

Momentum Killers Momentum Getters RSSS

Momentum in basketball is a great thing to have on your side. Of course, you can attempt to control momentum with timeouts, but you need those for the end of the game. This article has some thoughts on what types of plays can shift the momentum in a game. Raising your players' "basketball IQ" by teaching them to spot those momentum shifting plays and then working with their skill levels and your team's schemes in order to do something about them, will allow you to work at getting the momentum of the game on your side.

Momentum Killers

1. **Bad shot selection**

We have a suggested way to rate shots that will help with consistency on what a good and a bad shot are. It is in our [Team Offense](#) section—click on shot selection.

2. **Missed free throws**

Practice, practice, practice with as much fatigue and pressure as you can muster. Our [Two Minute Drill](#) is a great way to practice free throws in this manner.

3. **Giving up second shot baskets**

To emphasize block outs, chart it as a stat in basketball practice and in games. Give each player his or her stats. "Steve, you had 19 block out chances on defense, and only made contact on 12." It will make a difference in performance.

4. **Allowing opponent to score the last basket of a quarter**

If you hold the ball for the last shot as the clock is running down, your opponent is less likely to get the last shot.

5. **Giving up three point baskets in the fourth quarter**

As Dick Bennett says, "You must be tough enough to outlast your opponents." Work in basketball practice to be physically and mentally tough enough to defend with everything you have for the entire game.

6. **Turnovers that lead to scores**

Your team must be able to defend the shots you take and the turnovers you make. A five second or travel turnover is better than throwing a pass up for grabs because with those turnovers, you can at least set your defense.

7. **Unnecessary fouls**

Playing hard and with discipline on defense is crucial. Rick Pitino says, "Fouling negates hustle." Preach that to your team. If you play hard, you will get in position and be less likely to foul. If you play smart, you won't take chances that have low payoff potential and high risk for picking up a foul.

8. **Loss of poise**

We have a section on mental toughness and focusing on the task at hand and not on the distractions.

Momentum Getters

1. **Scoring to end a quarter**

Again, we feel that it is imperative to have a plan and practice it daily to get the last shot of each quarter.

2. Negating a basket by taking a charge

Emphasize how to and when to take charges in basketball practice and reward and praise it when it happens in practice or in a game.

3. Making a shot to take the lead in the 4th quarter

The right player shooting with great shooting technique, great shot selection, and repetitive pressurized success in basketball practice increase your odds dramatically.

4. Scoring against a press

We believe in attacking a press to beat it with a basket or a foul, not just to withstand it.

5. Diving on a loose ball to gain/save a possession

Always grab loose balls with two hands and chin them.

6. Answer a momentum getter by the other team.

Work with your players in practice to understand what those plays are and how to answer them.