



Skill Acquisition in Coaching Development

Coaching development and support is often understood through an educational lens. Formal education and qualifications, while providing clarity and knowledge needed for coaches to ascend a linear levelling-up knowledge transmission based coach development model, some key limitations have contributed to coaching development experiencing transformative change toward more contextually situated, individual needs-based approaches, often through necessity. To help attain a deeper understanding of skill acquisition in coach development we will explore some of the fundamental concepts that underpin an enriching, integrative individual-environment approach to high performing coach development practices. Some nations and cultures (e.g., New Zealand) have traditionally adopted a more humanistic approach to coach development placing an emphasis on valuing personal development and embedding this within socio-culturally specific behavioural settings. In this way, these authentic skill adaptation learning practices are underpinned and guided by key learning principles and concepts exemplified through critical and self-reflection, social construction, action learning and adult learning principles, or crudely known as an 'accelerated curriculum'. These coach development organisations also value; workplace coaching, taking ownership of their development, creating legacy by impacting and influencing athletes and the systems for ongoing success, accessing knowledge from world's top coaches to out-perform competitors, engaging in coach collaboration and identifying the right individuals to accelerate learning and develop world-class coaches and also attracting the best coaches. A number of these examples are supported by recent theoretical frameworks that emphasise emergence and evolution of skilled behaviour through coach and environment interactions such as a constraints learning approach, ecological niche construction and relational enskilmment.

Workshop #1

We will provide our audience with some practical examples through 'In-Action' in-formal learning of current innovative support strategies to developing skill adaptation in general coach development practices using principles of ecological dynamics to underpin a more immersive learning experience of high performing behaviours. Practices such as coaching on the run, coaching the coach on the run and its implications will be explored and discussed (eg, education of attention), alongside reflecting and critical thinking with a trusted friend will be integrated into the session. We will provide an overview of our practice design principles for the improvement of learning in performance aligned to athlete needs and appropriate coaching behaviours. Integrating measures of what we value and valuing what we measure (eg, enjoyment and improvement) may enhance the in-action experience and future involvement.