

The Difference is You

by Wayne Goldsmith copyright Moregold sports

OK. It's 5:00 a.m. It's still dark. You would probably rather be home in bed asleep. Your coach has come in as enthusiastic and motivated as ever and has written up this workout on the whiteboard:

The question is now, what do you do next?

The obvious answer is 400 freestyle, 6x50 breaststroke drills etc., etc. **Everyone** on your team will be doing that. The question really is, what will you do that is better, faster, and smarter than everyone else to give you the winning edge? What will you do in this session that will make you a better athlete?

If you want to be the best swimmer in your club, your state, America, or the world, you must be the best swimmer in your LANE first. You must set yourself a higher standard than anyone else in your lane is prepared to. You must set a higher standard and more challenging goals than even you coach thinks possible. Successful swimmers set themselves tougher goals than anyone else could possibly set for them.

The difference between good swimmer, very good swimmers, and great swimmers is very often their approach to their training. While the workout itself is important, the real secret to success is in how you do the workout. The benefit you gain from the workout is totally dependent on your attitude and approach to your training program.

You must set yourself a higher standard than anyone else in your lane is prepared to. You must set a higher standard and more challenging goals than even you coach thinks possible. Successful swimmer set themselves tougher goals than anyone else could possibly set for them.

How would three swimmers (a good, a very good, and a great swimmer) approach our workout?

The good swimmer does the training program: does what the coach had asked.

The very good swimmer also does the training program, does what the coach asked AND sets a few personal goals along the way to get a little more out of the workout.

The great swimmer does the same program, does what the coach asks, and then demands an uncompromising level of excellence from themselves to get the maximum benefit from the workout. The great swimmer sees the workout as an opportunity to improve and to get the most out of their efforts.

One of the biggest steps a swimmer must make in their development is the step from age group swimming to senior level competition. one of the biggest changes that a swimmer

needs to make in order to take this step is in the mental approach to their workouts. Most coaches set their workouts for the average level of swimmer in their team. The great swimmer understands this and sets a personal standard that is well above average. "Little kids" see workouts very simply: How do I do the minimum amount of work I can get away with? "Big kids" (those trying to take the step from age group to senior competition) see the workout activities and then aim to set themselves a standard well in excess of the level of the workout. they do more than the coach asks. They do the little things well. They aim for maximum distance per stroke, minimum number of breaths, excellent turns and outstanding skills. **Ask yourself, am I a "big kid" or a "little kid" in a "big kid's" body?**

Size and age has little to do with being a senior swimmer. Being a senior swimmer means training and racing with a senior swimmer's attitude. You can be 12 years of age and think like a senior swimmer or 22 years of age and think like a junior swimmer. You must "train your brain" in the same way that you train your body. you train your body for speed, for power, for strength and for technical excellence to help you achieve your best. Train your brain to do the same.

How would three swimmers approach our workout?

Workout Activity	Good Swimmer	Very Good Swimmer	Great Swimmer
Warm-up 400 easy free.	Swim slow easy freestyle.	Swim slow easy freestyle, making sure not to breathe inside the flags and to streamline off every turn.	Swim slow easy freestyle, making sure not to breathe inside the flags and to streamline off every turn, not breathing on the first or last strokes trying to swim each lap with one less stroke than the one before.
Breaststroke drills 6x50 on 1:15	Do the drills.	Do the drills correctly.	Do the drills correctly, aiming to do the minimum number of pulls and kicks each lap, developing great distance per kick and trying to hold an exact pace with a full underwater pull out at each wall.
Kick 10x50 on 1:30	Do the kick set.	Do the kick set fast and hard with strong,	Do the kick set fast and hard with strong,

		powerful kicks.	powerful kicks, trying to kick each 50 as close as possible to their best 50 swim time with as few kicks as possible.
16x100 on 1:40 holding personal best plus 15 seconds.	Do 16x100 on 1:40 holding personal best plus 15 seconds.	Do 16x100 on 1:40 holding personal best plus 15 seconds, trying to streamline out of each turn.	Do 16x100 on 1:40 holding personal best plus 15 seconds aiming to hold an exact pace, or experimenting with pacing strategies like negative splitting. they may also consider trying to minimize strokes and breaths, while holding an exact pace and streamlining a minimum of 10 meters off every turn.
Cool down 6x100 IM.	Cool down 600 meters.	Cool down 600 meters aiming to do good turns.	Cool down 600 meters aiming to do good turns and practicing to improve on any areas of weakness in their worst stroke.