***“Qualities of a Quality Coach”***

1. **Assertive with the students** – The nicest, most knowledgeable coaches will be extremely ineffective if they are not assertive as instructors. These kids will eat you alive!
2. **Patience** – I used to make this my # 1 priority, but a patient coach who is not assertive, will soon lose his patience!
3. **Personable** – Obviously, you want someone very approachable with good communications skills. This quality will cross more than a few chessplayers off your list.
4. **Kept appearance** – I’m not saying that your candidate has to be on People Magazine’s Best Dressed list, but an unkempt appearance should tell you a bit about the potential coach.
5. **Honorable** – I have seen coaches with all of the other qualities, but lacking in honesty and a desire to live life fairly. Sooner or later, this will become apparent to you and the students.
6. **Proper priorities** – If the coach’s first comment to you is that he once coached a child who became a state champion, he may be great for private lessons, but have the wrong priorities to run a scholastic chess team. You want to make this a positive experience for all the young players, not just those who have high ratings.
7. **Entertaining** – Kids can be a tough audience. A good coach has to know a few good jokes and should prepare his/her lessons as though it were a monologue for a Nickelodeon Talk Show!

**Knows chess** – Okay, I’ll admit it, knowing chess is important, especially for the lead instructor. The kids don’t care about your rating, but they would love to hear you tell them the setting for Morphy’s famous game, or how the spectators threw gold coins after Marshall’s spectacular Qg3! And, of course, understanding the ideas behind these games and many others will certainly help.