

The One Thing Check-In

Your athletes are running the Deliberate Practice Protocol this month: one capability going in, three—one coming out. This is your half of it. Thirty seconds a lane, one language rule, and the feedback they will actually keep.

BEFORE THEY GET IN — ONE QUESTION, EVERY ATHLETE

"What's your one thing today?"

One. Not three. If they do not have one, help them pick one — **a capability they can execute on the next send-off**, chosen now while they are calm, so when the set gets hard they go back to it instead of inventing something new under load.

IF THEY NAME AN OUTCOME — THE SWAP

"That's an outcome. What would you have to do, today, in this set, to get closer to it? Pick that."

"Go 1:05."	→	Three dolphin kicks off every wall.
"Make the cut."	→	Breathe every three on the back half.
"Beat my best time."	→	Stay long through the first 25 of every rep.
"Don't die on the last 50."	→	Hold my stroke count on the last 50.

Say what to do, never what to avoid. "Don't die" gives the brain a picture of dying. A job gives it a job.

THE TEST — IS IT A CAPABILITY?

1 Could they do it on a bad day?

If it depends on how they feel or how fast they are, it is an outcome.

2 Is it inside their control in this set?

Not this season. This set.

3 Would a video show it?

If you could not point at it on tape, it is not specific enough yet.

Three yeses and it is a capability. Any no — run the swap.

DURING — SPEND THE INSTRUCTION BUDGET

Feed back on their one thing first. Then anything else, **one at a time.** A second instruction in the same breath cancels the first. If you have three, that's three sets, not one send-off.

AFTER — THE FEEDBACK THEY KEEP

Name what they executed before what they missed — in capability words, specific enough to see on tape. Most will keep the correction on their own. Some will name the strength themselves; **if they can't yet, enabling that is your job.** Then **ask for their three—one-one.** It tells you what they think their weapons are, and whether they are right.

ONE CAPABILITY IN • THREE, ONE, ONE OUT • MENTALGRITCONSULTING.COM/UTAH-SWIMMING/COACHES

THE RULE OF ATTENTION

When they're focused on everything, they're technically focused on nothing.

Five corrections in one breath produce zero improvements. One per athlete, per practice.

THE RULE OF FEEDBACK

They only keep what gets named.

Bad is louder than good. The correction they will replay on their own. If they can't name the strength yet, it has to come from you.