledge and improve his practical skills of teaching: keep things interesting and logical, build on a model of knowledge (program of training, present various methods of conducting exercises, set realistic and challenging goals and tasks, impart new and valuable information, etc.

The ingenious fencing master constantly improves his methods; he learns from books, from practical experience and clinics, by talking with other coaches, by watching competitions, by analyzing the process of training. He may learn a lot too by watching his pupils, by listening to them, by trying to answer pupils' questions. A good coach may learn a lot from... his pupils!

And the best way to learn is to teach, for by teaching we learn twice. Very wise Rabbi Yehuda said many centuries ago: "I have learned a lot from my teachers, more from my colleagues, but most from my pupils".

#### **It is easy to be a good pupil when learning from a great Master (*Judy O'Donnell*)**

This is very true. As already stressed, the good fencing master should teach and motivate his/her pupils. The amount and depth of the fencing master's knowledge and practical skills is a very important and valuable factor, but equally - or perhaps even more important - is the ability to inspire the pupils, to choose interesting exercises, to conduct them lively and colourfully in such a way that they not only are highly instructive but also produce enthusiasm, interest, enjoyment and satisfaction. The exercises, demonstrations, explanation and lessons should stimulate a profound understanding of fencing and a desire to do more and better. It is then not

only the knowledge and skills that count, but also the ability to **impart** the knowledge and skills to the fencers.

**Don't throw away a weak kid: it may turn to be a lion's child (*Arab proverb*)**

I have chosen this colourful Arab proverb to show the unreliability and often futility of various selective tests and attempts to select, by means of functional and motor tests, a future champion. No tests of energy fitness can guarantee the correct diagnosis and prognosis of a candidate for fencing. To begin with, at a very early stage of a fencer's career, a high level of motivation may be more important and reliable than a whole set of various tests. Many cases are known of attempts to throw away a real future champion by merely relying on the results of tests and a coach's "impression". Bednarski's previously quoted words are very apt: "We don't select champions. They select themselves".

**We believe in what is pleasant to believe (*Napoleon*)**

Some coaches use selection tests and do not bother with children who - judging by the test results - do not show any promise of becoming good fencers. Such coaches often choose one kid, firmly believing that he is going to be a great champion. They give him plenty of lessons and spend a lot of time, energy and effort, completely oblivious to the fact that - contrary to tests results and coach's personal fancy - the "future great champion" is rather lazy, not very talented, and does not show any remarkable results. They do not accept these facts, but work with more energy and determination believing and hoping for a sudden outburst of fantastic results. This is typical wishful thinking. It is difficult to part with our dreams.

**The real measure of a coach's value is the results of his pupils**

Quite often we hear such statements. In a way they are true, but this is not the whole truth. To assess the fencing master's worth - his personality, work, training methods, programs etc. - we must of course consider the competition results of his or her pupils.

Although the rivalry and drive for outstanding results in competitions constitutes the very essence of competitive fencing, one must keep the value of winning in sensible proportions. To win is nice, pleasant, and desirable, but to lose is not an utter disaster! There are other important and valuable aspects of fencing: more social awareness, increased self-realization, satisfaction in improving one's skills and fitness, enjoyment of the very process of training and bouting, etc.

Apart from pupils' competition results, one should judge efficiency and value of a coach by assessing his educational influence on pupils, efforts in developing the theory and methodology of fencing, and successes in forming young coaches.

In assessing the value, efficiency, efficacy and significance of a fencing master, one should also bear in mind where and whom he is coaching. Different places of work demand various attitudes.

A fencing master coaching children must provide an optimum level of mental arousal, fun and enjoyment, a feeling of competence, all-round fitness, and basic fencing skills. Coaching young kids is typical "teaching for the future", ensuring physiological, psychological and social development and such fencing knowledge and skills which would be most useful and beneficial in the future.

A coach who conducts recreational fencing for adults ought to provide: all-round fitness, good health, active rest, psychological relaxation, a sense of well-being, fun and pleasure, a friendly atmosphere, and such a level of fencing skills so as to enable the participants to enjoy exercises and participation in minor competitions.

High competitive fencing demands a very strenuous, specialized, and specific training, taking part in major tournaments, and achieving as good as possible results. Such training entails: systematic practise; resistance to stress; courage; assertiveness; a high level of specific fitness; a high level of psychological processes (perception, various qualities of attention, fast reaction, and quick thinking); various aspects of achievement motivation, including the optimum level of motive of success and - above all - a wide range of fencing actions and good tactics.

To sum up: great coaches produce outstanding athletes, develop theory and methodology of their sport, form a specific school, and educate new generations of good coaches. I have never

ceased to be astonished by such coaches who produce good competitors, but somehow fail to educate new young coaches!

Stressing the importance of competition results should not be taken too one-sidedly. Victory is in sport, of course, very important, but it is not everything. The athletes must develop their personality, endurance to stressful situations, desire to learn more, ability to co-operate in a team, and they must enjoy the sport (see below).

### **Every great coach chooses his own road (*Nicolai Ozolin*)**

These words, by a well-known Russian specialist of sport science, are in a way complementary to the paragraph about the diversity of types among the best coaches. Great coaches form their own school/methods and constantly try to improve it; they do not blindly copy known methods and programs. They seek and find new and efficient solutions, taking advantage of basic science and empirical experience - their own as well as other coaches'. The best coaches show the ability to inspire both pupils and co-workers. A really great and devoted to his sport coach, even in very modest conditions, is able to produce good results and can extract maximum effort, improvement and results even from a not very talented pupil. As Napoleon remarked: *A lion commanding even a herd of sheep can perform miracles.*

### **It is easier to put a thousand cities into ruins than to abolish a firmly established myth (*Ignacy Paderewski*)**

A good coach appreciates and takes advantage of everything which is good/efficacious/progressive: that which brings results in the old methods but at the same time tries always to look forward, to improve, to find new ways, to be more efficient. An outstanding fencing master has enough common sense and courage to give up out-dated ideas and views. He takes advantage of recent advancement in theory and draws practical conclusions from research, observations, and the documentation of training and competitions.

In our activities we are often prejudiced, and it takes a lot of courage to reject certain views and practical methods firmly established by force of tradition and routine. It is often difficult to give up such ideas like "weightlifting is good for a fencer's strength" or "a fencer's results in competition depend to a large degree on the level of all-round fitness" or "to produce a champion we must first find a model of champion" or "in fencing the best and only efficient form of training is the individual lesson" or "to develop endurance one must run long distances at a moderate pace" etc. (the last advice is, of course, valid for long-distance runners but not for fencers!)

It takes a lot of common sense and an independent turn of mind to properly, justly and logically assess the real value and significance of the individual lesson, which for hundreds of years has been practically the only form of the fencer's training. It stands to reason that the individual lesson is not a panacea ("good for everything and everybody") but is one - and not the only! - form of training. It is highly efficient, but only when:

1. It is conducted in a modern, rational, logical and realistic manner, and
2. It is supported by other forms of training: group lessons, working on one's own, drills against the wall, drills with mirrors, pair exercises, exercises in line, training bouts etc.

One should firmly reject the old fashioned, mechanical, totally unrealistic manner of giving an individual lesson; it may do more harm than good. Such a stereotyped kind of lesson was described vividly and sarcastically by the great Moliere in his "Bourgeois Gentleman" of 1670.

It is unbelievable, but when one watches dozens of individual lessons at great international competitions, one must conclude that large portions of these lessons are totally unrealistic, full of ridiculous mannerisms, or "mechanical"; they do not improve concentration, choice of stroke, or perception. If a fencer wins after such lessons, it is not because of them but in spite of them.

A great fencing master sees the individual lesson in proportion to other forms of the fencer's training and conducts them in a coherent, rational, and realistic way. He also takes full advantage of a well-organized and lively-conducted group lesson... in fact, I am inclined to think that the real value of a coach - his ingeniousness, knowledge fencing, ability to keep interest and inspire

the pupils, correct choice of exercises, eye-catching demonstrations, his ability to develop pupils' initiative may really be shown in his interesting, lively and colourful conducting of group lessons.

**Coaches generally want their pupils to identify with them; it is much better when the coach and athlete identify a common goal (*James Counsilman*)**

In sport, as in other spheres of human activity, a group (club, section, team, national squad etc.) is strong, stable, coherent and efficient in action when all members of the group work together, co-operate in trying to achieve a common goal, and co-operate with detailed tasks necessary to attain that goal. The goals and subsequent tasks ought to be attractive and yet sufficiently difficult; a group whose goals and tasks are very easy is unstable and not efficient. The goals should be maximal, difficult but realistic, and possible to achieve - but with great effort and determination. Maximum plan and programs stimulate intense efforts, and even if 100% of the tasks have not been fully achieved, a lot will have been done. Minimal tasks and goals simply do not motivate one to great effort, and even when goals are achieved they are not worth much.

In trying to achieve common goals, the main coach tries to create and keep in the team a friendly, family-like atmosphere - at the same time ensuring discipline, mutual respect and a sense of responsibility.

**Nothing is more destructive than a coach's self-complacency and conceit**

A prominent coach must be sure of himself and must believe that he is able to produce very successful fencers. But every extremity may lead to absurd! So a conceited, sure of himself, uncritical coach is not likely to be really successful. Too great assertiveness/conceit and/or rejecting all thoughts of possible mistakes may have various reasons. Quite common is a deep sense of inferiority and attempts to compensate for it by glorifying one's own knowledge, boldness and attitude: "I never make mistakes". Oddly enough, it may also be caused by the fencing master's assets, good work and long string of successes; a very successful coach may come to the conclusion that everything he does is good and will bring further achievements. Such a master ceases to analyze his methods of coaching, does not watch competitions, does not see new changes in fencing training and in styles of fencing, competitions rules, ways of refereeing. He has no doubts about himself and his methods, and rejects all critical remarks. Such an attitude sooner or later leads to failure and defeat, which the conceited coach cannot understand.

A fencing master should constantly analyze his ways of coaching, trying to find the sources of his successes and defeats. This will enable him to introduce necessary changes and improvement into his/her system of coaching.

To a coach who shows a tendency to conceit and who is uncritically sure that everything he does is perfect, I would offer this advice; "Such a fool does not exist from whom a wise man could not learn something useful".

**A good coach has his favourite pupils and does not conceal it (*Vitaly Arkadyev*)**

This is, of course, true - but this principle ought to be properly understood and very tactfully applied in practice. The good fencing master **should** have his/her favourite pupils - but this means only that he supports and shows special interest in talented, hard working, highly motivated fencers who are able to fight and win. This is in accordance with the needs of highly competitive sport and the principle of individualization; it is not so, of course, in physical recreation or recreational fencing.

Supporting the most talented and enthusiastic pupils must be tactful and subtle when dealing with women and girls. Women, as we know only too well, very often do not take very kindly to other women being praised. If a male fencing master says, for example, "Mary has long and beautiful legs" in order to encourage her to make longer lunges, the other girls will not be very pleased. Or if he says "Jean works very hard and has made really big progress", the comment might be "She must have seduced him". Be careful!

**An ass knows seven styles of swimming, but when he sees water he forgets all of them**  
(*Armenian proverb*)

Probably such a coach does not exist who does not experience a great sense of disappointment when a pupil who learns various fencing strokes very quickly and correctly, and who does extremely well in the process of training, but whose performances in competitions are poor - far below his/her abilities and possibilities, and far below the coach's expectations. It happens quite often that fencer's movements in exercises and training bouts are correct, smooth, and efficient but in competition become bad, wide, chaotic and inefficient. This happens in fencing (and other sports) where there are many motor skills, technique is complicated, the motor skills are of the open character, and one has to make very fast decisions.

In the process of acquiring the technique and tactics of fencing one may distinguish three levels, three "thresholds of difficulty":

1. Acquisition of many, various movements and strokes (fencing stance, lunge, fleche, basic strokes, parries, ripostes, beats, feints etc.);
2. Application of various strokes and abilities in a training bout with an active opponent;
3. Application of these strokes and abilities in a competition where arousal, emotions, fears, and sense of responsibility for the result all play an important role.

It is mainly the fencing master who is responsible for the successful achievement of the first level, the first "threshold of difficulty". By using proper methods and forms of training, the coach helps the pupils to learn various elements of fencing technique and tactics. Here, of course, the pupil's motivation and effort are very important too.

The second stage - how to apply in training bouts the strokes learned in the process of training lessons and exercises - depend on the fencer himself, although the fencing master may help by giving advice, pointing out technical and tactical mistakes, etc.

In the last stage, the third level of difficulty - the application of fencing strokes in a competition - the responsibility lies nearly exclusively on the fencers themselves. This is the most important stage, and at the same time a stage in which the fencing master can offer only a little help. A competitor stands face to face with his opponent and tries to win. Only after bout (or after the entire competition) can a coach analyze the bout, the pupil's good points and errors, successful and unsuccessful tactical solutions, level of specific fitness etc. Results of competition bouts depend nearly exclusively on the pupil's form, technique, tactics, psychological processes motivation and resistance to stress. But, of course, the coach's presence at the strip, his attitude, interest, his remarks before and after the bout are very important.

We must bear in mind that the third stage (fencer's effectiveness in competition) is the most important it is the very essence of competitive fencing. So the fencing master should not be unduly fascinated with a pupil who learns quickly and with ease the various skills of fencing technique (although, of course, this is very important) but has difficulties in successfully applying in competition the strokes acquired in the process of training.

The ability to transfer the skills from training (first stage) to training bouts (second stage), and from training bouts to competitive bouts (third stage) is in a way a measure of the fencer's talent, a base of assessment, and a prognosis of his future achievements. Pupils with such ability ought to be the object of the fencing master's interest, care and work. As I quoted before: "A good coach has his favourite pupils and does not conceal it."

**A person is a reflection of his imagination; one is what one thinks one is** (*Muhammad Ali*)

One should not take this too literally, but there is a lot of truth in it. Of course, it is not always exactly so, and the number of Napoleons in psychiatric hospitals show it.

A coach in his/her activities must often assess not only his pupils and co-workers, but also his own personality, assets, weak points, knowledge, practical skills, programs of training, standards of lessons, results etc.

Some people, contrary to Muhammad Ali's opinion, think that a person is as others think of him. The truth is that our perception of ourselves is different from other people's opinions of us... also, we perceive differently other people's views of us. Naturally, we ought to take into consideration other people's opinions, especially those of our fellow coaches, but one should do

it with a pinch of salt. The fellow coaches' opinions may be very misleading, especially when, as it often happens, they are tinged with a slight hint of professional jealousy.

One of the leading Polish coaches has heard the most fantastic and improbable opinions about himself! According to some of his colleagues he is a diamond smuggler, vindictive and revengeful, a drug user whose arms are covered with pus due to dirty syringes, and has no earthly idea how to teach foil, sabre or epee. In reality the only "smuggling" in which he was involved was bringing to Poland, when under Communist rule, Solzhenitsyn's books - and to the Soviet Union, Ilya Erenburg's "Adventurous life of Lejzorek Rojtshwanitz"; as to his vindictiveness, he very often reproaches himself for stupidly being too nice and helpful to people who wronged him. The poor soul is so sensitive that the mere thought of an injection makes him feel faint! And lastly, judging by the results of his pupils in all weapons at the World Championships and the Olympic Games, he does seem to know something about fencing, which reminds us of one of the previous maxims that "the measure of a coach's quality is the success of his pupils".

Personally, I came to the conclusion that fencers assess a fencing master's value, knowledge and practical abilities better, more precisely and objectively than do fellow coaches. This resembles a little bit the theater where the critics (and above all the public) appreciate an actor more objectively than fellow actors. In fencing even quite young children notice and appreciate a coach's work, punctuality, devotion, and teaching skills. I have also noticed that what impresses the pupils most is the fencing master's own fitness, speed of execution, dexterity and all-round fencing skillfulness.

#### **Athletes first, winning second (*Rainer Martens*)**

This is simple to state, but not so simple to implement, yet the successful coach must strive to secure not only his pupils' good results in competitions, but also – and above all – take good care of his pupils' personality, their health, sport enjoyment, self-confidence, self-efficacy, resistance to stressful situations, feeling of independence etc. So – very shortly – one may say that coach's most important tasks are:

1. To help athletes them to develop physically (good health, energy abilities, co-ordination), psychologically and socially,
2. To teach technique, tactics and psychomotor capabilities,
3. To help them to achieve high results in competitions,
4. Optimum level of achievement motivation and arousal,
5. To help athletes to secure sport enjoyment.

As Rainer Martens aptly remarks, "there is more to being an athlete than just having motor skills" and "if winning is your first and only goal, you are far less-likely to be a successful coach".

To fulfill these tasks, most suitable is co-operative and friendly style of leadership.

I could hardly finish these remarks better than by quoting George Silver who wrote in 1599 in his famous "Paradoxes of Defence" in his quaint old English: "The exercising of weapons putt away aches, griefs and diseases; it expelleth melancholic, cholericke and evil conceits; it keepth a man in breath, perfect health and long life".

#### **STRESZCZENIE**

W swoim artykule autor opisuje długą i pełną wytężonej pracy drogę trenera, posługując się przykładami z praktyki trenerskiej w zakresie szermierki. Otwierając każdy podrozdział stosownym cytatem, przekonuje, że sukces w tym zawodzie jest warunkowany m.in. przez umiejętne wykorzystanie teorii w praktyce, ciągłe doskonalenie własnych rozwiązań i metod, poszukiwanie własnej drogi wbrew utartym schematom, uczenie się od swoich podopiecznych, ciągłe analizowanie własnych poczynań. Bardzo istotnym czynnikiem jest umiejętne motywowanie i podtrzymywanie zainteresowania uczniów, o których psychologiczno-osobowościowy rozwój trener również powinien zadbać.