

# EXAMPLE

## SPEECH WRITING

*Notes on Context: This is a HYPOTHETICAL speech which was written as a university assessment in 2016. It is intended to be presented by the Australian Netball Diamonds' coach at the commencement of a State Netball Tournament*

Officiators, competitors, mums and dads thank you for inviting me to speak to you today. I thoroughly enjoy attending events such as this. The atmosphere at the commencement of a sporting tournament is full of excitement, anticipation and nerves. I can't help but feed off the energy and get excited too. Of course, one of the other reasons why I love coming to these events is because of the amount of talent which is waiting to be unearthed. It was at an event similar to this that we discovered Kim Ravaillion. And I am assuming you would all know that because of that competition, she represented Australia in a Diamonds dress before ever stepping on the national league court. I wonder how many of you are hoping that could be your story too...?

Another cause for my enjoyment in attending these competitions is the displays of sportsmanship and comradery. This mutual respect our players have for one another, our continual displays of good sportsmanship, both on and off the court, and devotion to being good role models for young athletes are just some of the reasons why the ABC has dubbed netball as the "classiest sport on offer". I am choosing to embrace, promote and build on this label. And I am starting this crusade with you.

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, in 2012 16% of Australian females aged between five and 14 years played netball. To give you some perspective, at the time that was more than 22,000 young Australian girls running around a netball court on a Saturday morning. Now I want you to think back to your early days of Saturday morning netball. Think about when you first got down to the courts and the games were in full swing. You can smell the sunscreen and the food being cooked at the canteen. You can see the pops of colour from uniforms and the blur of letters on bibs as players and umpires dart around the courts. You can feel the bristling heat of the mid-morning sun as it radiates onto your skin. Aside from blasting whistles, umpire's calls, and squeaking shoes, think about what you can hear?

I'd wager that you can hear phrases like "good try", "nice pass" and that old favourite "here if you need".

Why am I putting emphasis on these phrases? Well to put it simply they are examples of the positive foundation with which good sportsmanship, in any code, is built. Studies have shown that focusing on effort and learning and celebrating growth and development help to improve performance. But more importantly, positive encouragement takes the stress away from the game which allows the young player to have fun. This fun builds the love of the sport. When a player loves their sport, they try harder. When you are a junior player all that should be asked of you is to love your sport and to give it a good go.

Once a player gains more maturity is when the next stages of good sportsmanship should be introduced. These stages include things like redefining success, appreciation of opponents and officials and acceptance of opportunities that come with losses. In my opinion, these next stages of sportsmanship development are not being as thoroughly impressed upon elite athletes as they should be. But as part of my crusade to keep netball as the classiest sport on offer, these are the sportsmanship lessons I implore you to galvanise.

As coaches or parents, start with lessons of respect for umpires and opponents. Because these lessons are teaching players to take responsibility for their own actions. It is making them think harder about their game. It is also making them think harder about someone other than themselves. Ways in which you all can ignite these lessons are simple. I encourage all of you to learn to umpire. Or to coach a junior grade or assist in netball clinics for younger players. After a losing game, rather than blame the umpire, have a discussion about what you did do right and what you could improve on. Focus on some sections of play which worked really well and applaud your success in that area. These are all ways of redefining your success, showing respect and taking responsibility for your actions. These are examples of the classiness of netball.

This commitment to sportsmanship and promotion of the good name of netball is why our national level players work hard on and off the court. It is not enough for them to just be world champions. It is in our team culture to want to be good role models for younger athletes. It is why they are so community minded and donate their time to various causes.

Through the Fuel 2 Fly netball clinics, they are promoting a healthy lifestyle and encouraging children and teenagers to continue to participate in sport. They are participating in the Australian Sports Camps which encourage young athletes of all stages of development to put in the extra gym sessions and court time in pursuit of the goal of representing our country on the world stage. Our elite athletes are out in the community and on the road to rural Australia running netball clinics at a grassroots level through the Net Set Go program. And most recently, five of our most recognisable Diamonds have told their most personal stories of tragedy and overcoming adversity in the Rethink Role Models campaign. This campaign is not only promoting netball. It is about encouraging children to rethink which athletes they admire and aspire to be like. As an ambassador for netball myself, this campaign, in particular, makes me so proud.

You all can contribute to this classy culture. You can all show great sportsmanship and community-mindedness. When you get home from this tournament I encourage you to volunteer whatever time you can spare, to promoting the good name of netball. Mentor young athletes. Volunteer to umpire. Assist in school holiday clinics. But for the next four days go out on court and give it your all. I know that I don't need to ask you to maintain good sportsmanship because I don't think you would be here if you hadn't already displayed it. So, I'll finish off by saying thank you, to the parents, coaches, officials and most of all our players. Because if it weren't for you promoting and upholding the good name of netball, both on and off the court, we would not have the name of the classiest sport on offer.