As we have said all along this course, maybe the most critical part of your success as a coach or trainer in getting your players better, is the ability to successfully sequence the workouts. By sequencing, we mean exactly what drills you are doing, for how long, and in what order. A point guard who needs to work on his ball handling under pressure and his ability to hit pull up jump shots off the dribble will have a much different drill sequence than a young, raw post player who needs extensive work on footwork and inside moves. There are also players who are not as fit as others when you begin to work them out, so they will need drills and sequences that involve moving them around and incorporate conditioning into the drills.

It is also critical, for any player, to make the workout “flow.” When there are too many stops in a workout or the drills are out of a logical sequence, the player has a hard time getting into any sort of rhythm. It is important how you warm the player up through the first few drills to get him or her going into the full workout. There is also a rhyme and reason to how much time is spent with basic fundamental drills, like stationary ball handling, and how much is spent on real “game action” settings, like coming off ball screens or hitting jump shots off of explosive 1-dribble moves. Also determining when to use a defender, when to do 1 on 1 or 2 on 2 work and when to bring in the 3 on 3 drills. These things are all carefully planned in our workouts and should be in yours as well.

It isn’t always easy when you are training a larger group to customize the workout for each individual, but with careful planning and sequencing you can make sure each player gets the most out of the workout.

Preparation is everything in this area. Knowing WHO is in the workout and what they need most is critical. As we say at Impact, “We make players better.” We don’t say, “we have the fanciest drills,” or, “we make our players throw-up.” We do this by constructing amazing workouts that are efficient and effective. One thing I always say when speaking about player development is that there are only so many different aspects to basketball. Shooting, ball handling, passing, etc. And what makes the sport so great and development so interesting is that these aspects are the same for an 8 year old learning to play as they are for a 15-year NBA vets. Come sit though one of our sessions with Garnett, Billups, or Ibaka and you will see players dribbling, passing, and shooting the basketball. We have discussed the basic principles involved in developing a basketball player. We have given you a series of drills in each of these categories as the base for your workouts. We have also discussed the necessary atmosphere and mental approach for both you as a trainer or coach and the player. Now, we add the little “tricks” that will set your player development apart from the average workouts. So much of what we do comes from our understanding what players need and how to get the most out of them in any particular workout. While much of this comes through experience over the years, it is far from “winging it.” Much of what we do is based on scientific research of heart rates for basketball players during game action, studies of the biomechanics of the body and how it all relates to basketball movements (as discussed in the other sections of this course) as well as pure basketball knowledge and experience. At the end of the day - it all boils down to performance on the court, which is what we are aiming to improve.

There are times when “competition” needs to be inserted in the workout. We have several NBA guys who just go a little harder when we put some sort of competitive twist on a drill. Instead of just making 10, we would make it a challenge for the “1st guy to get to 10.” Or, we make it a drill where, instead of “making 5, 7, or 10,” the player needs to “make 5 out of 7 to move to the next drill.” Some players need the extra competitive push - nothing wrong with that and as player development coaches, we must understand who needs what.
We will also discuss adding 1 on 1, 2 on 2, and 3 on 3 work into the workouts as part of the overall sequence. This is very valuable to increase intensity of the workout as well as provide a defender to simulate game action. As much as we love drills and the drills are the foundation of everything we do, true player development is not complete without utilizing the benefits and improvements from all the drills in live game action.

Now, we really look into “how to make a workout great.”

**Proper drill sequencing will produce the following:**
Create an effective flow to the workout and maintain a high level of intensity.

Make sure the players in the workout are getting enough reps and in the appropriate skill areas - “making the workout great and relevant.”
Help organize the workout and provide proper work to rest ratios. Allow you as a trainer to simulate the demands of a game within the workout.

Help you as a trainer and coach keep the workouts “fresh” and add variety. Allow you to build and “personalize” the workouts for different players.

Make sure the workouts are challenging and push the player to increase his conditioning as well as his skills.

Ability to focus the workouts on certain skill sets, on certain days.

Be able to adjust the sequencing to work from anywhere from 1 player all the way up to 10 or more. Critical to the workout process.

**THE PHILOSOPHY**

Think of your workouts as if you were constantly fitting pieces of a puzzle together. The basic drills are all the pieces and they fit together, with constant adjustments, to make up the complete workout. You have drills in 5 areas - as we discussed in the drill section - and it is up to you to activate these drills to create the full workout.

Each drill can be adjusted slightly to fit your style or the style of the player or players in the workout. Players love our workouts because the flow so well. People ask us all the time, “how do you get your workouts to flow together so well?” Well, we plan them and build them with a specific purpose and we have a deep understanding of the final goal, which allows us to fit the puzzle pieces together nicely.

Over the years we have done extensive research on players’ heart rates during games and how to simulate those spikes and valleys during the course of a workout. We have created specific work to rest ratios that allow the player to truly get ready for game action. We have done dozens of tests to see exactly what drills produce the most improvement, and in what sequence. All this work and research has shaped our vision of how a workout should be run and how players will truly improve. It is not a simple formula - so the key is then NOT to simply “memorize the formula,” but rather to learn the foundations of how the formula was formulated so you understand how the formula works, and are therefore able to manipulate it and adjust as needed.

**MAKING THE WORKOUTS**

If your total workout time is 60 minutes, it is up to you to break this 60 minutes down into smaller arts to create the workout and begin to sequence the drills.

Here is a basic outline of how you should be looking at your workouts. We will say it MANY times, but this is the BASE ONLY. As you understand the system and your players more and more, you will add more time to certain areas, delete certain areas entirely, or shorten some segments, depending on the GOAL of the workout. We will offer many examples here and also in our Sample Workouts Section.

**Segment 1 - Dynamic Warm-up**
As an exercise and example, the first 7 - 10 minutes should be spent with a warm-up and then move into a drill set that does not involve a tremendous amount of running, as the player is not yet warm.
Segment 2 - Ball Handling / Core Activation
Ball handling drills are a great way to get the workout going, get your player or players sweating and into the workout, and warm up the hands, core, and legs. You can make this a stationary segment or start stationary and move into the movement series - getting the players up and down the court. You must make the call on how long to do this or whether or not you omit this section entirely for certain workouts. For example, if we were working a high school player, or group of players out, we would drill this section hard, and every day to improve their ball handling. But, when we work out a group of Chauncey Billups, Derek Fisher, and Kyle Lowry as a guard group, we shorten the drills a bit and get into the body of the workout quicker. This doesn’t mean we do not work ball handling, but rather that we allow them to work on it within the structure of the rest of the drills throughout the workout. It can be as short as 2 - 3 minutes or as long as 5 - 8.

Here you can choose from the library we provided in the drill section, making sure to focus on the points of emphasis.

Segment 3 - Low-Movement Shooting Drills, Spot Shots / Form Shooting - Establish Fundamental Focus
The first drill of the workout should be drill sets with minimum movement that allow the players to focus on their footwork and fundamentals, most often a shooting drill to follow the ball handling. We often start with spot shooting drills or even form shooting to start and into spots - again depending on the player and skill level. This is where you really begin to stress the footwork and overall mechanics - constantly stressing the key elements of balance, getting low, body control, etc.

This section is where you really begin teaching and set the tone that you will demand detail in all repetitions. Get the players thinking about what is important in the workout. Here you can really coach and teach - before you get the player really rolling into the workout.

Here - you can choose the drills from our drill section that have limited movement or that get the player moving around the court, getting a feel for everything, but still focused and detail oriented. If you allow this part of the workout to be sloppy, you will never be able to clean the workout up.

Segment 4 - Full Speed, Shooting Drills off Game Cuts, Dribble Optional
Now we get moving with our combination drills, intense cutting drills, or moves of the dribble to get the player going, drill the footwork, balance, and efficiency in all his offensive skills and moves. This is where the workout really picks up intensity and you begin to challenge the players, pushing their wind and driving up the intensity of the workout into full game-speed.

The options for this section are endless and it is up to you to plan and construct the sequences so that the players are getting meaningful, game reps.

Players can be moved all over the court, and this section, at least in this basic workout structure. Most of this section is not position specific. You would just adjust the distance of shots or the amounts of dribbles in the drills for different players. For example if you have a post player and a guard in the group, they can do the same movements - a slide-to-corner drill - but the distance from where they shoot can be different, even though they are in the same drill.

An example here would be using the Impact Curl Series, where the player is making a hard curl cut. First, for a shot, then a 1-dribble pull-up, then a 2-dribble move, jab and shot, etc. You could also use our curl and fade combo drill where the player curls hard to elbow then fades to the corner for a second shot. And, as with all the drills, you could build on the cut and move into jabs, 1-dribble, or 2-dribble moves. Drill could be the Fade-Cut Series - or, the Curl to Fade Combo Series. You could also combine a series of shooting drills here - for example, a trail shot, then a fade to the corner. You have to know the players.

Know what you want to get out of the workout, and piece the drills together accordingly. If you want to get
them moving more for conditioning, then piece the drills together to create more running - trail shots from half court, etc. You can also move the drills from side to side - having the player shoot a curl from one side, then going to the other corner to curl again. You can increase the number of reps per drill to create a harder set, or lessen them to create more focus and keep the moves sharper. Again, you are in control and can manipulate the drills to get the desired results.

In this section, you are not worried about exactly what offense the players run or what shots they would get in a game. This is all about footwork and the rest of the basic fundamentals we need to be teaching. Coaches take the workout in the wrong direction when they are doing player development sessions and constantly do “team offense drills” with their players. This is NOT the time to worry about whether or not a player will or will not come off a curl, or a flex cut, or any cut, in his or her particular offense. Don’t forget what we are talking about here - PLAYER DEVELOPMENT, not traditional coaching.

Segment 5 - Intense Position-Specific Drills - Game Speed and Action

In this section is where you begin to really specialize the workout. For example, as we work with Serge Ibaka, and know that our goals for him are to improve his post game, including back to the basket and facing moves, we lock into that area during this time. For Kyle Lowry, whom we want to sharpen up on his mid-range pull-up game, we insert those drills at this time. Avery Bradley has a focus on improving his use of the ball-screen, so in his case, we put that sequence in here. If you have a player who has difficulty creating space off the dribble, then you can set u a pop-to-wing, cross-over and step-back series, really focusing in on creating space and making sure the dribbles are efficient and effective. As we keep saying, YOU must understand what your players need and that will determine what your workout looks like.

Here you must really emphasize the WHOLE MOVE - meaning if it is a pop out to the wing and one dribble baseline pull-up, that pop-out must be realistic and at game speed. No soft cuts, no soft dribble approaches. If a player is posting up, make him or her really flash into the post, or flash across the pain, or screen and duck-in. This is where the “game action” comes into play.

When we are shooting jumpers from spots, or working form shooting, we are not concerned with incorporating the drill into “the game.” Think of those drills as pulling a piece of the puzzle out to work on it. In this segment and in segment 6, we are inserting that piece back into the total puzzle and emphasizing the key teaching points.

Segment 6 - Intense Position-Specific Drills - Game Speed and Action

(Same principles as Segment 5, just another set of drills in game setting)
If you did ball-screen in Segment 5 with your guards, now maybe a difficult pull up jumper set from 3 spots would work well. This will give them variety in the workout and keep their minds fresh. It also allows you to focus on 2 main game-like sequences within the workout, after the warm up and fundamental emphasis. Points of emphasis are still the same here, just in the context of a game situation.

Segment 7 - Contact Drilling - 1 on 1, 2 on 2, or 3 on 3 Play in Drill Settings

This segment is really where we “turn up the heat.” We don’t use it every day, and we don’t use it during all times of the year. Basically you are taking your drills from segments 5 and 6 and adding defenders, help-side defense, etc. You are also integrating passing skills, ability to see the floor etc.

If you break down the NBA Pre-Draft evaluation process - it looks very similar to our workout structure. This fact is also a reason why our structure is what it is, because, in the draft, the teams are responsible for fully evaluating a player. So in a sense, they focus on EVERY part of his game including his physical tools and ability to make “basketball movements.” That’s what this Impact Development System is all about - developing the TOTAL PLAYER. We develop the total player at all levels, including for the NBA of course, so there is a striking similarity between the two processes.
Specifically - the teams first want to see how the player moves. Then they do a complete skill evaluation, starting with ball handling and moving all the way through shooting and individual moves off the dribble. For post guys they want to see them work in the post, how they jump to rebound, and how they defend. Once this is accomplished, the put the player in specific game situations - ball screens, pin-downs, etc. Then, to finish, they always play 3 on 3 (NBA rules limit the pre-draft workouts to 6 per workout) to really see how the player can apply his skills and athletic components. This gives them a full look at the player - and for us, it also resembles a COMPLETE workout.

In this section, you can set up the drills with a bit of a “coach” in you, to go along with your player development mindset. One on one should limit dribbles to make it game-like. 2 on 2 and 3 on 3 should require good spacing. Again, we NEVER just “play 3 on 3.” We set the players up in specific situation, limit dribbles, and coach the defense as well as the offense. We vary the offensive sets and usually have players from each position in the drill to guard each other. Out first game may be a ball screen series to feature the point guard, then we move to a pin-down series to feature the wing players, then lastly we may go to a post entry game to feature the post player. Again, we always have a purpose and we are always working to develop all the players on the court.

If we are doing a 6-day workout week, or even a 5-day week, we will not use defenders every day. We will discuss this is the weekly planning section and also discuss what time of the year is appropriate to do more or less of contact drilling.

**Segment 8 - Shooting Off the Catch Series - While Fatigued**

Nothing fancy here. This is an optional segment depending on how long you want to take the workout. When the players begin to fatigue, you should not continue the contact drilling. But, if you still need to add time to the workout, you can return to game-speed shooting drills that force the players to focus on the fundamentals while fatigued. We get a lot out of this segment when we use it. Really works the players physical endurance as well as mental endurance.

As we will discuss in the performance section, every time a player shoots a jumper, he technically does a “squat-jump.” So, you can think of this section as a major focus on muscular endurance as well. Will really build the endurance in the legs, core, and upper body.

Duration of this segment is based on total workout time tot his point.

**Segment 9 - Finish With Spot Shooting Series**

Back to the beginning of the workout, forcing the player to really focus on the fundamentals of shooting while fatigued. No cutting here, just a selection from one of our stationary shooting drills to finish the workout off.

**Conditioning Segments**

This can be done in one section at the end of the workout, but can also be broken up and inserted into the workout between each segment to create variety and also to fatigue the players throughout the workout to force them to train while tired in game situations.

As you will see in our conditioning library, there are “basketball conditioning drills,” and also just straight “conditioning drills.” The basketball drills will involve a basketball move with the ball, playing defense, etc. The straight conditioning drills are simply conditioning drills that don’t involve the use of a ball or a basketball-simulated activity, i.e. playing defense, etc.

We provide a variety of conditioning drills that simulate the cardiovascular demands of a basketball game. However we also use so drills that address base-fitness, as it is one of the real keys to developing as a good player as we state above. There are different times of the year to use each. Post season and off-season if not the time for intense sprints. For our NBA guys who need to be ready for a long season on October 1 or so, we work the base fitness all off-season, then turn the heat up as we get into mid-August to push the system with sprints and explosive conditioning work. We will discuss this in our yearly plan as well.
All the skill in the world can be crushed by fatigue. I have seen it over 17 years of developing players. The ones in the best shape play well. The ones who don’t commit to getting themselves fit, struggle as the game, or the season goes on. There is also a method to the madness of conditioning. The often seen “run them ’til they drop” mentality will get actually stall the player’s progress and limit their development. It can and often will also put them in a state where they are susceptible to injury from over-training.

As coaches and trainers, we need to have a basic understanding of how the body works, how much conditioning is too much, and how hard we can push our players. More is not always better. This program is designed to allow you to be efficient in all areas, and that must also include conditioning.

We feel very strongly that going through one of on-court basketball workouts will provide the players with a tremendous amount of basketball-specific cardiovascular conditioning. In fact, with many of our pre-draft players, we do very few conditioning drills. But is a necessary part of the overall program and must be addressed to make sure your players are fit.

Free Throw Breaks
Our Impact System used free throw breaks for the players to recover as well as get them to work on their free throws while fatigued.

FT’s can be used in a variety of ways. Rather than just take a “water break,” our system places FT’s throughout the workout, usually in-between segments. We vary the numbers, again based on the physical shape of the players in the workout, and the time of the year. If we are working out in May with an NBA player who is obviously not in “game-shape,” we would give more FT breaks as well as more FT’s per break. In May, we may have the players “make 4, then drink.” But in September or October, while players are expected to be closer to game-shape, we would cut the amount of FT breaks as well as only have them “make 2.” As we stated before, we have done a tremendous amount of scientific research to simulate game heart rates in players. The game has many hard spurts, then short breaks, then bursts of action again. We therefore work to simulate that in our workouts.

Our job as player development coaches is to prepare the players to play - not only to get them good at the drills. We not only train the skills and the mind, but we must train the body as well. We cannot expect players to perform in a game setting and improve if we do not train their heart and lungs to function at an elite level. Simple as it sounds, it is often overlooked. As I always say, a fast runner is not so fast when his legs are cramped up and he cannot process oxygen. You must take responsibility for covering this area. Use of FT’s and conditioning, along with demanding the players to work through the drills at game speed will allow you to do this.

Sequencing and Structure with Bigger Groups
One of the biggest challenges and limiting factors to many coaches and trainers workouts is that the workouts break when the number of players increases. We have hired many coaches at Impact who are tremendous when working out 1 or 2 players, but once we add players to make the group 4 -6 players, they are not quite sure how to run the drills to incorporate everyone.

We are all not always so fortunate to have 3 or 4 players in a group to workout. Sometimes we will have 6 - 8, or an entire team. And many of these times, we don’t even have the whole court to use. Ideally, you will schedule and plan your workouts to bring in 3 - 4 players per group, per basket to keep the groups smaller. I would say MOST head coaches in youth basketball can create enough time to fit everyone in, but also keep the groups manageable.

In Vegas during our busy summer months, we schedule 3 - 4 players per basket, on the top of every hour. We have 4 teaching stations at the facility. So therefore we have the capacity to train 16 players on the floor at once, each hour. So, if we start a group at 8:00 and go every hour until a 1:00 start, we can, theoretically, train 96 players between the hours of 8 am and 2 pm without any group being larger than 4 players. I would encourage you to try to schedule your workouts in a similar manner, but
we understand that in most situations, the gym time is limited and this is not possible. So, we take a look at how to manage the bigger group and still deliver and Impact-quality workout.

It is very important that you understand how to work these larger groups out without losing efficiency and effectiveness. We have all walked into a gym to see a line of 7 - 10 players on the wing, with one ball for the player at the front of the line, with each player stepping up to do a 1-dribble pull up, then the player going to the back of the line and standing for many minutes in between reps.

For ALL our drills - we have a basic structure for how we handle larger groups. More line, more basketballs, using a player as a feeder rather than just standing around. Below is a basic structure we use for larger groups that will allow you to take larger groups but still deliver the personal workouts. Here are some examples of a 1-dribble pull up drill with 8 players at one basket.

Remember this outline is a BASIC structure for you to build the workouts. You may have specific players who need more of one area than another. You also may have days when you feel the need to add more movement or less movement based on whether your players are fatigued, fresh, in-season, out-of-season. Think of yourself as the MASTER ARCHITECT for the workout. You know the players, you know the schedule, and, as a great coach or trainer, you must learn to get a “feel” for every workout and what is necessary to make it great.

What we will do now is go through many examples and situations that will help you master exactly how to build the workouts.

**ESSENTIAL POINTS TO CONSIDER IN BUILDING WORKOUT**

Workouts should address all of, or as many as possible, the Impact Components of the Game as well as the Impact “Mental Side,” and Fundamental Skills.

As you review your workouts, consider whether or not these areas are adequately addressed.

Workout difficulty can be adjusted in many ways:

- Drill selection
- Increasing or decreasing duration of drills
- Shortening or lengthening rest periods
- Adding in more or less conditioning drills to the workout, either between drills, or at the end.

Workouts must be planned to address the specific needs of the players in the workout, no matter how large the group may be. Consider what specific skills the players in the workout need to focus on and improve, and select the appropriate drills.

You control the duration of each workout and can take out certain segments depending on your overall goal.

All the drills are pieces to the puzzle. You piece the puzzle together based on what the objectives are.

If a player has specific needs with his physical tools - needs to get his feet faster for example, you can add in segments of performance training right into the workout. For example, after each segment, you could insert some agility drills to address that need. If a player needs to get quicker off his feet, you could add some jumping drills and quick jumping drills between the sets. We will expound on this in the performance section and the discussion of how to integrate these drills into the basketball workout. Your edge in player development will come from the understanding of how this is done.
**SECTION 5 - DRILL SEQUENCING**

**EXAMPLE WORKOUT FOR A GUARD**

**Segment 1 - Dynamic Warm Up**

**Segment 2 - Drills**
- Single hand pound dribble low - 1 minute each hand
- Single hand pound dribble low - 1 minute each hand
- Side to side hand dribbles low - 1 minute each hand
- Stationary Move superset - 2 sets, 1:30 total

**Straight Line Cone Series: 8 -12 cones**
Choose 5 different moves from library at execute at each cone - if no cones are available, pick spots on the floor.

**Angled Cone Series**
- 8 - 12 cones at 45 degrees
- Choose 5 different moves from the library and execute at each cone

Ball handling work that also activated the core, lower, and upper body through intense drilling. Player should be ready to move after this series

MAKE 2 FT’s, Water

**Segment 3 - Shooting Series**

**Spot shooting:** make 5 from 7 spots
1 set mid-range, 1 set from 3 point distance

**Wing glass shots:** make 7 from each wing from short range and 7 from moving back a bit

Fade to corner, jumpers, mid-range, make 7
Repeat from other corner
Corner to elbow curl shots - make 7

No dribbles yet, focusing on form and footwork and getting the body warm

Make 2 FT’s - water

**Segment 4 - Dribble pull up series**
- 1 dribble pull-ups: make 7 left hand, make 7 right hand
- Repeat from each wing
- Emphasizing explosive moves, footwork
- 2-dribble pull-up, make 7 left hand, make 7 right hand
- Repeat from each wing

2 dribble cross-over to mid-range jumper
SECTION 5 - DRILL SEQUENCING

- Make 7 mid-range from wing, top, and other wing: 7 right-to-left, 7 left-to-right
- Repeat from each wing

Dribble introduced and player is up to game speed. Focus for the guard is on the fundamentals of shooting off the dribble, angles, distance, etc.

Make 4 FT’s

Segment 5 – Ball Screen Series
Now we move into specific game action. Assuming this guard is a point guard.
- Make 5 attacking elbow for jumper
- Make 5 splitting the extension and getting to the rim
- Make 5 stepping back behind the screen for a 3
- Make 5, defense forces the screen down, guard goes baseline side for a pull-up

Repeat both sides of floor

INSERT CONDITIONING SET

Make 4 FT’s

Segment 6 - Transition jumpers off the dribble
Second set of game action
- Make 5 from wing, top, and other wing - mid-range shots
- Make 5 from wing, top, and other wing - 3’s.
- Transition finishes to the rim - make 5 from wing, top, and other wing.

INSERT AGILITY SET

Make 4 FT’s

Segment 7
- Add a defender to drills
- Pop wing, jab, then shoot, 1 or 2 dribble pull-up
- Player pops wing then reads the defense and makes the appropriate move. Each player in the workout gets 5 reps then rotates to defense. All players go through 2x if under 4 in the workout.

Segment 8
Curl/Fade series - make 10 total from each side shooting from elbow and then fading to corner for second shot.
- Elbow to elbow shooting
- Make 10

Segment 9
Finish workout with 10 makes from 5 spots around the horn, make 5 shots, then 5, jab shots.

Segment 10
Assess need for conditioning - workout inserted 2 conditioning sets + 1 on 1, so probably not necessary unless conditioning is a major area of concern with this particular group of players or specific players.