



Head Coach of the German Men's National Field Hockey Team
FIH Coach of the Year 2023

André Henning is the head coach of the German men's national hockey team and firmly believes that a team knows more than its coach. He gives his players responsibility and works with them to build a collaborative relationship that stands up even under the greatest pressure. With two World Championship titles (2023 and 2026), an Olympic silver medal (2024) and victory at the European Championship (2025), his team has demonstrated just how successful this approach can be.

When André Henning took charge of the national team in 2021, Germany was ranked fifth in the world. By the 2023 World Cup, he had succeeded in moulding a team that believed in itself even in difficult match situations and was consistently able to turn games around after falling behind. The 2023 World Cup title was the first for the German men's hockey team in 17 years. In the same year, Henning became the first German coach to be named FIH Coach of the Year.

André Henning (*1983) played in the 1st Bundesliga and for the German U18 national team before a knee injury brought his playing career to an end. Whilst studying law, he began coaching and, in 2007, at the age of 23, became the Bundesliga's youngest head coach at Uhlenhorst Mülheim. In 2014, he led the club to the German Championship. Via Club an der Alster Hamburg and Rot-Weiss Köln, his path led him to the national team. This success is closely linked to his understanding of modern leadership. Henning believes in personal responsibility, participation and a strong bond within the team. He deliberately challenges traditional hierarchies. The 2026 World Cup demonstrated that this approach remains effective even following changes in personnel: with a significantly younger squad, Germany once again managed to win the title.

In his talks, André Henning offers insights into his work and demonstrates how teams are formed, led and kept motivated even under intense pressure. His motto, 'Every team is smarter than its leadership', shapes his understanding of leadership. He challenges traditional hierarchies and uses concrete examples from elite sport to show how personal responsibility and team spirit develop. This includes why his team sometimes has to buy their own mineral water for a match, as well as consciously celebrating small successes and dealing with crises flexibly. In this way, Henning vividly illustrates what modern leadership can achieve when responsibility is not merely handed down from the top, but is lived out within the team.

Topics (Selection):

- Support, trust and collaboration rather than control and directive leadership – key factors for success
- Bringing together internal team steering groups for specialised tasks and the resulting development of intrinsic motivation
- Confrontational and appreciative communication skills in establishing a new culture with a focus on personalities rather than performance
- Profiling and cross-coaching, connection and trust