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# SPORT PERFORMANCE DIVISION

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## IN THIS ISSUE

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*Alex Morgan #13 of the United States celebrates with teammates after Morgan scores her first goal against goalkeeper Stefany Castano #1 of Colombia in the second half in the FIFA Women's World Cup 2015 Round of 16 match at Commonwealth Stadium on June 22, 2015 in Edmonton, Canada. (Photo by Kevin C. Cox/ Getty Images)*

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# Message from the Chief of Sport Performance

## Alan Ashley


Welcome back *Olympic Coach* readers!

Team USA athletes have just completed an excellent Pan American Games in Toronto with great performances by rookies and veterans alike, winning both the overall and the gold medal count and representing our country very well. During these games Team USA athletes gained valuable quota spots in various sports for the 2016 Olympic Games which have helped to put our team in a better place to prepare for Rio now that they have met the standards. Coming up shortly, Team USA athletes will compete at the ParaPan American Games (August 7 – 15) which we again hope to use as an opportunity to identify emerging athletes and qualify for Rio 2016.

As we are just one year out from the start of the Olympic Games and it is very encouraging to see Team USA athletes make the podium in many different sports. Our goal is to put each athlete in position to perform at their best and have the opportunity to represent their country. Between now and November we have many World Championships and these events should give us a glimpse of what we can expect at the 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

It's our hope to be able to share information with you through our *Olympic Coach* authors that will help you prepare your athletes to perform at their best. In this issue you'll see examples of training journals and how they can impact performance, how to establish a vision and mission to run a sport club with athlete development in mind, and leadership examples in coaching and how different leadership styles can impact performance.

We hope that you'll enjoy this issue of *Olympic Coach* and that you'll continue to let us know what information you find useful, as well as offer suggestions on topics that we should consider addressing in future issues.

# Implementation Plan for Training Journals Used to Increase Motivation and Performance

**Marshall J. Milbrath, M.Ed., University of Northern Colorado; Level 1 Coaching Instructor - USA Track & Field**
**Karl W. Humble, M.Ed., Pn1, Health Coach**

## Introduction

Coaches have ready access to training tools that aim to improve coaching and athletic performance. In some cases, complicated tools can be presented in a final form that that represents years of gradual steps. This can lead coaches to be intrigued by a promising tool only to be stuck at how to start implementation or may even find themselves in situations where they introduce too much, too soon.

In our previous article, we explained the importance of training journals and made a case for why they can be effective tools to improve athlete performance (Milbrath & Humble, 2014). This article provides manageable approaches with which coaches can teach athletes how to use a training journal. We provide examples of assessment tools that coaches can use to evaluate the effectiveness of "journaling." Specifically, in this article we answer four practical questions:

- How will journaling help my athletes?
- How do I teach journaling to my athletes?
- How do I keep journaling from overwhelming my athletes?
- How do I know if journaling is helping my athletes?

The implementation plan stems from a philosophical focus on athlete-centered, mastery-first coaching. This implementation plan adds to the multifaceted program already in place by the coach – not as a new system to which the coach should subscribe. Additionally, while athletes of various levels may have different demands from their respective sports, this plan applies to all athletes through appropriate adaptation. The goal of the plan is not to identify what components should be included in training, but rather to direct the athlete to what he or she should attune him or herself during training in order to increase motivation and performance.

The effectiveness of journaling stems from two main concepts. The first is that increasing motivation towards participation in sport is directly linked to increases in performance (Deci & Ryan, 2007). Second, research suggests increases in self-regulatory abilities are also related to increases in performance (Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 2005). A brief review of these topics will be provided, followed by answers to the above questions.

Additionally, this implementation plan aligns with the 2005 National Association for Sport and Physi-

cal Education Coaching Standards (Appendix A) (NASPE, 2005). Since this implementation plan focuses primarily on the emotional and knowledge-based domains of the athlete, standards focused on either physical development of the athlete or skills of the coach are omitted. The alignment of this implementation plan with NASPE standards ensures that the content of the plan is founded in rigorous standards that are representative of sound coaching practice.

**How will journaling help my athletes?**

Individuals are motivated intrinsic and extrinsically (Deci & Ryan, 2007). Intrinsic motivation allows an athlete to feel control over his or her experience, which has been shown to increase performance (Deci & Ryan, 2007). Self-regulatory behaviors, or behaviors that keep someone focused on a task, increase intrinsic motivation, as well as self-belief, diligence, and self-discipline (Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 2005). Self-regulation consists of three cycling phases: forethought, performance, and self-reflection as well as multiple processes and skills within each of the phases (Zimmerman & Campillo, 2003). The act of journaling provides a structure with which an athlete systematically cycles through these phases, thereby developing concurrent skills. As an athlete cycles through these phases, the associated meaningfulness of journaling itself increases. By using training journals, purpose is given to the daily tasks of an athlete, which increases fulfillment in sport and provides an environment that promotes intrinsic motivation (Bandura, 1977). In short, journaling provides a structure by which athletes keep themselves focuses and motivated (see Milbrath & Humble (2014) for review of self-regulatory processes in athletics).

**How do I teach journaling to my athletes?**

Self-regulation is specific to different aspects of an athlete's life (e.g., effective self-regulation as an athlete may not necessarily result in effective self-regulation as a student). This implementation plan identifies skills for four domains: primary workouts, ancillary workouts, competitions, and lifestyle using the terminology we previously proposed (2014) (Appendix B). Relevant skills for each domain are identified for each phase of self-regulation (Appendix C). Prompting questions are aligned with the skills to guide the athlete towards successful demonstration of these skills (see Milbrath & Humble, 2014).

Effective teaching of journaling begins with developing a relationship with the athletes through regular, informal, one-on-one meetings. It is recommended that these meetings occur away from the competition/practice arena and are in a relatively neutral location. The meetings help the coach to better understand the athlete, receive feedback regarding that athlete's participation in sports as well as other important events in the athlete's life. The coach can then use this time to introduce the training journal, assign skills and prompting questions while subsequently evaluating information in the journal that the athlete provided since the last meeting. The athlete can also elaborate on the provided information. Figure 1 presents a visual representation of the entire process including components of the implementation plan later presented in this article.

Training journal examples are provided for the primary workout and competition domains, each indicating how the skills fit into the components of training (Appendix D). The format provided here, using the context of endurance running as an example, shows what a journal might look like.

Various sports have different relevant training components; as such, journals should take a form that reflects the specific components of the sport. Just as a coach tailors training to fit the individuals and environment of his or her team, the coach should use creativity to create a journal that will make sense to him or herself as a coach and to the athletes.


*Figure 1*

**How do I keep journaling from overwhelming my athletes?**

Use a Behavioral Contract

Coaches provide athletes the systems and tools necessary to increase performance, achieve team and personal goals, and enjoy their experiences. Journaling further provides athletes with the opportunity to take ownership over past, present and future efforts, rather than blindly following the trajectory laid out by a one-size-fits-all plan. Journaling leads to a natural shift in mindset over time from thinking about athletics as a job to feeling a sense of purpose in his or her participation. Behavioral contracts can further encourage this natural purpose. These have been thought of as representations of mutual benefits, perceptions, and informal obligations between a supervisor and employee (1995). The definition translates well to sport. By implementing a behavioral contract at the outset of a program, the athlete is making an earnest, public declaration of commitment. The mutual benefits of presenting the athlete with a behavioral contract are clear: there is transparency of expectations between the coach and athlete.

Behavior contracts can be laid out in a variety of formats, yet they all contain the same four components: 1.) Expectations of all parties involved, 2.) a timeline for team goals, 3.) a list of desired behaviors, and 4.) places for signatures of both parties. By signing a document with the expectations of the program clearly described, there is an inherent buying-in that occurs (Rousseau, 1995). The contract eases the mind of the athlete and brings him or her into the program with transparency and trust. It also allows for journaling to be introduced. Including journaling as an expectation gives an opportunity for buy-in and commitment on the part of the athlete. It also gives an opportunity for the athlete to see journaling as an opportunity for athletic growth rather than overly time-consuming work.

Introduce Journaling Gradually

Generally speaking, most learning can be sorted into “lower” and “higher” order thinking skills. Lower order thinking skills pertain to concrete tasks and concepts, or things that are readily tangible to a learner. Higher order thinking is thought to be more abstract in nature. (Bloom, 1984). When teaching athletes how to journal, it is advisable for coaches to “scaffold” the learning of the athletes by gradually introducing skills, starting with lower order thinking skills and progressing to higher order thinking skills. Scaffolding allows the athlete to feel successful with simple tasks. This prior success further serves to increase feelings of competence and motivation (Bandura 1977, Deci & Ryan 2007). This increased motivation serves to then encourage athletes when larger more abstract tasks are introduced. In the training journal examples, skills with an asterisk are indicative of a higher order thinking skill; these are also highlighted in the provided training logs.

While it is generally advised to introduce lower order skills before higher order thinking, the coach should use his or her subjective knowledge and relationship with the athlete to determine what, if any new skills should introduced. This implementation plan does not require utilization of all skills to be successful; nor does it require the coach to address all domains of the athlete’s life. It is better for the athlete to be successful at a few skills than to be overwhelmed and “going through the motions” for many skills. Additionally, natural curiosity and creativity on the part of the athlete should be encouraged by introducing skills in which the athlete shows intrinsic interest regardless of thinking level or assignment by the coach.

Use Peer Mentorship

Sport is a very social endeavor that forms strong relationships. These relationships allow athletes to feel related to and provide sources of encouragement, both of which are associated with increased feelings of competence and motivation (Bandura 1977, Deci & Ryan 2007). Peer mentorship uses these already existent relationships to teach athletes how to focus on the skills presented to them and to do so independently. Peer-mentorship helps an athlete progress through four stages of skill demonstration: 1.) observation, 2.) emulation, 3.) self-control, and 4.) self-regulation, culminating in a stage in which not only is the athlete able to show proficiency in the skills, but also able to create unique meaning for themselves from them.

Athletes in the observation stage will benefit from reading the training journals of other athletes or

sitting in on conversations between other athletes and the coach. Allowing the athlete to observe the process will help increase the motivation of the athlete while also gaining better understanding of training journal use (Brown, Schunk, Rosenthal & Zimmerman 1978; Zimmerman & Rosenthal 1974).

Athletes in the emulation stage will focus on duplicating what they see done by their mentors. This allows for the mastery of the basic skill and then incorporating mimicked strategies or techniques into their own practice (Zimmerman & Rosenthal 1974; Rosenthal, Zimmerman, & Durning 1970).

Self-control is then seen when the athlete is able to use the training journal and give meaningful responses without having to look to a peer or mentor for guidance. At this point the skill is becoming automatic and the athlete no longer needs to be reminded to think about the prompting question. The automatic nature of the athlete's regulatory skills is the most tell-tale sign of this level (Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 1997, 1999).

Full self-regulation is finally attained when the athlete is able to complete the skill without being asked or having the response accounted for. This is seen through the athlete beginning to be creative in the self-regulatory process using techniques that are unique to themselves as individuals. While athletes may arrive at this stage on their own, having peer support works to speed the process by increasing motivation and giving the athlete a sense of success in his or her ability to journal as well as the skills upon which they are focusing (Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 2005).

**How do I know if journaling is helping my athletes?**

Assess Athlete Skills

To assess self-regulation, the coach should determine the level of mastery of each of the previous skills during the regular one-on-one meetings. During the meeting, the coach assesses the level of mastery over the assigned skills and determines which, if any, additional skills are to be assigned for the next week.

Evidence of learning is seen through meaningful responses upon which the athlete can further elaborate when prompted. The provided rating scale can be used by the coach to aid in assessments of the different skills (Appendix C). It is advisable that a coach refrain from introducing new skills until current skills are at the self-control stage. If an athlete seems resistant to a particular skill, the coach may replace the skill with one in which the athletes finds more purpose.

Assess Athlete Motivation

In order to assess motivation, a modified version of the Behavioral Regulation in Exercise Questionnaire can be used (BREQ-2) (Markland & Tobin, 2004) (see Milbrath & Humble 2014 for a modified version of the BREQ-2). Assessing motivation may be done with a formal administration of the modified BREQ-2 or informally during the one-on-one meetings by integrating questions from the modified BREQ-2 into the conversation. While a formal administration will provide a clearer picture of changes in motivational status, assessing this during a natural conversation may

prove to be more effective with athletes who may not care for the nature of a formal administration.

The changes in motivational status can give information to the coach regarding the attitudes and potential level of engagement the athlete is experiencing. For example, if the coach sees that motivation for competition went down between two different BREQ-2 assessments, the coach would then turn the focus of that athlete more heavily towards self-regulation skills focusing on competition contexts. The effectiveness of using training journals would then be demonstrated by simultaneous increases in self-regulation skill and motivation levels.

**Summary**

Just as a classroom has different curricula for its various subject matters, this implementation plan serves as one piece to the complex environment of sport and competition. This implementation plan centers on the ability of the athlete to plan, perform, and reflect in order to better focus training efforts while increasing motivation. Care should be taken to avoid overwhelming the athlete through use of a behavior contract, introducing skills gradually and deliberately, and providing peer support. Coaches can then evaluate the effectiveness of training journal use by assessing motivation and self-regulation abilities. Finally, all of these considerations should be taken under the umbrella of the athlete-centered training model using the coach's relationship with an understanding of the athlete to direct training journal use.

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## Appendix A - NASPE Standards Alignment

| Self-Regulation Components | | | NASPE Coaching Standards | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Phase** | **Process** | **Skill** | **1** | **18** | **19** | **20** | **24** | **26** | **28** | **37** | **38** | **39** |
| Forethought | Task Analysis | Set Goals | X | X | | X | | X | X | | | |
| | | Make Plans | X | X | | | | X | X | | | |
| | Self-Motivation | Assess Abilities | X | X | | | | X | | X | | |
| | | Assess Expectations | X | X | | | | X | | | | |
| | | Assess Interests | X | X | | | | X | | | | |
| | | Assess Motivations | X | X | | | | X | | | X | |
| Performance | Self-Control | Recall & Execute Plans | X | X | | | X | X | X | | | |
| | | Create Mental Imagery | X | X | | | X | X | | | | |
| | | Focusing Attention | X | X | | | X | X | | | | |
| | | Create Strategies | X | X | | | X | X | X | | | |
| | Self-Observation | Personal Feedback | X | X | | | | X | | X | | |
| | | Self-Recording | X | X | | | | X | | X | | |
| Reflection | Self-Judgment | Compare Results & Plans | X | X | | X | | X | | X | | X |
| | | Identify Result Source | X | X | | | | X | | X | | X |
| | Self-Reaction | Satisfaction/Disappointment | X | X | X | | | X | | X | | X |
| | | Monitor Attitude | X | X | X | | | X | | X | | X |
| **BREQ-2** | | | | | | | | | | | X | |

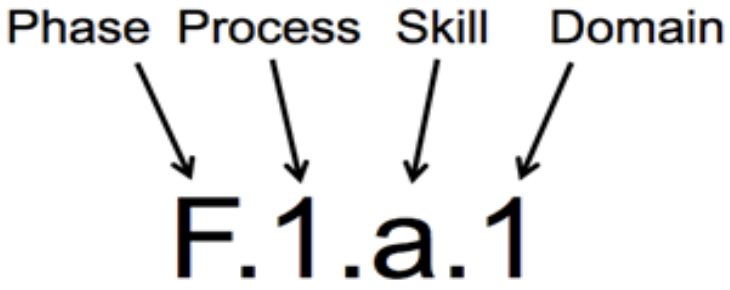

*LONDON, ENGLAND - APRIL 26: Tatyana McFadden of the United States crosses the finish line to win the Women's wheelchair Virgin Money London Marathon on April 26, 2015 in London, England. (Photo by Tom Dulat/Getty Images)*

## Appendix B - Self-Regulatory Phases, Process, and Skill Nomenclature

| FORETHOUGHT PHASE | |
|---|---|
| Task Analysis | Self-Motivation |
| Set Goals | Assess Abilities |
| Make Plans | Assess Expectation |
| | Assess Interests |
| | Assess Motivations |
| **PERFORMANCE PHASE** | |
| Self-Control | Self-Observation |
| Recal & Execute Plans | Personal Feedback |
| Create Mental Imagery | Self-recording |
| Focus Attention | |
| Create Strategies | |
| **SELF-REFLECTION PHASE** | |
| Self-Judgment | Self-Reaction |
| Compare Results & Plans | Satisfaction/Disappointment Source Identification |
| Identify Limitations | Monitor Attitude |

Adapted from (Zimmerman & Campillo 2003)

| Domain | Example (Track & Field Context) |
|---|---|
| 1 Primary Workout | Interval workout at prescribed speed, distance and rest |
| 2 Ancillary Workout | Strength training |
| 3 Competition | Interscholastic track meet |
| 4 Lifestyle | Items pertaining to diet, sleep, school, family, etc. |



## Appendix C - Implementatino Plan - Skill Assessment
## FORETHOUGHT SKILL ASSESSMENT

| Task Analysis | | A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Set goals** | | | | | | |
| F.1.a.1 | Identify purpose of running workouts. | | | | | |
| F.1.a.2 | Identify purpose of ancillary workouts. | | | | | |
| F.1.a.3 | Identify purpose of races. | | | | | |
| F.1.a.4 | Identify strategies for a healthy balance in daily life. | | | | | |
| **Make Plans** | | | | | | |
| F.1.b.1 | Recall what is necessary to complete running workouts successfully. | | | | | |
| F.1.b.2 | Recall what is necessary to complete ancillary workouts successfully. | | | | | |
| F.1.b.3 | Recall race details. | | | | | |
| F.1.b.4 | Create weekly plans. | | | | | |
| **Self-Motivation Beliefs** | | | | | | |
| F.2.a.1* | Examine current running abilities. | | | | | |
| F.2.a.2* | Examine current abilities in strength, flexibility, and agility. | | | | | |
| F.2.a.3* | Examine current performance abilities. | | | | | |
| F.2.a.4* | Assess balance of his/her life. | | | | | |
| **Assess Expectations** | | | | | | |
| F.2.b.1* | Explain expectations for running workouts. | | | | | |
| F.2.b.2* | Explain expectations for ancillary workouts. | | | | | |
| F.2.b.3* | Explain expectations for races. | | | | | |
| F.2.b.4* | Explain expectations for week. | | | | | |
| **Assess Interests** | | | | | | |
| F.2.c.1* | Evaluate self-interest in running workouts. | | | | | |
| F.2.c.2* | Evaluate self-interest in ancillary workouts. | | | | | |
| F.2.c.3* | Evaluate self-interest in races. | | | | | |
| F.2.c.4* | Evaluate his/her self-interests in having balance. | | | | | |
| **Assess Motivations** | | | | | | |
| F.2.d.1 | Classify types of goals for running workouts. | | | | | |
| F.2.d.2 | Classify types of goals for ancillary workouts. | | | | | |
| F.2.d.3 | Assess types of goals for races. | | | | | |
| F.2.d.4 | Classify types of goals for a balanced weekly schedule. | | | | | |

A=Assigned skill (Y or N) * higher order thinking skill

1= Observation – Has seen a peer-mentor engage in the skill
2 = Emulation – Can mimic responses provided by peer-mentor, but lacks elaboration.
3 = Self-Control – Provides in depth responses and can elaborate without prompting.
4 =Self-Regulation – Provides responses that demonstrate specific individual meaning.

## Appendix C - Implementation Plan (continued)
## PERFORMANCE SKILL ASSESSMENT

| Self-Control | | A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Set goals** | | | | | | |
| P.1.a.1 | Recall and apply strategies to running workouts. | | | | | |
| P.1.a.2 | Recall and apply strategies to ancillary workouts. | | | | | |
| P.1.a.3 | Recall and apply strategies to races. | | | | | |
| P.1.a.4 | Recall and adhere to weekly plans | | | | | |
| **Make Plans** | | | | | | |
| P.1.b.1 | Visualize environmnets of running workouts. | | | | | |
| P.1.b.2 | Visualize correct skills and required efforts. | | | | | |
| P.1.b.3 | Visualize environments of races. | | | | | |
| F.1.b.4 | Predict possible interference to weekly plans. | | | | | |
| **Focusing Attention** | | | | | | |
| P.1.c.1* | Compare workout environments with expectations. | | | | | |
| P.1.c.2 | Identify exercises which require increased concentration. | | | | | |
| P.1.c.3* | Compare racing environments with expectations. | | | | | |
| P.1.c.4* | Identify unexpected events that may affect weekly routines. | | | | | |
| **Create Strategies** | | | | | | |
| P.1.d.1* | Compare running workout plans to current efforts. | | | | | |
| P.1.d.2* | Compare ancillary workout plans to current efforts. | | | | | |
| P.1.d.3* | Compare race plans to current efforts. | | | | | |
| P.1.d.4* | Compare weekly plans to actual time requirements. | | | | | |
| **Self-Observation** | | | | | | |
| **Personal Feedback** | | | | | | |
| P.2.a.1* | Evaluate current running efforts. | | | | | |
| P.2.a.2* | Evaluate current ancillary efforts. | | | | | |
| P.2.a.3* | Evaluate current racing efforts. | | | | | |
| P.2.a.4* | Evaluate current weekly schedule. | | | | | |
| **Self-Recording** | | | | | | |
| P.2.b.1 | Recall strengths and weaknesses of running workouts. | | | | | |
| P.2.b.2 | Recall strengths and weaknesses of ancillary workouts. | | | | | |
| P.2.b.3 | Recall results of races. | | | | | |
| P.2.b.4 | Recall strengths and weaknesses of weekly schedule. | | | | | |

A = Assigned skill (Y or N) * higher order thinking skill
1 = Observation – Has seen a peer-mentor engage in the skill
2 = Emulation – Can mimic responses provided by peer-mentor, but lacks elaboration.
3 = Self-Control – Provides in depth responses and can elaborate without prompting.
4 = Self-Regulation – Provides responses that demonstrate specific individual meaning.

## Appendix C – Implementation Plan Skill Assessment (continued)
## PERFORMANCE SKILL ASSESSMENT

| Self-Judgment | | A | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Compare Results and Plan** | | | | | | |
| R.1.a.1 | Recall and record running workout details. | | | | | |
| R.1.a.2 | Recall and record ancillary workout details. | | | | | |
| R.1.a.3 | Recall and record race details. | | | | | |
| R.1.a.4 | Recall and record weekly events. | | | | | |
| **Identify Result Source** | | | | | | |
| R.1.b.1* | Infer what caused shortcomings in running workouts. | | | | | |
| R.1.b.2* | Infer what caused shortcomings in ancillary workouts. | | | | | |
| R.1.b.3* | Infer what caused shortcomings in races. | | | | | |
| R.1.b.4* | Infer what caused deviations from weekly plans. | | | | | |
| **Self-Reaction** | | | | | | |
| **Satusfaction/Disappointment** | | | | | | |
| R.2.a.1 | Describe successful components of running workouts. | | | | | |
| R.2.a.2 | Describe successful components of ancillary workouts. | | | | | |
| R.2.a.3 | Describe successful components of races. | | | | | |
| R.2.a.4 | Describe successful components of weekly plans. | | | | | |
| **Monitor Attitude** | | | | | | |
| R.2.b.1* | Devise methods to improve running workouts. | | | | | |
| R.2.b.2* | Devise methods to improve ancillary workouts. | | | | | |
| R.2.b.3* | Devise methods to improve races. | | | | | |
| R.2.b.4* | Devise methods to improve weekly schedules. | | | | | |

A = Assigned skill (Y or N) * higher order thinking skill
1 = Observation – Has seen a peer-mentor engage in the skill
2 = Emulation – Can mimic responses provided by peer-mentor, but lacks elaboration.
3 = Self-Control – Provides in depth responses and can elaborate without prompting.
4 = Self-Regulation – Provides responses that demonstrate specific individual meaning.

## Appendix D - Training Journals
## Competition Training Journal

<table>
<tr><td>Race Date<br>F.1.b.3</td><td>Race Name<br>F.1.b.3</td><td>Race Distance<br>F.1.b.3</td><td>Other Important Factors<br>F.1.b.3 P.1.b.3 P.1.c.3</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Goals</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Individual</td><td colspan="2">Team</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Abilities/Expectations<br>F.2.a.3<br>F.2.b.3<br>F.2.c.3</td><td>Process<br>F.1.b.3 P.1.a.3 F.2.d.3</td><td rowspan="3">Abilities/Expectations<br>F.2.a.3<br>F.2.b.3<br>F.2.c.3</td><td>Process<br>F.1.b.3 P.1.a.3 F.2.d.3</td></tr>
<tr><td>Performance<br>F.1.a.3 F.2.d.3</td><td>Performance<br>F.1.a.3 F.2.d.3</td></tr>
<tr><td>Outcome<br>F.1.a.3 F.2.d.3</td><td>Outcome<br>F.1.a.3 F.2.d.3</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Race Purpose<br>F.2.d.3</td><td colspan="2">Race Strategy<br>P.1.c.3 P.1.d.3</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Results</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Race Summary<br>P.2.b.3 R.1.a.3</td><td colspan="2">Reactions<br>P.2.a.3</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Satisfaction<br>P.2.b.3 R.2.a.3</td><td colspan="2">Improvements<br>P.2.b.3 R.1.b.3<br>R.2.b.3 R.2.a.3</td></tr>
</table>

***Highlighted*** *skills indicate higher order thinking skills.*

## Appendix D - Training Journals (continued)
## Primary Training Journal

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Date</td><td rowspan="3">Weather<br>F.1.b.1<br>P.1.a.1</td><td>Sleep<br>P.2.b.4</td><td colspan="2">Heart Rate<br>R.1.a.1 P.2.b.1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Time Awake</td><td>Average</td><td>Lying</td></tr>
<tr><td>Total Sleep</td><td>Lowest</td><td>Standing</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">Primary Workout</td></tr>
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<tr><td colspan="2">Assigned Warm-up Routine<br>F.1.b.2 P.1.a.2 P.1.b.2</td><td rowspan="2">Reactions<br>P.1.c.2 P.1.d.2<br>P.2.a.2 P.2.b.2<br>R.1.a.2</td><td colspan="2">Satisfactions<br>R.2.a.2</td></tr>
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<tr><td colspan="3"></td><td colspan="2">Total Miles<br>P.2.b.1 R.1.a.1</td></tr>
</table>

***Highlighted*** *skills indicate higher order thinking skills*

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*Coach Jerry Stackhouse of team USA gives instructions to players during adidas Eurocamp at La Ghirada sports center on June 8, 2015 in Treviso, Italy. (Photo by Roberto Serra/Iguana Press/Getty Images)*

# What do Champions' Autobiographical Accounts tell us About Athletes' Learning?

## Ben Oakley, author of 'Podium: What shapes champions'

First person autobiographical insights interest me since they provide examples of what shapes elite athletes' learning. My fascination with these accounts, my own experience as an Olympic coach (1988, 1992) and my academics led me to research 30 autobiographies from serial champions such as Usain Bolt (track and field), Steve Redgrave (rowing) and Chris Hoy (cycling) along with comments from their coaches. I then drew on these multiple learning anecdotes and combined them with research evidence to develop a book called Podium. From here I start to answer the above using eight main lessons I learned from my research which we will explore below.

**Independence: Coaches Speaking Less**

Coaches were not surprised when a number of recent talent-development books emphasized the importance of quality and quantity of practice in the development of champions. British table tennis champion Matthew Syed (2010) describes great coaches as being "able to design practice so that feedback is embedded in the drill, leading to automatic readjustment, which in turn improves the quality of the feedback, generating further improvements, and so on."

For example, Michael Johnson's coach Clyde Hart introduced feedback into Johnson's sessions by wiring a beeper through track speakers to give Johnson pace feedback in every session for 15 years. Like a metronome in music, it helped him to judge his rhythm and speed, enabling him to instantly judge his form at key checkpoints and refine his technique and tactics.

Feedback and instruction are often seen as key roles to coaching. Serial champions' accounts suggest that practice is most effective when a coach encourages an open-minded athlete who can determine what they have done wrong and how to correct it independently (Patterson and Lee, 2013). Golfer Jack Nicklaus illustrated this point when he said, "Jack Grout taught me from the start. He said I need to be responsible for my own swing and understand when I have problems on the golf course how I can correct those problems … myself without having to run back to somebody. And during the years that I was playing most of my competitive golf, I saw Jack Grout maybe once or twice a year for maybe an hour… But he taught me young the fundamentals of the game. He taught me how to assess what I was doing. When I made a mistake, when I was doing things, how do you on the golf course fix that without putting yourself out of a golf tournament and then teaching yourself" (Patterson and Lee, 2013).

This strategy is at odds with what coaches often do because giving less feedback is counterintuitive-it challenges the coach's control and the cultural norms of many sports. The idea of gradually reducing or fading out a coach's feedback is to reduce coach-dependency, get athletes to think more and make their own decisions just as they need to do in the heat of competition.

A sport's 'cultural norms' will largely influence how coaches behave and run their sessions. Coaches often base their coaching model of off how they were coached and these behaviors are perpetuated, sometimes meaning that practices can become deeply ingrained in to the sport culture. For instance, coaches in elite judo have been described as highly autocratic, showing limited social support and using their behavior as part of a 'toughening-up' process for their athletes (Cushion et al., 2012).

Looking at professional coaches' central role in soccer, a 'traditional' approach to coaching has also been described by a number of studies in English Premier League (EPL) soccer clubs. This 'is characterized by a highly directed, autocratic and prescriptive approach to instruction' with limited player independence (Cushion et al., 2012).

For example, when the amount of time EPL coaches spent on different tasks during practices was measured, some interesting results showed up. Instruction (60 percent) was by far the most common activity, proportionally followed by praise (15 percent), with observation (13 percent), occupying less time and far less time used for the coach asking questions (3 percent). The remaining nine percent of the time was made up by the coach managing and hustling the session along (Potrac et al., 2007).

This somewhat contradicts the lessons that Jack Nicklaus gleaned over the years about being able to think and work things out for himself. With 60 percent of the time being used for instruction-including feedback-it suggests too much information and talk in sessions. The overuse of praise could also be regarded as a sign of unspecific feedback that can dilute its motivational effects. In a similar study of top-level football coaches in Norway, they employed silent observation two and a half times more than English coaches (37 percent as opposed to 15 percent). Encouraging individuals to work things out for themselves is one thing, but perhaps the real craft for team coaches is to set up situations in which groups can respond and fix problems.

In soccer matches themselves the former Dutch and now Manchester United manager Louis-van-Gaal has recently said: '… you cannot influence a game by shouting from the sidelines … That's why I'm always on the bench. You have trained them to read the game by themselves. It is much more important that they are more involved with the game, that they make their own decisions.' (The Daily Mail, 2014).

In one-to-one coaching, the coach might come to feel like a spare part as their athlete becomes independent. Consider world 800-meter record holder David Rudisha's coach and mentor, Father Colm O'Connell, who has never been abroad to support him at major events – for him, his work is done.

**Beyond the Salivating Learner**

I've learned that coaching practice is often shaped by a coach's perception of how athletes learn. For instance, one of the first bits of behavioral theory I learned in college was about the salivating learner Pavlov, his dogs and behaviorist conditioning. This approach explains how people respond to stimuli, reinforcement and feedback, and suggests that drills and practice lie at the center of elite

athlete learning.

My early indoctrination into this was combined with another view. I thought coaching was mainly driven by the coach's knowledge and how this understanding is passed on and acquired by athletes. I later discovered that the learning theory has moved on from this cognitive model to also recognize the social side of learning. With this view, athletes 'construct' their own mental frameworks through interaction with elite sport environment. With such a 'constructivist' view, understanding and experience are constantly interacting through participation, mingling with others and practice. My revised view of learning now is that athletes gradually learn how to become an elite athlete by their interaction with an elite training environment and their ability to construct new meanings from experiences – knowledge and skills being passed on informally just as much as formal teaching.

Learning does not occur in a vacuum, it is shaped by squad and coaching culture and symbolic systems. For example, does a team player learn how to make the right passing decisions just through coaching? No, other elements are just as important, such as informally chatting to colleagues, watching videos of other games, gradually learning how to assess risk or reward, and symbolic gestures within a squad such as any 'player of the month' or similar awards.

This hindsight view represents a more holistic approach to an athlete's learning process, with the coach's knowledge as only part of the picture.

**Some Autonomy - Can Shared Leadership Help?**

The world of professional team sport takes a coach's leadership under pressure to a new level. Constant weekly selection games and the need to handle a range of players from newcomers to experienced pros are new variables. An unusual probe of elite soccer in Norway looked at the type of leadership from newcomers and experienced players that were preferred while on a losing streak verses a winning streak.

When the players tried to dig themselves out of a hole in the losing scenario, they preferred more instruction, positive feedback, social support and democratic leadership. This is not surprising for a team in a slump with democratic leadership, but it is not something I heard of as a novice coach. What does it mean? Here is how the authors described democratic leadership:

> "*to take more responsibility, have more influence and potentially participate more in the decision-making and leadership process … [with] greater player involvement in the coaching process* ..." (Høigaard et al., 2008)

This then leads to a little bit of autonomy. This is exactly what the England Rugby team drew on as they progressed to the final of the 2007 World Cup. They suffered a 36-0 defeat in their first game and were written-off. This defeat stimulated senior players to take more responsibility as a team, which saw them dramatically improve their performance and reach the final. Democracy doesn't mean taking a vote on everything, in this instance, but rather creating a shift in power relations between coach and athletes so that there is collective responsibility and shared leadership. In most

teams, there are three or four experienced players who, if they can work together, can contribute to learning, provided that the coach does not feel threatened. It takes an open-minded coach to relinquish some of their control.

Some claim that a new breed of coaching this ilk is emerging. Respected sports scientist Ross Tucker has written about South African cricket coach Keith Upton, who is turning coaching as control on its head.

**A new genre of coaching?** (Tucker, 2013)

As a coach of India and South Africa (with Gary Kirsten) he has lead his squads to World Cup and No. 1 World Rankings and club success.

The professional team sport norm is that the coach is the all-knowing, all-seeing, head of a team of specialist assistants and analysts who collectively provide data and information vertically downwards to the players. Upton's approach is to recognise how expertise is constructed socially, giving more power to the players, allowing them to drive their own technical, and personal development through exploration, failure and support from more experienced colleagues. A sort of squad collective wisdom that the coach draws out. 'Information flows sideways, peer-to-peer, with the coach facilitating' this approach.

It demonstrates that there are many different interpretations of how effective learning is developed amongst elite athletes. As a young 25-year -old novice coach I doubt I would have had the confidence or interpersonal skills to adopt this approach, unless I had experienced it myself when I was younger. It is a 'catch-22' because it takes a unique person with well-developed emotional intelligence to achieve this more democratic approach.

**You can only Learn by Staying Injury-free**

American coach Dan Pfaff who worked with diverse gold medallists Donovan Bailey (100 m-eter), Greg Rutherford (long jump) and Paralympian Jonnie Peacock (100-meter) expressed this injury-free approach most clearly:

> *"I think there is a tendency for athletes to do more than they should. They think if two was good let me do four, well four was pretty good let me do six; well there is a breaking point and more is not better. I'm actually the opposite, every year I write training [plans] I'm looking what can I get rid of, you know, how few of things can we do?" (*BBC, 2012).

For me, the injury-free priority is leading everything - it percolates down to influencing athletes learning ability and perception about their bodies that can counter an obsessional approach to

training of certain athletes.

**Building belonging that is purposeful and fulfilling**

Frenchman Arsene Wenger is the longest serving soccer manager (or head coach in US terms) in the English Premier League, having joined Arsenal Football Club in 1996. His intellectual 'Le Professeur' media tag has stuck, as has his love of a multicultural squad. His club is part of a wider enterprise, which owns a number of American team franchises. Wenger has often commented about creating the right environment for learning and the importance of the mind, "… in soccer you do need special talent, but when a player passes the age of 20, what is in the mind is more important than the rest and that's what makes a career [my emphasis] … For me being a soccer manager is being a guide. A guide is someone who leads people somewhere … he has to identify what he wants … convince everybody else and try to get the best out of each individual" (Carson, 2013).

Wenger's interest in the mind and a personal guiding approach is said to work, because he emphasizes his core underpinning values, which are articulated through his squad helping to provide direction: values such as multiculturalism, respect, honesty, fairness and trust. He also has to convince every player of the importance of team solidarity: the emotional bond of going through something together can give individuals far more than just concentrating on themselves. Wenger describes the crucial age for young professionals when they are 19–22 years old as "a period in your life when your ego is massive … the world turns around you – and that's a normal development thing for a person. But at that age [he believes] that a leader has a big part to play to give this understanding that, OK, you are important but all together we are even more important" (Carson, 2013).

Leadership expert Mike Carson, who interviewed Wenger, says that a leader who can create belonging and fulfilment in the work of his squad will influence them at the deepest level. Leaders should strive to create a sense of belonging that is purposeful, intimate, lasting and fulfilling (Carson, 2013).

This is easier said than done in soccer, since a number of practices work against it. The need to create belonging is therefore even more important. Wenger identifies

> *"one of the difficulties in [a coach's] job is that [you] have 25 people who fight to play on Saturday and on Friday night [you] have 14 who are unemployed and [you] tell them on Monday, let's start again you have another chance."*

Those who don't play feel useless and vulnerable every week, and often start asking themselves, and maybe the management, how they might fit into the team. As a result, their sense of belonging is threatened with every team selection. This highlights the importance of how a squad's culture needs to give a sense of belonging, respect and credit to athletes and players who may not have the chance to demonstrate their talent.

Squad culture can also be the glue that helps bind people together. The underpinning values and behavior boundaries also need to be crystal clear. At Arsenal, Wenger has had athletes in the squad representing 18 different countries, which provides a different challenge. Wegner explains, "For example, being on time isn't the same for a Japanese man as it is for a Frenchman. When a Frenchman arrives five minutes late, he still thinks he is on time. In Japan when it's five minutes before the set time he thinks he is too late.

That means you have to create a new culture and identify how we all want to behave and create a company culture. That way, when someone steps out of line, we can say: 'Look, my friend, that's not what we said.' So it's important to have clear rules and everyone knows and agrees with it" (Carson, 2013)

After almost two decades in the job, you can see that Wenger has a particular clarity in how he operates. He also emphasizes an appropriate mental mindset by encouraging his players to have autonomy and look at their own standards off the field as much as on it. Carson reports that Wenger constantly invites players to assess how they think they're doing and then is keen to see how accurately they evaluate themselves.

Overall, Wenger's holistic approach with his squad is based on a commitment to working with emotions, identifying beliefs and motivations, and reinforcing players' self-regulation.

**Mental Tools**

In this limited space I want to focus on two mental aspects of learning that athletes often describe. The first is the ability to realistically evaluate their own performances. British track cycling Olympian Chris Hoy provides a good example in the year before his first gold medal. In 2003, he suffered a severe performance slump that at some time or other effects most champions. Hoy recalls, "Up to then I'd been on a steadily rising curve of improvement, which is like winning: it's easy to deal with. I hadn't yet peaked; I hadn't even plateaued. I had just kept getting better – the challenge for any athlete always comes when you stop improving – and in 2003 I seemed to stop improving … Looking back at that year now through the long lens I can see what went wrong" (Hoy, 2009).

He describes overtraining, cramps, poor sleep, a relationship breakup with his first serious girlfriend and a last-minute change to his race plan seconds before going onto the track at the 2003 World Championships final. For him, finishing fourth at worlds was a calamity.

> *"To say I was devastated would be an understatement. I was really shattered, and I felt my confidence evaporate. With hindsight … if I had not bombed so abysmally – it's possible I might not have gone on to win the gold medal in Athens … as it was, I went back to basics, and reassessed everything"* (Hoy, 2009).

Hoy and other champions all display an important skill: realistic performance evaluations. He went back to the drawing board to analyze his performance that year and how he could change it. You

can already tell that, with hindsight, his evaluation highlighted a combination of circumstances. He also sought out extra input from a former Olympic medalist who suggested that Hoy take ownership of his own training plan so that the creation of a new plan became an exciting project. Remember how I mentioned 'autonomy' earlier. This is an example of an athlete taking responsibility and making his own choices and decisions and not being slow in asking for support from others. He also consulted the team's psychiatrist, Steve Peters, who helped him place the performance slump into a broader perspective. Hoy's example is one of successfully evaluating and learning from a six-month slump, but an equally important skill is to respond and evaluate performance during a championship.

At the 1980 Olympic Games, Seb Coe was world record holder in the 800 and a favorite to win, but he only managed silver. Evaluating his performance and bouncing back in 48 hours to contest the 1,500 heats was a huge challenge. He identified the cardinal rules of 800 running that he had broken and rationalized that: first, the statistical chance of running that badly again were low; second, he got to a point where "I genuinely did not care whether I won, I lost or I was second, third, fourth or fifth' (Johnson, 2010). It was clear in his mind that he would never again leave a track with the feeling of such an underperformance. As the saying goes he recognised that 'you don't become a bad athlete over night."

Exactly a week after his 800 defeat, he took gold in the 1,500. There is a lot mixed up in this example of Coe's two contrasting performances including response to pressure (800 – 'the truth is I froze'), regulating his emotions (1,500 heats), and – importantly – a realistic performance evaluation that was able to identify a strategy to win his first Olympic 1,500 gold medal after a calamitous earlier performance. At the time phrases like 'resilience' and 'mental toughness' had not emerged into popular use. So when the BBC asked that typically inane question 'how do you feel?' after he left the track victorious, he exhaled, 'Christ!' – a Bishop complained to the BBC of his blasphemy. The next mental tool is visualization. You will be familiar with its contribution to learning and a study conducted for the US Olympic Training Centre (Murphy et al., 1990) indicated that 90 per cent of Olympic athletes use some form of imagery with a similar proportion of coaches using it within their training sessions. It is widely used then, but champions describe it in different ways and for different purposes.

Chrissie Wellington (4 times ironman champion) offering advice about preparation, says:
I find I do some of my most valuable work on the sofa. Visualisation is a hugely important tool, one that requires little more than some peace and quiet. Close your eyes, relax, and then go through each stage of the race in your mind. Picture yourself performing at your peak. Then imagine all the things that could go wrong, and picture yourself dealing with them. What will I do if my goggles are knocked off? What will I do if I suffer a puncture, or cramps? (Wellington, 2012).

Champions describe use of vivid positive images of successful performance and skillfully use this visualisation or imagery for three main purposes (MacNamara et al., 2010).

1. For simulating competition situations - This is the most common reference to visualisation among the champions. This is typically used to help develop clarity about executing a strategy, controlling anxiety or imagining what to do in unusual situations such as Wellington's lost gog-

gles.
2. For help evaluating performance - Particularly useful when individual decision-making can be reviewed by visualizing part of a performance. Is it more vivid perspective compared to the one-dimensional analysis offered by a coach on a white board?
3. For skill development - This is crucial in helping rehearse new moves and capture the kinesthetic feeling, cues, sound and timing of new movements.

Five-time gold medalist rower (1984-2000) Steve Redgrave describes how his crew, after undertaking a relaxation routine, would get the psychologist to talk about what to expect in the race. They would discuss things like concentration during the warm-up, awareness when sitting at the start, certain points in the race, after 15 strokes, the stride, rhythm and tactics. He describes these as becoming 'ingrained deeply into the mind'.

Finally, Michael Johnson used visualization to help his concentration in the tense, anxious minutes leading up to an Olympic final. He uses it as a tool in one of the most intimidating places-the athletics call room. We know that visualization is an important tool.
Critical events or catalysts

'Having a vision' is something you often hear about in business or leadership-speak. It turns out most serial champions can identify a key event or catalyst, often getting beaten, which made them realise the vision of what was required to reach the top. Take Usain Bolt for example. Yes, being 6'5" and lightning fast at the age of 15 meant his genes had given him the physical attributes to be a potential winner, but his own account of the challenges he faced over the next five years is a fascinating insight into what shaped him. After a poor 2004 Games in Athens, aged 17, one race changed everything for Bolt: the world championships 200-meter final in Osaka, 2007. Tyson Gay ran past him off the bend to take gold, and Bolt took his first major senior medal, a silver. At 2 a.m. the night after the race, Bolt couldn't sleep and wanted to know why he was beaten after initially leading. He knocked on the door of his bleary eyed coach … once awake, coach Mills told him straight, "You're slacking off in the gym [conditioning]" (Bolt, 2013). From then on, Bolt took responsibility and did everything that was asked of him in training and started to build the strength that would allow him to burst off the bend and maintain his high knee lift. This catalyst made him realise the priority of focused conditioning work in the gym, particularly important with his scoliosis back condition.

Typically, by the end of their adolescence or into their early 20s champion athletes are gradually learning what it takes to succeed at the very highest levels (cf. Arsene Wenger's soccer players). Coaches and support staff help convey an overall vision or plan of what is required, but it often needs a major jolt for athletes to wake up and realise what it really takes to succeed.

Steve Redgrave the rower describes it poignantly as a key moment when he was 21 years old. Winning was fairly inevitable as a teenager with physical prowess:

> *"I figured 'all I've got to do is follow what the coaches are telling me and Olympic success will happen'. It wasn't until the 1983 worlds when … I didn't make the top 12, it suddenly dawned on me… it's about how hard*

> *and how well you prepare. That was the turning point in my career' "*
> (Johnson, 2010).

He won his first gold medal the following year.

There are a lot of examples of how this vision emerges. One striking reoccurring narrative is the description of a fierce duel to overcome one particular rival early in international careers. This shaped the progress of people like Bradley Wiggins (cycling) and Ben Ainslie (sailing) in their first Olympics. Later in 2012, as he'd conquered the pinnacle of the Tour de France, Bradley Wiggins said:

> *"In spite of the gold medals … I'd say it was only in 2011 that I completely understood how much you need to work to get to the very top, what hard training is, and how much of a lifestyle change is involved"*
> (Wiggins, 2012).

So, even when you get to the top with multiple Olympic medals like Wiggins, staying there and aspiring to win the three-week battle of the Tour de France required considerable adjustment to his vision of what it takes.

A curiosity and fascination with the process, and finally continuing the mental theme I want to focus on one attitude in particular: The athlete mindset of embracing and enjoying learning almost compulsively. As a six-time Olympic gold medalist Chris Hoy said – "One of the things you can do as an athlete is to constantly ask questions: it is a healthy curiosity and a constant quest for answers that produces a lot of the drive' (Hoy, 2009). His coach also describes champions needing to have 'a fascination with the process' (Keen, 2014). Notice neither Hoy or his coach use the word 'obsession' (a topic I have addressed in 'Podium') which perhaps has more negative connotations whilst curiosity and fascination describe a deep excited engagement with, not winning per se, but the process of how you become the best in the world and then deliver on the day under pressure. They get deep satisfaction of the forensic examination of what it takes and the subsequent preparation. Perhaps it is partly a personality trait that Michael Johnson describes as a search for perfection.

It is interesting that Chris Hoy not only has a degree in sports science, but also that he shows similar fascination and curiosity for another love – making coffee – he is a trained barista and often travels with his coffee machine. The big question is how this special type of learning interest might be encouraged by coaches and families (cf. Carol Dweck's 'Mindset') and/or can it be spotted and nurtured with the right training environment?

**Final Thoughts**

This brief tour of some of the main lessons gleaned from autobiographical accounts of champions and coaches encourages us to think more about the overall motivational climate in which athletes learn. It also places champions' appetite for learning at the center of constantly seeking improvements over many years. I will be exploring this theme further in future issues of *Olympic Coach*.

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*SHANGHAI, CHINA - MAY 10: In this handout image provided by the World Archery Federation, Team USA celebrates winning recurve womens bronze at Archery World Cup Stage 1 on May 10, 2015 in Shanghai, China. (Photo by Dean Alberga/World Archery Federation via Getty Images)*

# The Importance of Sport Clubs: The Role and Functions of the Club

Matthew J. Robinson and Jeffrey Schneider, University of Delaware

In part one of this series, The Changed Landscape, the changes to the sport club environment were addressed in detail. The main point of the article was that the environment in which athletes are developed is not the same as it was 20 years ago and that sport clubs must recognize and adapt to this changed landscape to achieve its purpose. In part two, we focus on that purpose and the means to achieve it.

Changes in the environment mentioned in the first article included the reduction in volunteerism; the increase in professional coaches; the increased level of parental engagement; increased pressure for athletes specialization at younger ages; the decline of education-based sport opportunities, and the increased emphasis on providing a safe environment to prevent the mental, physical, and sexual abuse of sport participants. The variables that contribute to the changed landscape must be considered as leaders of the sport clubs define their purpose.

An existing club can benefit from taking the time to revisit its purpose and this should be found in its mission and vision statements. In those documents, the club will be able to determine whether it is still the club it set out to be. In the case of new clubs, they should take the time to determine what it wants to be, where it wants to go, and how it will get there. Successful clubs don't happen by accident, they happen through conscious endeavor.

The elements discussed in this article are the foundation for this process. Skipping over them may lead to the club drifting away from its original intents. It is also an opportunity to evaluate how a club currently operates and to identify the variables that are associated with achieving and developing metrics to determine whether or not it is fulfilling its intended purpose in the changed landscape.

## Determining the Purpose and Defining the Mission

While all sports clubs have great intentions, some lose their way and some never even start down the right path. Club leaders must be able to communicate why the club exists in its mission statement, what it aspires to achieve in its goals, how it will operate in its policies and procedures, and what the club will look like when it reaches its full potential in its vision statement.

Thus, the club's decisions and actions can be evaluated upon whether it is consistent with the mission, whether it assists in achieving a goal, whether it follows the club policy and procedures, and/or whether it contributes to the vision. A club can pass on those opportunities or actions that are not consistent with the ideals, values, and philosophies communicated in these documents and

avoid being taken off course. While a club leader has many responsibilities, establishing sound mission, goals, procedures, and vision may be one of, if not the most important.

Having a clear mission and vision can influence every aspect of the club from the hiring and firing of staff, “Does a potential or current coach’s views on athlete development fit in with our mission?” to budget allocation, “Are the funds being allocated for a capital project related to fulfilling the mission and reaching the vision?” and athlete development plans within the club, “Does the athlete development platform promote development over winning at the developmental stage?”

Unfortunately, a mission statement is nothing more than a page on the club’s website unless the club is committed to living it every day. A vision statement, too, is meaningless unless the club is striving towards it every day by achieving both short term and long term goals. Since both the mission and vision will drive the actions of the club, it is advisable to gain input from those who will be impacted. This is where input, feedback and insights from board members, advisory boards or perhaps a task force made up of staff and members can be used.

In the end, the mission and vision should be so important that it appears on every document, is prominently displayed on the website and in the facility. All members of the organization should know what the club is and aspires to be.

**A Potential Mission and Vision**

A sports club at its most basic level offers the opportunity for individuals to participate and compete, but that experience will vary from club to club. An option to consider in creating a mission and vision is to use the USOC Athlete Development Model (ADM) as a base. The ADM is an all-encompassing philosophy that provides a means of defining success for the entire club, as well as the different stages of development. From there, it enables a club to establish an athlete development platform, it provides criteria for resource allocation and staff hiring for each stage and also provides a path for a club to follow.

It is not the intent of this article to present the ideal mission statement or to promote one purpose over another, for some clubs will focus on achieving success as measured by wins and losses and its ability to develop elite players, while others may view itself as being purely recreational with the goal to promote participation. Finally, there may be clubs whose mission encompasses both of these purposes. It is up to the club to define the purpose and then live it.

**Structuring the Club to Achieve Its Mission and Vision**

Once a club has been established or is considering reorganizing, club leaders also need to understand the range of services the club will offer to fulfill them. Questions that the mission can assist in answering in terms of structuring are:

- Will the club be everything to everybody?
- Will the club specialize in one area for one age group at one skill level?
- Will the club be a multi-sport club?

- Will the club focus on one sport only?

Club leaders also need to decide how the club will be structured from a business sense. As mentioned in the previous Landscape article, the traditional model was as a non-profit 501 c3 model that were either educational or community-based, but in the changed landscape models, such as sole proprietorship, partnerships, franchises and limited liability corporations have become more common. Each business structure has its pros and cons to be considered. For many who favor the for-profit models or the sole proprietorship, partnership, franchising and limited liability corporations, it is because they can move away from the board structure that is associated with the non-profit model. These business structures can establish advisory boards, but the club leaders have the ultimate say in the direction of the club and respond to the wants and needs of the customers more than they do to a board.

If the club has a board, its makeup, role, and power, and a means to evaluate its effectiveness must be considered. In the board structure, the focus should be on the broader picture of the club, such as being involved in the development of the overall mission and not be directly involved in the implementation of the policies and procedures created to the mission. The business structure of the club is tied to the mission. A club should evaluate its current structure to determine if it is the most appropriate.

**Variables Leading to Sport Club Success (VALSCS)**

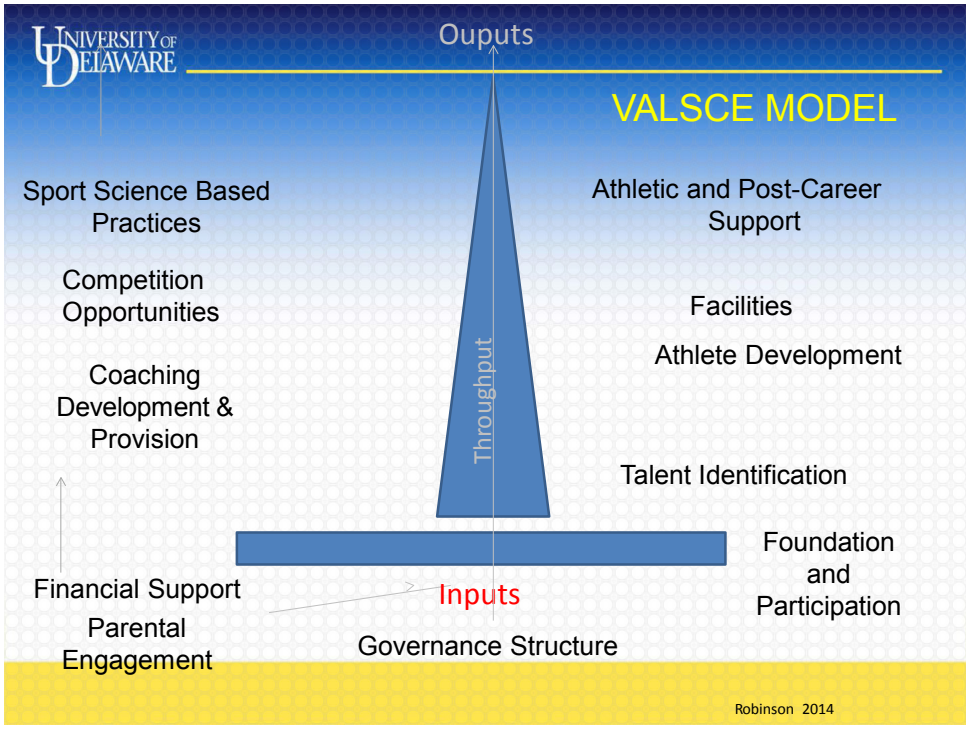
While establishing a mission, goals and vision are more of a conceptual exercise. The mission needs to be placed within the context of the services where they become more tangible. The Variables Leading to Sport Club Success (VALSCS) incorporate those aspects that are essential to achieving success as defined by the mission and vision.

DeBosscher, Bingham, Shibli, von Bottenburg & De Knop (2008) developed a theoretical basis that identified variables associated with achieving international sport success. While De Boscher et al. (2008) recognized that there are macro variables that a sport organization such as a national federation or Olympic Committee has no or little control over, such as a country's population or Gross Domestic Policy, there are meso-level variables that can be a focus of an organization's efforts. Thus, the De Boscher et al. (2008) model Sport Policies Leading to International Success (SPLISS) provided a framework for explaining why countries either achieve or do not achieve success internationally. The SPLISS framework developed by De Boscher et al. (2008) served as a theoretical foundation for the conceptualization of the VALSCE. The thought being that many of the same variables associated with attaining international sport success for a national governing body also contribute or inhibit success on the club level.

*Inputs*

VALSCE, like SPLISS, is an input-throughput-output performance model (see Diagram 1). The inputs for the model include the foundation and participation in the area of the club. This variable can dictate a great deal in terms of development of a mission and realistically fulfilling it. If there is a large population where a particular sport has a strong culture (e.g., soccer in Maryland and ice hockey in Minnesota) a club will benefit from that foundation, whereas those sport clubs located in less populated

areas where a sport's culture is not strong, the club has a challenge and will have to be creative and aggressive in its grassroots marketing to attract participants to both the sport and the club.




Along with this, the governance structure, which includes the organization of the club and its relationship with and effectiveness of governing agencies (e.g., state association, National Governing Body, etc.) are essential to the club achieving success. The organization of the club was touched upon earlier in article, but also the professionalism, support, and empowerment provided by governing entities of which the club is a member is an important input. Does a governing body have a staff to offer education for coaches and administrators, does it host championships, does it provide rules and guidelines for the sport, does it offer grants to support club initiatives are all examples of strong engagement by governing agencies. Both are important inputs for a club.

In order to fulfill its mission, a club must have the financial support to do so. In the case of sport clubs, practicing sound business practices both in revenue generation and allocation is tied closely to what the club does. In most cases, over 70 percent of operating revenue for clubs come from registration-based sources (e.g., registration fees, tryouts, camps, special training, etc.). The challenge for clubs is to grow other revenue streams such as sponsorship, fundraising, and ancillary revenues such as concessions stands and the sale of licensed products. Along with this, clubs should try to secure grant funding as a revenue source. Without the input of financial support, the mission and vision may be left unfulfilled.

Parental support and engagement is the input in terms of the sport club. Heinrichs and Robinson (2014) found that the parents of U.S. women's national team players can be best described as "supportive." While the majority of mothers never coached their daughters, they did volunteer in the club and attend games and practices. Fathers did volunteer with the club as unpaid or paid coaches and

board members, and attended games and practices.

It has long been known that the most powerful and profound influencers in a player's personal development are parents and family. Baumrind (1971, 1989), and Maccoby and Martin (1983) both reported that parenting styles consist of two dimensions. The first is "demandingness," which refers to the extent parents show control, maturity, demands, and supervision in their parenting. "Responsiveness," on the other hand, refers to the extent to which parents show affective warmth, acceptance, and involvement with their children. Based on these two dimensions, four classifications of parenting have been described by Maccoby and Martin (1983) and Baumrind, (1991).

Authoritative parents are both demanding and responsive. This means that they are controlling but not restrictive. Authoritarian parents are controlling and not responsive, while permissive parents are not controlling but are responsive, and neglectful parents are neither controlling nor responsive.

Aunola, Stattin and Nurmi (2000) reported that parenting styles play an important role in the development of adolescents' achievement strategies. In particular, parenting emphasizing child disclosure, parental trust and engagement on the one hand, and parental control and monitoring on the other hand, seem to provide a basis for the development of adaptive achievement strategies. In contrast, family relations characterized by an overall un-involvement, a lack of parental trust, engagement, and control seem to lead to the use of maladaptive achievement strategies. On the other hand, a parenting style that is demanding and unresponsive was found to be associated with the child deploying maladaptive strategies, particularly passive behavior and a lack of use of self-enhancing attributions (Diener and Dweck, 1978).

Aunola et al. (2000) reported that adolescents from authoritative families seemed to apply the most adaptive, task-oriented strategies in achievement situations. In a nutshell, they hold themselves personally accountable for their success and their failures and rise to the occasion in competitive situations. Those from authoritarian tend to demonstrate more task-irrelevant behavior, passivity and a feeling that they lack the competence to solve problems. Glaskow et al. (1997) reported that neglectful parenting was related to adolescents' internal attributions for failure and external attributions for success. Thus parents who do not provide encouragement, parental involvement, or foster young people's doubts about their own competence and thus expose them to the use of task-avoidant strategies and negative causal attributions.

If parents provide the appropriate amount of support, encouragement, and resources, it can create a significant variable that will impact the degree that the throughput variables can be used to achieve the desired mission.

*Throughputs*

The throughput variables address the aspects of a club; how - and to what extent - they are provided vary by club.  Each of the variables has the ability to contribute to fulfilling the mission of the club.

Coach development and provision entails the training and mentoring of coaches and whether they are volunteer or professional coaches. If a club views coaching as important to its definition of suc-

cess, it should support coach development through professional education and encourage coaches to earn their certifications or licenses from the national governing bodies. It should also create a mentoring program for younger coaches to retain and further develop them. Another important question for the club under this variable is deciding whether coaches will be paid or will serve as volunteer coaches. As stated earlier in the article the mission can answer this question. Whether it be a volunteer or paid coach, the idea of developing the coach is still important.

There are opposing views on whether to compensate developmental coaches, especially at the younger stages. In some sports the professional coach is part of the culture, while in others it is a newer concept. The professional coach has made a choice to pursue coaching as his or her career. In this case, a coach has a professional responsibility to continue to improve as a coach and educator and the club should - and can - require that the coach earn certificates and participate in professional development activities. The idea of a professional coach will be addressed again, when we discuss the Five-by-Five ADM Coaching Model in part three of the series. In this model the focus is on coaches specializing in a particular developmental stage and evolving through that stage to ultimately become a master coach.

The utilization of the sport science-based practices such as psychology, physiology, kinesiology, nutrition, strength and conditioning, and age-appropriate training design are essential to the effective development of athletes. The club mission will dictate the degree and the manner in which they will be incorporated. The more “elite” an experience a club wishes to offer, the more important this variable becomes. Likewise, a club that wishes to create a holistic experience will incorporate multiple sport-related opportunities as well as other disciplines, such as child psychology and ethics to create a well-rounded experience for the participant.

Athlete and Post-Career Support involves both access to and sustaining of athletes within the club. In terms of access, will the club create the means so that athletes who cannot afford the services provided by the club can gain access? This applies to both the competitive elite club environment, as well as a participation-based club that promotes a “sport for all” mission. On the other hand, does the club have a means or plan to assist in the support of athletes who wish to pursue Olympic or Paralympic competition and whose sport does not offer the opportunity to make a living?

At the elite level, this variable is taking on increased importance due to the decline of scholarship funding for Olympic and Paralympic sports. Elite athletes could aspire for a scholarship in order to pursue their education while competing at an elite level. These opportunities are decreasing in a number of sports as American universities continue to cut Olympic and Paralympic programs to pay for revenue-producing sports. The NCAA currently requires universities to offer a minimum of eight sports each for men and women and there has been discussion of further lowering that number.

With this becoming the reality, clubs will be taking on more responsibility for training athletes at the higher levels of the ADM, and financial support will be important as they pursue their Olympic and Paralympic dreams. In terms of participation, grant programs are available to support financially disadvantaged youth, and sports clubs can set aside a portion of registration fees to provide financial assistance so as not to deny access.

The athlete development variable is one of the most discussed variables since there are multiple views on both development and identification. This variable should be a prominent part of the mission of the club, as the athlete's experience is defined within this variable and is at the heart of what a sport club does.

The ADM provides a clear framework and a logical progression for a club's athlete development platform. There are other development models with varying numbers of stages, but the common theme for all models is that athletes move through clearly defined stages of development with logical progression. The role of the coach in each of these stages is important.

The club mission will also help to define talent identification. Clubs with a mission of developing elite athletes will use talent identification as a means to include those athletes with the potential for elite status, while not including those who do not fit that profile. Some clubs promote participation and use talent identification to assign players to teams, and will not turn athletes away, which helps to focus on athlete retention. This approach is not just good for business - because participants remain with the club as paying members - but many athletes are late bloomers physically, emotionally or may lack confidence and bloom later.

Facilities play an integral role in whether the club fulfills its mission, but is the variable that is most difficult to adjust. If a facility (e.g., modern facility, increased training space, enhanced competition area) is essential to fulfilling the mission of athletes achieving national level status, and if facilities are essential to attracting and retaining elite athletes, then a club may need to commit financially to the facility. That is a case where the mission drives a decision. In the case of recreational or participation, renting fields may make more sense than taking on the financial commitment of building or owning a facility.

Competition opportunities is inherent to the existence and purpose of a sport club, but defining the balance between competiveness and participation is an essential part of the mission for the club. A criticism of the current club environment is an imbalance in the competition-to-training ratio. Athletes are competing too much and not training enough and that is impacting the effective development of athletes. Heinrichs and Robinson (2014) found that for the U.S. women's soccer team age group pool players, the playing-to-training ratio for players from ages six to twelve years old was 1.7 training session to one game instead of the recommended 3 to 1 ratio; for 13 to 17 years old, it was 2 to 1 instead of a recommended 4 to 1 and for 17 years old and above, it was 2.5 to 1 instead of the recommended 5 to 1.

For team sports, participation in tournaments is common, but the question for the club is whether this a good use of financial resources and time, and does the participation in those events contribute to fulfilling a mission focused on athlete development. This is not to say competition is not important; the question is whether the dose of competition for the particular stage of developmental is the right amount. The selection of leagues and tournaments should be appropriate to what is communicated in the mission. If the mission is focused on elite, then those are the type of events in which teams and athletes should compete.

*Outcomes*

The final piece of the VALSCE are the desired outcomes. More than anything, these are tied to the mission. By making decisions and setting goals within each of the input variables the outcomes become a byproduct and ultimately a statement of the mission and journey towards fulfilling the vision. If the desired outcomes include the development of national level athletes and winning age group championships and are in line with the mission of the club, then the mission is accomplished. The same holds true for those clubs whose focus is on participation and retention of athletes through the developmental stages as defined in athlete development. If so, then again the mission is accomplished. As stated throughout the article, each club needs to define its own metrics for success and communicate those in their mission and vision and set the course to achieve success.

## Closing

The challenge to clubs is to invest the time, thought, and energy into developing a mission, goals and a vision. In doing so, they are setting the course for the club. It is very easy for a club to lose its way and chase every opportunity and allocate resources to initiatives that are ultimately counter-productive to achieving the mission.

In the changed landscape sport clubs must be smarter, more proactive, and - even if it is a non-profit entity - think and act like a business and professional organization. In doing so, the experience for the athletes of the club will be enhanced for their betterment, and for the betterment of sport overall in the U.S.

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*The United States team stands during the national anthems before taking on Japan in the FIFA Women's World Cup Canada 2015 Final at BC Place Stadium on July 5, 2015 in Vancouver, Canada. (Photo by Kevin C. Cox/Getty Images)*

# Benefits of Leadership Development in Sport

## Mike Voight, Central Connecticut State University

Many athletic administrators and sport coaches have told me over the years it is easier to see effective leadership than to explain it, yet the real challenge is in developing good and effective leadership. In this brief article I outline some fundamental benefits of enhancing team leaders and general principles to develop it.

"*Leadership is the most observed, yet least understood, phenomena on earth*." - James McGregor Burns, father of modern leadership practices

### Defining Leadership

The task of verbally defining such a grandiose concept is no easy feat, as researchers and thought leaders have argued for years about it. Many of these definitions use words such as "position," "power," "influence," "change agent," "visionary," "commanding" and "guidance." Dr. Steven Sample, former President of the University of Southern California, simply defines a leader as "someone who has identifiable followers" (Sample, 2002). Another definition comes from Harvey Dorfman, a Major League Baseball sport psychology consultant, who writes, "The position of authority identifies the leadership role. The degree to which one appropriately influences others identifies the leader" (Dorfman, 2003). I also tend to agree with Michael Useem, director of the Wharton School Center for Leadership and Change in Pennsylvania and author of "The Leadership Moment," when he says, "A precise definition is not essential here; indeed, it may be impossible to arrive at one. But I take leadership to signify the act of making a difference" (Useem, 1999).

So if leadership is about holding a position of authority from which a difference can be made in the personal and professional lives of others, what are the additional benefits to leadership development in sport?

"*The single most important ingredient after you get the talent is internal leadership*." - Coach Mike Krzyzewski (Janssen and Dale, 2002)

### Valuing Leadership in Sport

One of the most successful women coaches across all sports, Pat Summitt, who led her Tennessee basketball team to six national championships, believed her job as coach was to help develop leaders. "More than winning, I believe our job as coaches is to develop our players into responsible leaders. Sure we teach them how to be better athletes. But that's not all I want to be known for. I want the young women who come into our program to be better people and better leaders by the time they leave" (Janssen, 2003). It is about time leadership is being valued for its own sake. There are simply too many examples of bad leaders in our society, even in the world of youth, scholastic, collegiate,

international and professional sport. This is a primary driver for the importance of leadership development for sport participants.

According to social scientists and generational experts, today's generation of young people is deficient in crucial leadership skills, despite their many documented strengths. These strengths include how savvy they are with all types of technology, how connected they are with each other through social media, how they embrace diversity and multi-tasking, and how goal-directed and confident they are, along with their desire for group and teamwork. Areas of deficiency include having little experience dealing with adversity and struggle (a result of being overprotected), lacking patience due to the instant gratification of technology and communication, succumbing to the pressure to excel to meet high expectations through cheating and working the system to get one's way, seeking exorbitant amounts of performance feedback, and despite social media influences are not the more effective communicators. Beliefs such as this highlight the importance and value given to leadership skills and leadership development for sport. Jeff Janssen, who provides leadership programming for high school and college programs, lists seven benefits effective leaders provide their sport teams. Good captains ensure high standards and a strong work ethic, help the team handle adversity, build better team chemistry, help the coach obtain the pulse of the team, minimize and manage conflict, help in recruiting, and are the best insurance against stupid acts conducted by teammates (Ibid). Additional benefits I have seen via my educational leadership consultations can be seen in Table 1 (Voight, 2012).

**Table 1 - Benefits of Sport Team Leadership**

| Context | Responsibilities |
|---|---|
| *Team organization* | with how busy teams are these days, captains keep the team altered to the schedule commitments and changes to it. |
| *Team connections* | Captains are responsible for connecting with their teammates on a daily basis to ensure each teammate feels a part of the program. |
| *Locker room climate* | Captains try to keep the locker room talk and banter productive and motivating, win or lose. |
| *Practice leader* | Captains keep the practice climate productive, energetic, and efficient. |
| *Go-to's* | Captains always want the ball with the game on the line and will make the plays that need to be made. |
| *Lead by example* | Captains are first to speak in team meetings, first to go in a drill, and know the system and plays. |
| *Competitive* | Captains are responsible for setting the competitive tone by getting the most out of every rep, drill, practice, and game opportunity. |
| *Challenge teammates* | Ensuring their teammates follow the competitive tone set. |
| *Improved teammate play* | Captains help reinforce coach teachings and strategy instruction while helping their teammates make adjustments during game play. |

| | |
|---|---|
| *Improved team play* | In most sports, play on the field is dictated more by the players (adjusting and decision making) than by the coaches, and the captains are the "coaches" on the field or court of play. |

Additional reasons for increased attention and efforts for leadership development initiatives in sport include the notion that good coaches and sport leaders look to maximize all factors which could influence productivity, thus, improving individual and team leadership can greatly improve a team's chances of succeeding. Moreover, an understanding of the newest of generations, the millennials, reveals they are in need of improved leadership and followership skills to overcome their alleged shortcomings as a generation is needed. Appreciating leadership for its own sake is a very important first step for administrators, coaches, players, and teams to make, followed by knowing and defining what leadership is and the many processes involved in improving individual, team, and organizational leadership.

"*The ingredients of leadership cannot be taught, however. They must be learned*." - Warren Bennis, On Becoming a Leader (2009)

**Leadership Development in Sport**

The primary goals of the leadership development process are to mobilize the individual and collective processes to assist the team in accomplishing their ultimate goals (e.g., winning conference and national championships), while improving team functioning, communication, connections, and overall effectiveness. Subsequent goals include improving upon individual leadership and followership skills of its members and orienting the up-and-coming team leaders to the process for the future. How these goals can be met is through a progressive series of stages that comprise more of a process than a program. One example of this is the 6-T process©.. This 6-T process represents a compilation of techniques and tactics used by experts in organizational dynamics and leadership development that represent an all-encompassing process rather than a program. Of note is that leadership programs are limiting as they usually consist of random lectures or guest speakers that address leadership skills like communication and leading by example. Daniel Goleman and his esteemed colleagues in the book "Primal Leadership", use the term "process" when describing the best practices of leadership development: "What many organizations need aren't just one-time programs but a process built as a holistic system that permeates every layer of the organization" (Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, 2002). They continue by stating true change and transformation occur through a multifaceted process permeating three particular levels, namely, individuals, team and the culture of the organization. The 6-T process is an example of this via these six stages: testing, teaching, training, transferring, transforming, and tradition (Voight, 2014).

1. *Testing*: Assessing the presence of leadership talents, techniques, tactics, strengths, and weaknesses, while reflecting on deeper motives and inspirations defining you and the roles you play in your social world. This can be accomplished by self-assessment surveys, 360-degree assessments, peer feedback, and self-reflective exercises and discussions.
2. *Teaching*: The feedback derived from the surveys and open-ended responses represent "teachable moments" which can be further explored and applied to the team leaders' present positions

and responsibilities. Areas of strengths can be maximized while embracing areas of improvement once identified and addressed through action learning and practice.

3. *Training*: It is in this stage that the formal practice of "doing" leadership occurs daily. Learning on the job has always been valued but when leaders-in-training have a mentor along the way to maximize the learning opportunities, which present themselves daily, then it truly is the most efficacious way to learn and practice good and effective leadership. Consistent dialogue and feedback in this manner is one of the more critical aspects of the leadership process.
4. *Transferring*: The objective of this stage is to transfer leadership strengths and lessons learned from one situation to another, while looking for and learning about other potential solutions and/or methods for problem solving. Another important mission is to assist in transferring what is being learned into other areas of their lives (personal, social, academic, and family lives).
5. *Transforming*: Global objective here is to become more effective at influencing others and maximizing leadership opportunities, not only for personal growth, but also for the greater good of others and the team or organization. The ultimate measure of a leader's success is the impact they have on growing others. This is accomplished through an integrative process continuously referred to with active reminders and follow-ups.
6. *Traditions*: The ability to imprint leadership traditions into the fabric of the team becomes a priority here, which includes its standards, identity, vision, and daily pursuits, both short and long term. If these have not been created, it signifies an important starting point and project not only for the leaders-in-training but also for the members of the organization and team.

I continue to be an advocate for do-it-yourself leadership development processes over commercialized one-size-fits-all programs. It is possible to create and implement your own do-It-yourself leadership process especially with the knowledge that teams are better served by designing and implementing a personalized leadership process comprised of their own values, philosophies, resources, and their own people. One of the more important aspects of do-it-yourself leadership development is the power of your people. It is the involvement of your own people and your own resources while including them in the process of teaching, mentoring, and modeling key leadership techniques and tactics. Doing it yourself is made easier by using a template like the 6-T process as a blueprint. This allows your team or organization's values and your own valuable assets, your people, to be incorporated so a richer, inclusive, and authentic leadership development process can flourish. You are limited only by your creativity and vision.

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*Portions of this article are from Mike Voight's newest book, The Sports Leadership Playbook (McFarland) and its accompanying workbook, Working the Sport Leadership Playbook, as well as from his upcoming book, Leadership is a Team Sport: A Do-It-Yourself Guide to Developing Impactful and Influential Leaders Throughout Your Sport Team and Organization. Dr. Voight advises with high performing teams, coaches, and athletes on personal and team leadership matters and leadership development processes.*

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On the cover: Caption:GOLD COAST, AUSTRALIA - APRIL 11: In this photo provided by the International Triathlon Union (ITU), (L-R) Sarah True (Second), Gwen Jorgensen (First) and Katie Zaferes (Third) of USA pose on the podium at the ITU World Triathlon Gold Coast on April 11, 2015 in Gold Coast, Australia.
Cover photo by: ITU via Getty Images


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