



U.S. SOCCER FEDERATION

KEY QUALITIES



6 KEY QUALITIES

**GAME UNDERSTANDING
AND DECISION-MAKING**

PHYSICAL EXECUTION

TECHNICAL EXECUTION

**RESPONSIBILITY AND
INITIATIVE**

**GROWTH MINDSET AND
WINNING MENTALITY**

LEARNING ABILITY



6 KEY QUALITIES



GAME UNDERSTANDING AND DECISION-MAKING

READ SITUATIONS, ANTICIPATE AND MAKE QUICK DECISIONS UNDER PRESSURE

TECHNICAL EXECUTION

BALL MASTERY AND SKILLS UNDER PRESSURE

PHYSICAL EXECUTION

MOVEMENT SKILLS AND FITNESS

GROWTH MINDSET AND WINNING MENTALITY

CONTINUOUS DRIVE TO WIN AND IMPROVE

RESPONSIBILITY AND INITIATIVE (SELF-REGULATION)

RESPONSIBLE FOR ONE'S OWN LEARNING, DEVELOPMENT AND PERFORMANCE

LEARNING ABILITY

CAPACITY TO ADAPT TO A HIGHER LEVEL

GAME UNDERSTANDING AND DECISION-MAKING

READ SITUATIONS, ANTICIPATE AND MAKE QUICK DECISIONS UNDER PRESSURE

- Observes and analyzes the position of teammates and opponents
- Identifies cues and intentions of teammates and opponents
- Recognizes space, time and risk/opportunity
- Processes information quickly, thinks ahead and acts fast (makes the best choice)
- Manages the pace of the game, recognizes when to accelerate or slow-down play
- Understands position and role, based on style of play, team principles and strategy
- Adjusts position and moves into space quickly/ahead of time to provide support/cover, aligns actions with teammates
- Scans continuously
- Adapts body shape
- Shows versatility and flexibility to play multiple roles or positions in different systems
- Uses creativity to find new and different solutions



RESPONSIBILITY AND INITIATIVE (SELF-REGULATION)

RESPONSIBLE FOR ONE'S OWN LEARNING, DEVELOPMENT AND PERFORMANCE

- Takes ownership, sets goals, plans, monitors, (re)evaluates
- Takes initiative, is proactive (creative), sees opportunities to take action without being told
- Manages personal lifestyle and environment (rest, recovery, sleep, nutrition, injury prevention/care, mental health)
- Is a role model under all circumstances
- Builds relationships, helps and supports teammates and staff
- Prepares for every game/session
- Reflects on and evaluates one's own performance (self-critical)
- Receives feedback, asks questions (coachable)
- Communicates openly and often (coaches, teammates)
- Creates a personal development plan
- Holds self accountable (no excuses, delivers on agreements and promises)



GROWTH MINDSET AND WINNING MENTALITY

CONTINUOUS DRIVE TO IMPROVE AND COMPETE

FOCUS (INTENSITY)

- Gives maximum effort (work ethic)
- Concentrates, stays on task
- Commits to the process (sacrifice)

MOTIVATION & DETERMINATION

- Shows passion/enthusiasm
- Challenges self
- Relentlessly pursues goals (desire)
- Never gives up
- Is brave, fearless (not afraid to make mistakes)
- Pushes self to limits (body and mind)
- Believes in self (confidence)
- Is a team player, selfless (giver)

EMOTIONAL STABILITY AND CONTROL

- Overcomes adversity and setbacks
- Deals with pressure
- Stays composed
- Behaves maturely
- Is true to self



TECHNICAL EXECUTION

BALL MASTERY AND SKILLS UNDER PRESSURE

- Comfortable and calm with the ball under pressure
- Receiving and playing in tight spaces
- Receiving to play forward
- Ability to play 1 and 2 touch
- Precise passing to set up the receiver (range of passing: long, break lines, short, etc.)
- Dribbling and running with the ball to create (use of body feints, change of speed and/or direction)
- Making quick combinations
- Creating chances and finishing (final pass/shot)
- Heading
- Dominating 1 v 1 (take-ons, challenges, regains, tackles)



PHYSICAL EXECUTION

MOVEMENT SKILLS AND FITNESS

- Moves efficiently (agility, coordination, balance)
- Uses body in duels to control or disrupt the opponent and/or protect the ball
- Is explosive, makes quick movements (accelerates) and/or jumps higher (separating from opponent)
- Exudes strength, power and endurance
- Repeats high intensity actions (sprints)
- Has specialized physical qualities and stature for position





LEARNING ABILITY

CAPACITY TO ADAPT TO HIGHER LEVEL

- Shows an ability to excel
- Adapts to new situations quickly
- Absorbs and applies new information quickly

*observed over an extended time, includes games and training sessions





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