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Essential Tools For the Evolution of Expertise in Coaching

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Abstract

Stone, Stone and Sands (2005) noted the critical lack of sport science and research based coaching practices in the United States. They noted that current practices are commonly not based on a systematic approach to coaching that allows for both intentionally applied evidence based scientific principles and valid and reliable evaluation methods. Coaching is a profession that requires strong decision making skills, constant assessment, and consistent integration of new information for successful talent development and performance management. Like athletic talent development, the development of these professional skills and the overall development of coaching expertise takes time and deliberate effort (Schempp, 2006). Unfortunately, while formal coaching education program and sport science studies emphasize the physiological, technical and tactical sides of preparing athletes, less attention is paid to the formal development of critical thinking and self-assessment necessary for professional growth and development as a coach. Further, the prevalent grass roots 'athlete to coach' and 'assistant to head' mentorship models of coach development provide even fewer opportunities for the systematic and deliberate development of these crucial skills.

This workshop will explore multiple models and approaches that can be incorporated into both coaching education and current coaching practices to enhance and cultivate critical thinking, intentional decision making, and evaluation skills. Current models of reflective practice (Gibbs, 1988; United Kingdom's National Coaching Foundation, 2006), action research concepts (Schmuck, 2006), and critical thinking (Paul & Elder, 2010) will be discussed. Everyday strategies and practical application for coach development will be emphasized. Active participation will be facilitated and encouraged.