



The Routledge Handbook of Coach Development in Sport

Edited by Steven B. Rynne and Clifford J. Mallett

THE ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF COACH DEVELOPMENT IN SPORT

The Routledge Handbook of Coach Development in Sport is a comprehensive text that underscores the importance of learning and context for those who sculpt the environment in which people of all ages develop in and through sport.

Coaches and those responsible for the development of coaches are best positioned as both learners and facilitators of learning. As sport becomes more globalised, the concomitant professionalisation of coaches necessitates ongoing learning and development to embrace new knowledge and understanding. Moreover, contemporary coach development presents as a wicked problem, in that it continues to evolve, it is contextually bound, and there is no single or obvious way to approach it. Problematically, there is often limited assistance available to support coaches and coach developers in their ongoing development. As such, this book provides a truly international reference point that brings together leading scholars and practitioners from across the globe to provide an overview of the theories and practices of coaches and coach developers that are impacting the quality of sporting environments.

Therefore, this book is an important reference for researchers, scholars, and practitioners alike in the fields of Sport Coaching, Coach Development, Sport Development, Sport for Development, Physical Education and related disciplines.

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Edited by Steven B. Rynne and Clifford J. Mallett

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PART I

Coach Development Globally



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1

FOUNDATIONS AND EVOLUTION OF COACH DEVELOPMENT

Pierre Trudel and Wade Gilbert

Introduction

The mandate given to us from the editors was to provide a wide-ranging and high-level overview and thoughts on the future of coach learning and development. As mentioned by Silsbee (2010, p. xiv): “Our writing is inherently autobiographical: we cannot help but write from the perspective of who we are at the time we are writing it”. Therefore, this chapter reflects our perspectives based on our research programs, and our experience as coach developers and consultants for many sports organisations. We also considered the literature on “sport coach learning” which has grown rapidly in the last two decades (Trudel et al., 2020).

We write this chapter “living in a time of unprecedented change, a Fourth Industrial Revolution driven by new technologies” (Doucet & Evers, 2018, p. 2). This time of rapid change subsequently requires a change in how we approach coach development. What is needed is more than a few minor improvements; we believe coach development needs a paradigm shift. Although we have recently seen efforts to adapt the traditional and heavily structured approach to train coaches, it still rests on the belief that the best way to coach is a product that can be neatly packaged into modules/courses to be sold and consumed on demand by coaches using new technologies. We are proposing a structure that provides coach learning environments that are safe, yet demanding enough, to nurture the development both of coaches and those with whom they interact. Such a structure must (a) be agile so as to anticipate and respond quickly, (b) favour diversity in potential coach learning situations, (c) encourage collaborative learning, and (d) recognise individual differences in the capacity for self-development.

This chapter is divided into three sections. First, using a broad array of learning literature, we map the learning and development contexts and opportunities that coaches experience during their lifelong learning journey of becoming a sport coach (see Figure 1.1). Second, using the sport coaching literature, we present a fictional story of a coach (Tom) navigating the learning experiences identified in Figure 1.1. Finally, we propose a hypothetical scenario for the future along with the main challenges of enacting this envisioned future (see Figure 1.2). Because sport coaching and learning are both very complex, so is coach development. Therefore, the proposed figures and Tom’s story cannot cover all possibilities – a map is never the territory. To fully benefit

from this chapter we propose that readers use the content to get a better “perspective on the world rather than generate statements that can be true or false” (Wenger-Trayner, 2013, p. 1).

The background to this chapter is based heavily on the work of Peter Jarvis, a pioneer in the field of education and adult learning. A summary of his books, articles, and chapters can be found in his trilogy *Lifelong Learning and the Learning Society* (Jarvis, 2006; 2007; 2008), and in an edited book *Teaching, Learning and Education in Late Modernity: The Selected Works of Peter Jarvis* (Jarvis, 2012). We and other researchers have previously highlighted the potential application of Jarvis’ work to better understand coach learning and development (Nash et al., 2019; Trudel, Culver & Richard, 2016; Watts & Cushion, 2017).

Learning is an individual act in a social context. Coaches are part of organisations that structure the working conditions and by extension the possibility to grow. Recognising this, two additional conceptual frameworks have been particularly influential. Sessa and colleagues (Sessa, 2017; Sessa & London, 2015) argue that “learning takes place within a system of individuals, groups, and organizations all interacting in a complex environment” (Sessa & London, p. x). Their framework presents different types of learning (adaptive, generative, transformative) that can happen at three levels: individual, group, and organisation. We also considered the concept of a “deliberately developmental organisation” (DDO) proposed by Kegan and Lahey (2016) as their book can be seen as a twenty-first-century answer to the question, “What is the most powerful way to develop the capabilities of people at work?” (p. 4).

The expression “learning and development” is often used in this chapter and therefore merits further explanation. For Jarvis, *learning* is being in the world, a process of becoming. The key elements to consider are: “the person, as learner; the social situation within which the learning occurs; the experience that the learner has of that situation; the process of transforming it and storing it within the learner’s mind/biography” (Jarvis, 2006, p. 198). Therefore, Jarvis (2006, p. 134) proposes the following definition of lifelong learning:

The combination of processes throughout a lifetime whereby the whole person – body (genetic, physical and biological) and mind (knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, emotions, meaning, beliefs and senses) – experiences social situations, the perceived content of which is then transformed cognitively, emotively or practically (or through any combination) and integrated into the individual person’s biography resulting in a continually changing (or more experienced) person.

Development is the process of a person “becoming a better version of himself/herself” (Kegan & Lahey, 2016, p. 58). Thus, development includes learning since it is an ongoing evolution of one’s biography through a succession of social learning experiences – a lifelong learning journey.

Becoming a Sport Coach Is a Lifelong Learning Journey

Based on the work of Jarvis and others in educational research, we offer a conceptual diagram (Eppler & Kernbach, 2016) to illustrate the many ways that coaches can learn (see Figure 1.1). According to Jarvis (2007) “there are broadly two quite distinct manifestations of lifelong learning – one which is private, lifelong non-vocational and often non-formal and even individual, while the other is social/public, work-life long, vocational, often formal” (p. 188). We will not elaborate on “life outside of sport” although we can say that personal and family conditions impact the general disposition and time available to invest at work because “everyone who has ever worked anywhere knows that work is intensely personal. We all bring our whole selves to work every day” (Kegan & Lahey, 2016, p. 106).

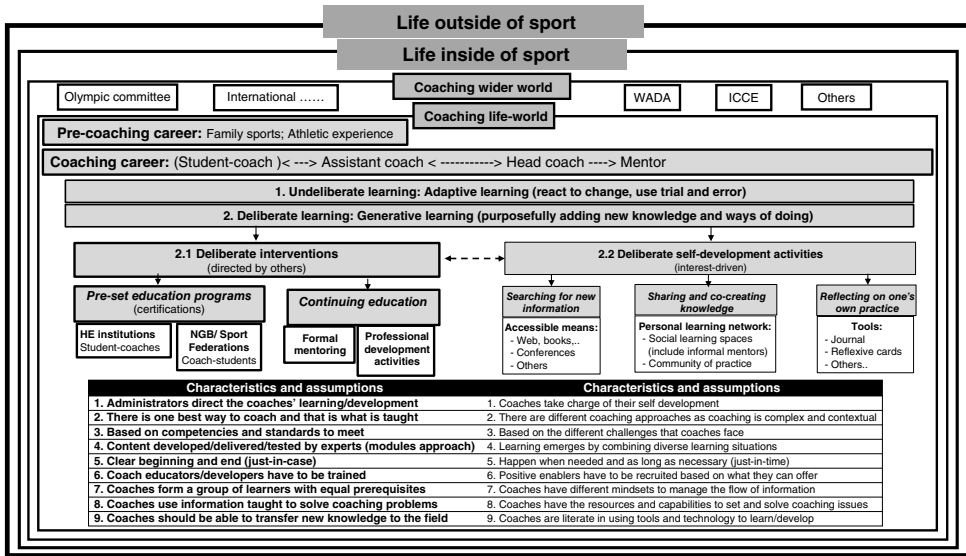


Figure 1.1 Mapping the most prevalent ways to learn how to coach.

The “life inside of sport” frame includes two components: the coaching wider world and the coaching life-world; the former having a strong influence on the latter. We concur with Jarvis (2006) that trying “to study learning as something divorced from learner in the wider world is artificial and non-realistic” (p. 194). For example, the “coaching wider world” can include International Olympic Committee (IOC) decisions such as including new sports and eliminating others, International sport federations’ (IF) directives such as regulation changes for safety reasons, the World Anti-Doping Agency’s (WADA) guidelines, or the International Council for Coaching Excellence’s (ICCE) publications and initiatives. Exceptional situations can also greatly influence the whole sport system, like the COVID-19 pandemic (Papageorgiou, 2020; Santos et al., 2021). The “coaching life-world” refers to the familiar situations perceived and defined by the individual: “we learn to fit in and we adjust our behaviour accordingly in relationship to those others with whom we interact” (Jarvis, 2009, p. 13). It seems logical to assert that volunteer or part-time coaches will have a less dominant “life inside of sport” than full-time coaches. The remainder of this section provides an overview of the coaching life-world.

Pre-Coaching Career

Adopting the perspective of lifelong learning requires us to look at coach learning and development as something that starts very early in life. Thus, the coaching life-world can include relevant experiences that happened before starting a coaching career. For Jarvis (2006), primary socialisation – time spent within family (e.g., family sports) – is the first socialisation an individual undergoes and the impact of what is learned on people’s later life should not be under-estimated: “In this process of primary socialisation, those early sensations and experiences of interaction generate the growth and development of more and complex emotions as we grow older” (p. 179). Following this phase of primary socialisation is a period of secondary socialisation:

“As we grow and develop, so we enter other groups having their own sub-cultures, such as schools, leisure clubs [athletic experience] and work, and in each of these we go through a process of secondary socialisation” (Jarvis, 2006, p. 60).

Coaching Career

With the exception of parent-coaches whose voluntary involvement is often limited to the few years of accompanying their own children, a coaching career will usually include opportunities to hold the position of assistant coach or head coach, and the possibility to act as a coach mentor. People are involved in many learning experiences and they impose meaning on these experiences as they join them together. However, it is important to recognise “that some experiences are much more significant in our life stories than others” (Jarvis, 2006, p. 136). Based on the literature, we propose two distinct but concurrent learning processes: undeliberate learning and deliberate learning. The former is the result of a series of events with little or no planning, while the latter suggests that learning and development results from careful and thorough considerations by organisations to develop coach education programs or by coaches to engage or not in learning opportunities.

Undeliberate Learning

Undeliberate learning typically is incidental, and because we tend to develop routines, what we do becomes so familiar that “our biography is in harmony with our situation and we may not consciously learn” (Jarvis, 2007, p. 16). For Sessa and London (2015), an unconscious response to changes in the environment can be called “adaptive learning” and “In addressing this often unwanted or unexpected stimulus, the system may try an already familiar solution, modify a familiar solution, or maybe try a new behaviour, using trial and error” (p. 9).

In an information and networked society, connecting with other people becomes an ongoing activity with little cost and effort: “... as we take our world [coaching life-world] for granted so our expectations of these networks of relationship become routinised and ultimately ritualised within our culture and, therefore, within ourselves” (Jarvis, 2007, p. 14). Considering that professionals develop their tacit knowledge – their theory-in-use (Schön, 1987) – in their day-to-day work, more effort should be put to better understand this learning process, unless it is considered that what is learned in situ is of limited or no value.

Deliberate Learning

In our rapidly changing world, we experience more and more a “state of disjuncture (the gap between our biography and our perception of our experience) or a sense of not-knowing” (Jarvis, 2012, p. 13), and therefore “we are forced to learn, or to reject the opportunity to learn and learn to live in ignorance” (Jarvis, 2007, p. 39). For Sessa and London (2015), generative learning “is proactive, anticipating change and establishing readiness to face unexpected situations” (p. 15), and “Adults control what they learn generatively across their life span in a variety of different ways” (p. 24). For sport coaches, deliberate learning can happen in two broad contexts: the deliberate interventions suggested or imposed by others who want “a better version of the coaches”, and the deliberate self-development activities in which coaches decide to be involved in order to have “a better version of themselves”. In Figure 1.1, “Deliberate interventions” appears in larger text than “deliberate self-development activities” to illustrate that it predominates due to the pressure from

organisations to fulfil educational requirements. Therefore, deliberate interventions remain the most visible when discussing learning and typically people find “it tremendously difficult to describe precisely how, or even when, they learned unless they describe formal learning in which they have a teacher” (Jarvis, 2006, p. 54).

DELIBERATE INTERVENTIONS

Across our life, “often we are not the initiators of our learning but others are, and we are recipients of experiences” (Jarvis, 2006, p. 139), and schooling is there “to achieve specific ends of preparing a skilled individual for the job market” (Anweting, 2020, p. 129). Attempts to establish sport coaching as a profession (Gill, 2021; North et al., 2019) favour an evidence-based approach along with its scientific knowledge and competency standards to meet. For Lyle (2018), “the primary vehicle for the transmission of research findings into practice is through education and development [pre-set education programs]” (p. 7) and “In relation to the use of current research, the role of ‘continuing professional development’ is interesting” (pp. 11–12).

Pre-set Education Programs Pre-set education programs are well designed by experts to teach clients according to the offerings of these programs (Tsang, 2013) and to grant certifications. In sport coaching, these programs are developed and delivered either inside or outside higher education (HE) institutions. In the last decade, we have seen an increase of coach education programs offered by HE (Kuklick et al., 2021; Trudel et al., 2020), while many of the programs offered by national governing bodies/sport federations started in the 1970s (Chapman et al., 2020; Werthner et al., 2012). In an attempt to provide a common language and set of principles, the International Council for Coaching Excellence (ICCE) published, with collaborators, the *International Sport Coaching Framework* designed to be “an authoritative and flexible reference document that facilitates the development, recognition and certification of coaches” (2013, p. 5). A few years later, they published the *International Sport Coaching Bachelor Degree Standards* to serve as an international reference point (Lara-Bercial et al., 2016). Even if the globalisation process tends to exert a standardising effect on the world “each country retains something of its own independence, even something of its own sovereignty” (Jarvis, 2007, p. 45). Therefore, there is a diversity of pre-set coach education programs, which is clearly evident when reviewing the *Coaching In* section of the *International Sport Coaching Journal*.

In general, HE coach education programs are three to four years in length and offer more opportunities to develop reflective practice skills than national sport federation programs, which are shorter in duration and tend to focus on coaching principles and sport-specific knowledge (Trudel et al., 2020). It is ironic, however, that the degrees issued by the HE institutions are sometimes subject to evaluation by national governing bodies/sport federations (Hall et al., 2019), and might even require additional training. However, there are exceptions in places such as Brazil, where coaching is a recognised profession and coaches need a HE degree to coach (Milistedt et al., 2014).

Continuing Education Pre-set training programs generally happen in classrooms (physical or virtual) and focus on standards to be met. As a result, there is generally little to “no room for discourse and critical examination of the subject matter and how they might be applied in specific lived context of the students” (Anweting, 2020, p. 134). Formal mentoring programs are often recommended to address this gap, in an effort to help new coaches integrate suggested best practices into their coaching. Also, like many other professionals, coaches have to demonstrate

that they stay up to date because “educational qualifications are important for practitioners seeking career advancement, they are engaging in additional study to gain credit [professional development activities]” (Jarvis, 2012, p. 95).

Both pre-set education programs and continuing education are formal educational procedures and settings where teachers or other experts have the mandate to deliver specific content structured into a curriculum typically identified as best practice. Therefore, “within educational institutions the influence of the teacher cannot be discounted even though educational institutions may claim to offer learners self-direction” (Jarvis, 2006, p. 128). Deliberate interventions, although important, will always be just one of the many opportunities for coaches to learn (Stoszowski & Collins, 2016) and attest only to a specific range of our competencies said to have been acquired in the recent or distant past.

DELIBERATE SELF-DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

For Jarvis (2004, p. 17) “Society is changing so rapidly that many of the traditional educative organizations are not able to keep abreast with the new demands and so individuals are forced to learn outside of the education system”. This context invites learners to “make a conscious decision to embark upon their own learning project [deliberate self-development activities]” (Jarvis, 2006, p. 128). Contrary to the traditional classroom-based education approach, “contemporary career pathways are often associated with individual self-training, network building, and it is related to activity on online platforms and out-of-school spaces” (Thibaut & Carvalho, 2018, p. 150). People who engage in professional learning that is active, interest-driven and autonomous, can be called “deliberate practitioners”. According to Trede and McEwen (2016), deliberate practitioners are continuous learners who question what they do, are curious of what others are doing, and “aspire to learning more than mastering measurable knowledge and skills; they also aspire to acquiring the means to support their need for perspective, value and meaning-making through a lifelong journey of learning and change” (p. 9). Probably because organisations have no control over this learning context, the learning activities initiated by coaches are little recognised and encouraged (Dohlsten et al., 2021). Based on the literature, we argue that coaches who are serious about their learning and development will manoeuvre through three interacting learning opportunities: searching for new information, sharing and co-creating knowledge, and reflecting on one’s own coaching practice.

Searching for New Information As continuous learners, people facing a current issue can independently search for information “to gather, filter, and organise content to make meaning while also sharing content and their viewpoints through social software and web applications” (Kennedy, 2018, p. 21). Also, attending seminars or conferences will be a different learning experience if they are agreed upon because they meet a coach’s actual goals (just-in-time approach) rather than if required for potential uses in the future (just-in-case approach).

Sharing and Co-creating Although learning is an individual process, “individuals are not born in isolation [and] individuals are always individuals in a social context and learning always occurs within a social context” (Jarvis, 2008, p. 63). Therefore, learning should not be perceived “so much as the acquisition of a fixed body of knowledge, but as interaction with others to construct and access content” (Oddone et al., 2019, p. 111). Sharing information and co-creating knowledge is so important that what differentiates high performers from others is not so much their individual

expertise but the quality of their personal network (Hart, 2014). Advances in technologies have a great impact on how people learn: “In a world of just-in-time learning the affordances provided by the internet means it is also possible to find people quickly at the point that a problem has to be solved” (Jackson, 2015, p. 3). Therefore, developing a “personal learning network” (PLN) becomes essential and advances in new technologies increase the possibility to network. To illustrate how, when, and where people can deliberately connect with others to share information or co-create knowledge, we present two related contexts: social learning spaces (SLS) and community of practice (CoP).

Etienne Wenger-Trayner and Beverly Wenger-Trayner (2020), in their book *Learning to make a difference: Value creation in social learning spaces* – an extension and refinement of “communities of practice” – define SLS “as a particular experience of engagement that takes place among people in pursuit of learning to make a difference, [and where] social interactions and relationships are structured by a desire to push a joint inquiry together” (p. 13). SLS can include one other individual – an informal mentor being a good example. While a CoP requires from the participants a clear shared goal, sustained engagement and progressively producing a shared repertoire, SLS is more episodic and will depend on the PLN: “The individual nature of the PLN differentiates it from a learning community or community of practice, where participants typically work together towards shared goals” (Oddone et al., 2019, p. 104). However, SLS “may give rise to a community of practice over time, [and] may be a light way to launch a community of practice, or explore the possibility, since it does not require the same level of initial commitment” (Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2020, p. 33).

Reflection For Jarvis (2006), “in order to give that past experience meaning or in order to provide a rationale for a future action, we need to be able to step outside of the frame of duration and reflect” (p. 81). People can deliberately reflect on their practice (generative learning) using tools (journals, reflection cards, etc.) but can also be critical of their practice (transformative learning). Such reflection “challenges and make judgement about the validity of one’s taken-for-granted assumptions, ideas or presuppositions about the world, others, and oneself” (Anweting, 2020, p. 133).

Although we have presented the three deliberate self-development activities separately, in reality they are interrelated and influence each other. Having access to more information makes it possible to be more able and confident to connect with others to share and co-create and, by extension, to develop one’s PLN, which will allow better access to new information. This process might trigger reflection on one’s practice and contribute to valuable associations.

The dotted line between “deliberate intervention” and “deliberate self-development activities” is to indicate that they can influence and complement each other. Attending a course and being exposed to new content can lead an individual to explore it further on their own. Realising a gap in their knowledge can lead an individual to register for a formal course. For this interaction to be successful, coaches need to be aware of their real needs, and deliberate interventions should be based on learner-centered teaching principles (Paquette & Trudel, 2018), which is not an easy task (Dempsey et al., 2021; Galatti et al., 2019). However, with collaboration and creativity it is possible to do unusual things such as certifying coaches when guided in deliberate self-development activities (Trudel et al., 2022).

Characteristics and Assumptions

At the bottom of Figure 1.1, nine characteristics and assumptions are listed under the two broad contexts of deliberate learning, and can be regrouped in three blocks: the coach education programs (curriculums) or their absence (#1 to #5), the key actors (coach developers or positive enablers) (#6), and the learners (coaches) (#7 to #9). Although many of these characteristics and assumptions have been discussed earlier in the chapter, we believe that additional information is required here. First, developing coach education programs to train and certify coaches is a long and complex exercise (Gano-Overway et al., 2020; Martin et al., 2019). A danger facing programs divided into modules/courses is that the content can become more important than the learner. In recent years, some sport organisations have worked toward making their programs more learner-centred (Paquette et al., 2019) and more in-situ (Allison et al., 2016; Vinson et al., 2019). Although coach education programs are essential to facilitate access to an overall picture of the number of coaches trained/certified and at what level: “From the perspective of rapidly changing knowledge, there is a fundamental shift in the conception of knowledge itself, from something that is certain and true to something that is fluid and relative” (Jarvis, 2012, p. 96).

Second, we find key actors throughout the coaches’ lifelong learning journey. Some examples include parents and coaches or physical educators in the pre-coaching career and coach developers in the deliberate interventions. The ICCE (2014) suggested using the expression “coach developers” as an umbrella term to include “all those who have undergone training to fulfil one or more of the following roles: coach educators, learning facilitators, presenters, mentors and assessors” (p. 6). Studies have recently been conducted to learn more about coach developers’ profile, training, and work (Callary & Gearity, 2020), along with calls to professionalise coach developers (Redgate et al., 2022). However, there is less research done on coaches’ self-development and on who can help them become a better version of themselves. Here we suggest the expression “positive enabler”, an inclusive term to regroup appellations such as coach of coaches (Rodrigue et al., 2019), critical friend (O’Dwyer & Bowles, 2021; Perkins & Hahn, 2020), system convener (Duarte et al., 2021), and personal learning coach (Milistetd et al., 2018). In the interest-driven and autonomous learning outside of a specific curriculum, coaches should be able to select the person with whom they want to grow for the period of time they wish. We believe positive enablers should not be obliged to conform to a specific training curriculum. As “deliberate consultant practitioners”, they will be in charge of their development and there will be a diversity of services offered allowing coaches to choose from and the possibility to work with people having diverse perspectives.

Finally, in the context of deliberate interventions, there is a strong attempt to regroup coaches with similar profiles to whom a unique curriculum is delivered, the result being a homogeneous group of coaches. This contrasts with the deliberate self-development context in which development tends to be idiosyncratic and influenced by the coaches’ social network literacy (PLN) and their mindset/biography. For Jarvis (2006) “it is the attitude to learning that enables some individuals to grow and develop more than others – more attitude than intelligence” (p. 136). The work of Kegan and Lahey (2016) allows us to better understand why some coaches hesitate to take responsibility for their own development and that for others, the commitment may vary. These authors argue that learning and development are influenced by one’s mindset.

According to Kegan and Lahey, there are three common mindsets: the *socialised mind*, the *self-authoring mind*, and the *self-transforming mind*. People with a socialised mind will behave as “good

soldiers”. The way they send and receive information “will be strongly influenced by what [they] believe others want to hear” (p. 63); it is a state of dependence. Thus, “socialised mind coaches” will tend to feel comfortable with what they have learned through diverse deliberate interventions. In contrast, an individual with a self-authoring mind will show some independence and “is more likely to be a function of what I deem others need to or ought to hear to best further the agenda or mission of my design” (pp. 65–66). We can imagine “self-authoring mind coaches” searching for new information and sharing their knowledge but with a filter that prioritises information that supports their coaching approach, while avoiding discussions that will potentially be too challenging. Finally, someone with a self-transforming mind is aware that best practices belong to the past and what make sense today may not make as much sense tomorrow. People with this mindset “are not only advancing their agenda and design but also making space for its modification or expansion” (p. 69). “Self-transforming coaches” will more likely take time to critically reflect on their coaching practice and will network with other people who have different perspectives and with whom they might even co-create knowledge. Using data from empirical studies, Kegan and Lahey conclude that: “We expect most workers to be self-authoring, but most are not. We expect most leaders to be more complex than self-authoring, but few are” (p. 77).

Tom’s Story

Narratives/stories are used in sports coaching research to present results of an empirical study (Cronin et al., 2020; Keeling & Palmer, 2018), and can also be used as an effective pedagogical tool when structured as storied representations of research (Douglas & Carless, 2008). Here, we have used a creative nonfiction style of writing (Smith, 2016) to compose a story in which we accompany Tom on his journey through Figure 1.1. For ease of reading, we use superscript numbers to reference the literature (see Notes section).

Tom’s parents were multi-sport athletes growing up. Because of his parents’ involvement in sport, they instilled in him a passion for competitive sport. On car rides home for sporting events, he was often reminded of the importance of giving his maximum while remaining respectful of opponents, referees, and so on; values that Tom will keep for life.^{1,2} As a teenager, Tom preferred team sports including soccer and baseball that exposed him to several different coaches, with knowledge and behaviours to be modelled or the opposite to be proscribed, if one day he became a coach.³

His performances on the soccer field allowed him to evolve for several years in professional leagues until an injury ended his career. As a graduate in administration, Tom worked in a bank and his schedule allowed him to take on an assistant coach position for the high-performance B team of the club where he had played. Therefore, he was very familiar with “how we do things here”.⁴ For health reasons, the head coach had to resign and Tom took his place. Based on his experience as high-performance athlete and as assistant coach, Tom felt that with his background and a little support⁵ he could provide a training environment that respected best practices of the day. Sometimes he would put a little more of himself into it and if the results were disappointing, he would philosophise by saying “I like to try and if it is a flop, then I learn from my errors”.⁶ Tom was progressively accumulating years of coaching experience and when asked about his coaching philosophy, he replied “it’s hard to explain, follow me for a week and you’ll see. I have ways of doing things that are mine and that I adapt a little without knowing it”.⁷

One day Tom is told that he must be certified if he wants to become the head coach of the provincial/state soccer team. Surprised that his past athletic and coaching experience was not

enough, he and the club manager met with people in charge of the certification program and made an agreement so Tom could jump ahead in the program directly up to Level 3.⁸ The training took place over four weekends and approximately 20 people participated. The icebreaker of the first hour showed that the participants had very different backgrounds. At lunchtime, Tom started a discussion with four coaches:

Tom: What do you think of the course so far?

Paul: I love it. I have limited experience as an athlete. I started to coach my daughter and learned how to coach through levels 1 and 2. It was the first time that my personal understanding and coaching approaches were challenged by other ways of coaching based on scientific theories.⁹ I left these courses with more coaching knowledge, but the challenge was to transfer it to my coaching practice.¹⁰ Taking level 3 will make me a better coach but not enough to coach a very high level; I do not have HP athletic experience like you.¹¹

Peter: I have a different opinion. Owning a degree in sport science and looking at the program, I will be surprised if I learn anything new. It seems that for employability, a NGB's coaching certification has more value than a HE degree in coaching.¹²

Tom: What about you Jim?

Jim: As a Parasport coach, I am still looking for a course that will address my needs, but I am not sure they exist considering the complexity and variation in Parasport.¹³ I believe the development of Parasport coaches is based on our own search for information, our sharing of information with athletes, parents and other coaches, and a lot of reflection to create coaching strategies for our specific context.¹⁴

Tom: And you ... sorry I do not remember your name, but it seems that you are representing women coaches here.

Lisa: Or representing the other 50% of the population. Regarding what I think of the course ... I prefer to wait until the end to share my feeling. As usual, we are only a few women here and based on my previous experiences, opportunities to speak and the interest shown in our comments are not always optimal.¹⁵ I will also be able to compare with a women's-only coach education program I attended last year.¹⁶ But what about you Tom?

Tom: First, I thought that it will not really change my coaching but the presentation on the 'coaching philosophy' made me realise the importance of being critical about what I do if I do not want to limit myself to just reproducing what I have learned as a HP athlete.^{17,18} Do you feel the same?

Peter: For me it is not new. During my degree, the importance of reflecting on our coaching practice was addressed in my courses, and we experienced different tools like the traditional reflective journals and some new technology applications.¹⁹

Paul: I have mixed feelings about using online tools to search for information or contact other people. I know it can help to expand my network but there are so many options that I often get lost. I think buying them without support in how to select and use them in our context is wasted money.²⁰

Moving up, Tom was selected as a potential candidate for HP coaching. He was invited to an audit. Based on Tom's portfolio and questions during the audit, a group of experts identified coaching gaps, structured a personal learning plan and provided a mentor.²¹ His sport federation decided to send him to the Olympic Games as an observer to gain experience. Although he had played

professional football, as a coach he felt like a newcomer in this HP environment²² and realised the importance of (a) being well prepared, (b) having coping skills, and (c) connecting with experienced coaches who want to share their knowledge.²³

After more than 30 years in coaching, with the last 15 often being away from home, Tom wanted to be less active but still contribute. Although he often shared his coaching expertise with coaches looking for an informal mentor, he felt he could be more involved. He reached a friend working in an NGB, who suggested he attend a training program for coach developers/mentors. Although the two weekend program was, to some extent too intensive,²⁴ Tom became aware of several facts: (a) without the right training, mentors and coach developers might just contribute to the reproduction of what is going on instead of contributing to “real” learning and development,^{25,26} (b) the resources and materials that form the official curriculum should provide a type of quality assurance and consistency but were hardly met as delivered,²⁷ and (c) the role of the coach developer can be rewarding²⁸ or disappointing.^{29,30}

Hypothetical Scenario for the Future

We cannot predict the future, we only can propose possible scenarios that may or not influence alternative futures (Monda, 2018). Therefore, any scenarios are hypothetical and “are no more than mirages that retreat as we approach them. However, a major function of utopian thought is that it shows us the imperfections in the present and gives us a goal for the future” (Jarvis, 2008, p. 1–2). Therefore, after having presented the benefits and limits of the broad contexts in which learning takes place, we propose a view toward the future that invites us to see organisations as playing a central role in coach development on the condition that they become deliberately developmental organisations.

As sport coaching becomes more complex, the coaching life-world includes the presence of diverse specialists such as strength and conditioning coaches, sport psychologists, and performance analysts, to name a few. Thus, it becomes irrelevant to talk about coach development without including the people with whom coaches interact. Coaches learn as individuals and also as members of groups (e.g., coaching staff) and both make the organisations (Sessa & London, 2015). To us, the organisation(s) in which coaches work, are key actors in workplace learning: “Organisations have to change in order to keep abreast with the current situation and appear relevant to its members and so the changing organisations has been called a learning organisation” (Jarvis, 2008, p. 96). Up to now, “working organisations” had played a negligible role in the development of their coaches, limiting themselves to encouraging their coaches to comply with certification requirements and scheduling courses and diverse educational activities (deliberate interventions) (Dawson & Phillips, 2013).

In Figure 1.2 we sketch out a potential answer to the question: What could be the most powerful ways for organisations to support everyone – coaches, specialists, administrators, etc., – in their lifelong learning journey? The ideas presented in Figure 1.2 are influenced strongly by the work of Kegan and Lahey (2016) and their new paradigm of organisation life along with the concept of “Deliberately developmental organisations” (DDO): “something different from an accelerated version of business as usual [that] represents, instead, a rethinking of the very place of people development in organizational life” (p. 86). Learning is no more an addition to work; it emerges from work. Coaching is learning, and learning is coaching.

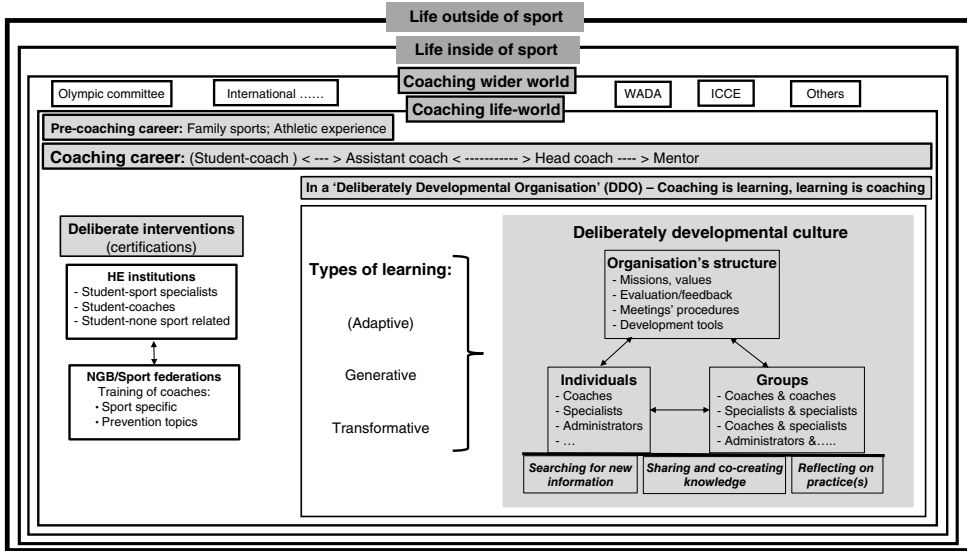


Figure 1.2 Mapping a hypothetical scenario of ways to learn how to coach in the future.

Deliberate interventions will still play an important role. Most sport specialists have earned such degrees and this can generate a ripple effect so that HE institutions will play a bigger role in the education, development, and assessment of coaches (McCarthy et al., 2021). However, there will always be coaches without a degree in sport, especially among volunteer coaches, and a need for all coaches to participate in professional development activities. Therefore, NGBs and sport federations should deliver sport-specific courses to certify minimal training and develop prevention lessons (concussion, harassment, doping, ethics, etc.). Recent research points to the value of better communication and coordination among all the stakeholders (administrators, coach developers, coaches) and when applicable with the HE institutions (Griffiths et al., 2018; Kolić et al., 2020). Although important, these learning activities typically are delivered sporadically rather than continuously. Continuous learning requires the presence of a “deliberately developmental culture”: “a culture that itself immersively sweeps every member of the organization into an ongoing developmental journey in the course of working every day” (Kegan & Lahey, 2016, p. 5).

Individuals, groups, and the organisation’s structure make an interactive triangle. Through its missions/values and ways to structure the activities, all actors in the organisation contribute to make learning a constant, collective and challenging experience. Because it is the learner who decides to learn or not, coaches, groups, and organisations might show resistance to this developmental culture and only make some small adaptations – “using the opportunity to correct some flaw within the system” (Kegan & Lahey, 2016, p. 80). By providing support and the right development tools for individuals to be more effective when searching for new information, by encouraging the development of an extended PLN and interactions with others, and by establishing reflective time periods, DDOs are crafting “an organizational culture to accelerate the development of personal mindsets [from socialised to the self-transforming mind] than any previously seen” (p. 78).

Next are two examples of learning activities deliberately structured to make learning continuous, collaborative, and authentic. The first involves the common scenario of a coach attending a conference. By viewing this as more than a personal development credit issue, and by

providing support for more than one coach from the organisation to attend, additional SLS are created before, during and after. The conversations before allow the coaches to (a) analyse the program and identify the most useful sessions, (b) reach out to colleagues for formal and informal discussions, and (c) schedule a temporary coaching replacement so that they can be fully present at the conference. During the conference, multiple discussions between the coaches allow for small debriefs and schedule adjustments. After the conference, a joint presentation is then made for discussion with other members of the organisation.

The second example is an SLS created to have all the actors jointly searching for new information, sharing their knowledge and co-creating contextual solutions, and reflecting on its implementation. We call the activity “Together on an uncertainty”. For Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner (2020): “The quality of a social learning space depends on the degree to which the engagement of uncertainty is mutual. Everyone is at the edge of knowing. No one owns the final destination or has a claim to fully knowing” (p. 21). Let’s say the question related to the uncertainty is “What factors and strategies should we take into consideration during the athlete recruitment process?” The first step will be to organise three distinct intra-professional conversations where sport psychologists, strength and conditioning coaches, and coaches have to search for information and develop a one-page summary of their view to be shared with colleagues. Then, interprofessional conversations regrouping one person from each of the previous groups are set up to talk about different options, and to identify the one that best suits the coaching context and can be applied by the coach(es). In a following interprofessional conversation, the group will reflect on the outcome. In this type of activity, everyone pushes their understanding of the uncertainty, shares it, and most importantly “rather than looking for the universally perfect solution [they] instead look for a contextually relevant solution”. (Jeffreys, 2021, p. 12)

To summarise, the paradigm shift we are talking about is moving from a perspective where deliberate interventions are considered the predominant method to learn the right way to coach, to a perspective where organisations should also be a key actor in coach development. Through their structure, deliberately developmental organisations can promote multidisciplinary teamwork (Tee & Rongen, 2020) and continuous learning. Such a change will not be easy to achieve due to the following challenges:

- *Leader’s self-transforming mind.* In a DDO there is a “deliberate leader” who models the desired learning approach: “If the leader is not deeply committed to the full dialectic of the DDO mission – organisations and their people being each other’s greatest resource for flourishing – then the DDO will never launch or will not long survive” (Kegan & Lahey, 2016, p. 121). Leaders will need to be supported during this paradigm shift that, for many of them, will be a quantum move in their leadership style (Kraft & Culver, 2021). In short, they will be asked to abandon their power for controlling the what, when, and where of teaching coaches in order to support a flexible and fluid coach developmental culture based on a continuous, collaborative, and deliberate self-development learning. Without committed leaders, learning will still be limited to a few occasional small changes that likely will just reinforce current practices.
- *Development versus performance.* Most sport organisations have a culture of performance: “Everyone is trying to look good, display expertise, minimise and hide any mistakes or weaknesses, and demonstrate what they already know and can do well” (Kegan & Lahey, 2016, p. 124).

However, in a deliberately developmental culture, everyone helps everyone to learn. Having the best version of everyone increases the probability of success: “Better me + Better you = Better us” (p. 20).

- *Consultants/experts’ engagement.* Many organisations hire specialists to support coaches in order to provide athletes with an optimal training environment. However, by calling on several consultants, the danger exists of creating work silos. Activities like “Together on an uncertainty” help to promote a constant and collaborative learning culture.
- *Having the right people.* Being in a developmental culture means being continuously engaged with others at the leading edge of our knowing what and how to do things. It is not a place for people who fear change or for experts who sell their precious knowledge but resist engaging in the collective growth. Leaders might have to let some people go when there is too much resistance: “People will need to change their mindset, not just their skill sets” (Kegan & Lahey, p. 238).

Conclusion

Research on coach learning and development is in its infancy but has recently experienced important growth. As mentioned throughout this chapter, drawing on a wide range of learning perspectives, we have an opportunity to imagine a flexible and fluid, deliberately developmental culture to meet the needs and aspirations of the next generation of athletes, coaches, and specialists. In a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous world, “knowing in practice involves being able to function productively under conditions of uncertainty” (Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2020, p. 1). We have outlined a hypothetical scenario where learning can be continuous, collaborative, generative, and transformative at all levels (individuals, groups, organisations). We do not believe there is one specific recipe for establishing such a structure because it is up to the actors in the field to imagine what best suits their unique context and biography. However, we are convinced that the resistance or willingness of coach development administrators to adopt this new perspective will be a critical determinant of success. For those who want to take up the challenge, it will be important to have realistic expectations. It is impossible to change in a few months the frame of references and ways of doing things that, over decades, have shaped predominant approaches to coach education. Openness to novelty and the quality of commitment cannot be imposed; it is the responsibility of each individual, group and organisation. But, by bringing together a critical mass of interested and dedicated people it will be possible to co-create and gradually integrate a deliberately developmental culture.

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2

COACH DEVELOPMENT IN AUSTRALIA AND AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

Evolutions and Current Directions

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and David Morley*

Introduction

As with the other chapters in Part I, in this chapter, we recognise Callary and Gearity's (2019) suggestion that there is a need to examine coach development initiatives in light of different sport and country-specific circumstances. With this in mind, a brief history of the key moments for coach development in both Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand (NZ) are presented chronologically beginning from the 1970s. We do so to illuminate Australia's and Aotearoa New Zealand's nuanced journeys of coach development, highlighting the milestones that have led to the current vision of coach development. In the Australian section, we showcase several examples of how coach development is currently implemented across different sporting bodies. In the Aotearoa New Zealand section, we describe the vision that has underpinned Sport New Zealand's 'flagship' Coach Development Program. In doing this, we draw on the rich, layered, nuances of coach development across a myriad of Australia's sporting bodies alongside the lived experiences of colleagues from NZ who are able to exemplify a macrocosm of coach development as it is disseminated nationally. The chapter concludes by outlining a regional approach with an example of an online coach development initiative that, at the time of writing, is in the process of being collaboratively designed and piloted across both nations.

Coach Development in Australia – From Past to Present

A Brief History of Coach Development in Australia from the 1970s–2020s

1970s and 1980s

In the early 1970s there were several coach education courses and clinics delivered across Australia by the National Fitness Council and the Rothmans National Sports Foundation (RNSF). The RNSF in particular, linked up with several sporting organisations (e.g., golf, cricket, track and field, and the four football codes – Rugby Union, Rugby League, Australian Rules Football and Soccer) and employed full-time coaching directors tasked with developing coaching in their sports (Phillips, 2000; Woodman, 1989). However, at the time, sport was still fairly under-resourced and

coaching was largely under-developed. Following the Bloomfield report (1973), Coles report (1975), and the 1976 Montreal Olympics (Australia's poorest medal tally in three decades), there was a widespread call for the Australian Government to re-invest in sport (and coaching) (Phillips, 2000).

These reports and the underperformance of Australia's Olympic team were the catalyst for a more systematic approach to coach development. More specifically, these significant factors led to the Sport and Recreation Ministers' Council (SRMC) establishing the National Coaching Council in 1978, which was renamed the Australian Coaching Council (ACC) in 1979. This was a key moment for coach development in Australia. The ACC, a not-for-profit organisation, included government and sport representatives with an aim of (i) promoting coaching excellence through greater coach education opportunities, (ii) establishing coaching standards and accreditation programs; and (iii) providing support and resources to coaches in co-operation with National Sporting Organisations (NSOs) (<https://australiancoachingcouncil.com> council; Phillips, 2000).

A key initiative of the ACC was the development of the National Coaching Accreditation Scheme (NCAS) that provided a standardised framework for coach education and quality assurance across all recognised sports in Australia. Based on the Canadian model of coach certification established at that time, it involved three tiers of accreditation (Phillips, 2000):

- Level 1 introductory course – aimed at the beginner coach, this course involved 14 hours of contact supported by the 'Beginning Coaching Level 1 Coach's Manual and Workbook' plus one season (at least 30 hours) coaching.
- Level 2 intermediate course – for coaches in participation and developmental contexts, this course involved two additional seasons coaching plus theory and practice, with 60 hours coursework focused on 'the application of sport science to coaching', supplementing 'the art of coaching' and 'legal responsibilities'. Resources included the 'Better Coaching Advanced Coach's Manual' and the 'Better Coaching Workbook for Level 2 Coaches'.
- Level 3 advanced – designed for experienced coaches of elite level athletes, this course encompassed 100 hrs theory and practice information and three seasons of practical coaching with elite athletes (Phillips, 2000).

During this period, the ACC supported all recognised NSOs to develop, implement and coordinate coaching policy and development. All NSOs were provided guidelines and invited to submit applications to the ACC for the approval of their courses (L. Woodman, personal communication, March 10, 2023). Once approved, the NSOs administered the courses. This led to variations in quality across sports, with some NSOs becoming better at standardising content, delivery and assessment compared to others. Although there were components of pedagogy within the courses, there was a strong focus on sport science. Nevertheless, accreditation provided "standards for the credentialing of coaches" (Schembri, 1995, p.52). To maintain their accreditation, coaches were required to complete regular professional development activities determined by their NSO (a combination of practical coaching, coach education and self-education) over a four-year period (den Duyn, 1996).

In addition to working with the NSOs, the ACC also worked with organisations and stakeholders such as the Australian Olympic Committee, Paralympics Australia and Commonwealth Games Australia, as well as the Australian Sports Commission and State Sporting organisations (SSOs). The ACC also established links with other aligned sectors including education (e.g., schools and tertiary education providers) and government (e.g., Departments of Sport and Recreation), as well as private enterprise.

As alluded to above, the other significant advancements during this time, were the establishment of the government-funded Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) in 1981 and Australian Sports Commission (ASC) in 1986. The AIS played a pivotal role in coach development as it provided employment for coaches and access to world-class facilities, resources, and support networks (Phillips, 2000). Once established, the ASC was also a driving force for coach development, strongly advocating for national coaching directors to be appointed and take responsibility for the NCAS courses in their sport and the overall development of their coaching workforce. The result was the employment of 29 full-time and four part-time coaching directors by 1987 (Woodman, 1987).

During this time the ACC also sought to create forums for the sharing of coach-specific materials. This included publishing the Sports Coach Journal (1987–2008) and the Coaching Director (1984–1996; later changed to The Sport Educator). In addition, the ACC created sharing spaces such as through their establishment of the Elite Coaches' Seminars (began in 1986). Operating out of the AIS, these seminars provided opportunities for coaches to learn from experienced coaches and experts and share ideas and learn from each other (Phillips, 2000; Woodman, 1987).

The 1990s

The ACC was semi-autonomous in its decision making until officially becoming part of the ASC in 1991. There was further growth during the 1990s with several new initiatives (e.g., high-performance coaching focus, coaching athletes with disabilities, establishment of the Australian coach awards). The high-performance course, established in 1990, was only available for full-time coaches who were nominated by their NSO and during this time was “recognised as the pinnacle of coaching accreditation in Australia” (Phillips, 2000, p.104). Another important initiative was the establishment of the National Coaching Scholarship Program (NCSP) in 1992 as part of the federal government's ‘maintain the momentum’ sport funding policy, which was administered by the ASC (Holmick, 1997). This one-year full-time program consisted of three main pillars: i) placement in an elite sport environment with a mentor coach (usually the head coach of an AIS program); ii) a series of professional development blocks (typically a week-long camp at the AIS facility) and; iii) enrolment in a program of formal study (e.g., ACC Graduate Diploma of Coaching, or other recognised tertiary education program).

By 1996 each of the eight Australian States and Territories had their own government-funded academy or institute of sport providing programs in numerous sports and increasing the employment opportunities for coaches. Although the National Institute Network (NIN), consisting of all State and Territory institutes of sport plus the AIS, acknowledged the critical role of coaches in the success of their programs, the continued professional development of the coaches was largely ad-hoc and left to individual coaches themselves to organise (Rynne et al., 2006). Nevertheless, these workplace sites offered opportunities to create social networks and learn from each other through informal collaboration such as discussions and observations. However, challenges existed with a reliance on funding and a tiered sport system (based on a sport's potential contribution to high-performance targets) indicating what and how many resources were available (access to support staff, sport science, etc.). These limitations led to some tensions amongst coaches as they viewed each other as competitors, not wanting to honestly share experiences and assist in developing other coaches for fear of losing their positions (Rynne et al., 2006). Recognising the complexities and challenges of workplace learning, the NIN now employs high-performance coach advisors or coach developers to support and accelerate the development of coaches.

Evidence of the growth of coach development, as well as the increased prioritisation of coach development in Australia, was illustrated in the way that the ACC had expanded from one full-time staff member with secretarial support in 1983 to “15 employees who manage high-performance coaching, the NCAS, coaching athletes with disabilities, development and technical programs, as well as provide technical and coaching consultancy expertise” (Phillips, 2000, p.95), by 1997.

From 2000 to 2017

In July 2000 the ACC changed its name to the Sport Education Section (SES) of the ASC. Some say there was a view from the ASC in the early 2000s that the ‘job was largely done’; the NSOs now had their accreditation programs up and running and did not need the same level of assistance as before. The political view was that coaching and coach development was only a small subset of the NSOs development, with increasing attention being given to NSO governance, management, planning, communication, technology infrastructure and the like. At this point, the ASC adopted a policy orientation for NSOs rather than a hands-on approach regarding coach development. Due to this decision, NSOs reported a loss of individualised assistance and manpower to run their day-to-day coach development activities such as delivering courses, running conferences and workshops, and training facilitators, assessors and mentors. With other competing priorities being resourced by the ASC (e.g., encouraging physical activity, tackling obesity, developing after-school programs for children) and a decrease in funding overall in a variety of sports, many NSOs gradually went down different pathways in terms of coach development. For entry-level coaches, most sports encouraged (or had as a pre-requisite) completion of the ASC’s online Beginning Coaching General Principles before completing sport-specific coaching courses. Pathways then varied where some sports followed the guidelines of their International Federation (e.g., the Australian Track and Field Coaches Association adopted the International Association of Athletics Federations’ level 0-5 for Athletics coaches) while others adopted two streams – community and advanced – which may offer several different courses within each stream (e.g., Football Federation Australia offered courses across ‘Community’ and ‘Advanced’ streams). In some instances, coaches were able to self-select the most appropriate context to engage with (e.g., club coach or performance coach). In addition, some sports recognised the sport-specific knowledge of former elite athletes and provided a fast track for their development where they were exempted from lower-level coach education courses (Rynne, 2014).

In keeping with this more ‘hands-off, policy-focused’ approach to the area of coach development in the 2000s, the NCSP was discontinued in the late 2000s / early 2010s. It wasn’t until mid-late 2010 that coach development programs were re-established, and they were shaped by the ‘Winning Edge’ policy (ASC, 2012) that was implemented at the end of 2012 (i.e., highly targeted, low numbers, high investment programs, small number of sports – all based on performance standard and potential) with the aim to get Australian sport back into the higher echelons of international sporting performance. One of the priorities at this time was the establishment of the AIS Centre for Performance Coaching and Leadership. In addition, the World Class to World Best conference has been held annually since 2013 and attended by approximately 250 coaches and leaders from high-performance sport. Although there was support for the Winning Edge policy during this time, there were also criticisms of this initiative due to the change in how funding was allocated to sports (with some sports receiving significant increases while others received less funding), the abolishment of AIS athlete scholarships and high-performance programs (Weissensteiner, 2023), and a general dissatisfaction in the sport system for there being a lack of support.

In October 2017 the ASC retired the NCAS as it wasn’t being used as intended and the organisation remains in a period of transition with an unclear future. Nevertheless, sports still have

their own accreditation or registration system and have their own structure in place for coach development.

Existing largely independent of the national system was the coach education opportunities offered by tertiary institutions. Two postgraduate sports coaching programs for performance coaches offer a learner-centred approach, where coaches are encouraged to engage and think beyond their own experience, question assumptions, collaborate, critically reflect on their coaching, and complete authentic assessment tasks that can be adapted to the needs of the learner. Graduates of these programs have reported greater self-efficacy and perceived improvement in their coaching practice (Araya et al., 2015; Mallett & Dickens, 2009; Mallett et al., 2013). However, common barriers to these formal courses, like all tertiary programs, may be cost, time, and the anti-intellectualism that remains in some parts of Australian sport with high value placed on athletic experience and success when making coaching appointments (Rynne & Cushion, 2017).

Current State of Play for Coach Development in Australia

When addressing the current landscape of coach development in Australia, it is pertinent to include coach development opportunities as they apply to all coaches, not just those within high-performance sport. For clarity, a High Performance (HP) coach is any coach who is responsible for Podium Ready or Podium athletes (Olympic/Paralympic and/or Commonwealth Games Pathway athletes), as recognised in the AIS's Athlete Categorisation Framework (2021). A Pathway coach is any coach who is responsible for Emerging, Developing, or Podium potential athletes whilst a Community coach is any coach who is coaching a non-categorised athlete and is responsible for grassroots and community coaching; This role may be paid or voluntary. It is worth noting that not included within this coach categorisation are those coaches who are responsible for non-Olympic/Paralympic and Commonwealth Games sports, who must rely solely on their own coach development within their own organisations. Depending on the NSO, this may be facilitated within the silo of each individual club, rather than at a governing-body level (i.e., Professional Football Clubs managing their own coaches' development, rather than a governing body such as the National Rugby League or Australian Rules Football League being responsible).

High-Performance Coach Development Strategy (HPCDS) (AIS, 2021)

The High-Performance Coach Development Strategy (HPCDS) is positioned as a blueprint for an AIS-led certification and regeneration of High-Performance Coach Development across the Australian sport system. Its inception was said to be a result of the governing body wanting to "identify, attract and retain world-class coaches to enhance the experiences and successes of Australian athletes" (HPCDS, 2021). A stated aim of the HPCDS is to develop and build the capacity and capability of the Australian Coaching workforce through customised learning and experiential opportunities. The AIS states that the HPCDS was developed as a result of a consultation process that included input from individuals with professional expertise in coaching, coach development, adult learning and sports administration. From this, key themes and consequent recommendations were then consolidated to create three 'pillars' which provide the framework for the strategy (Figure 2.1).

These three pillars support the four main objectives for the HPCDS: (1) position the HP coach at the centre of a dedicated, learner-focused experience; (2) work in conjunction with the NSOs and National Institute Network (NIN) to create customised outcomes; (3) articulate stakeholder roles and responsibilities to maximise system-wide cohesion and engagement; and

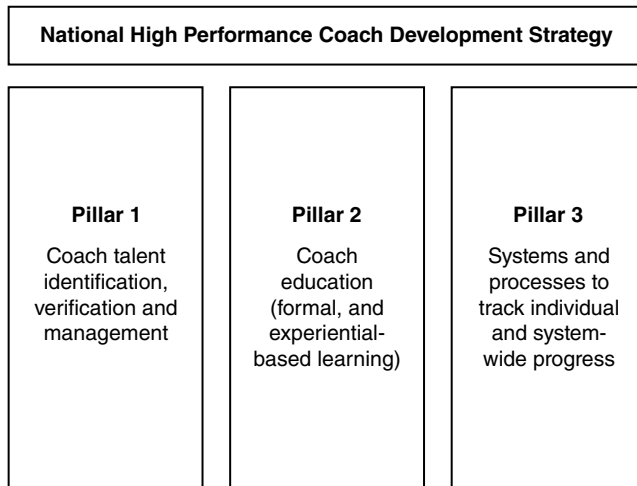


Figure 2.1 High-Performance Coach Development Strategy Framework Outline.

(4) align with Sport 2030 and the National High-Performance Strategy (NHPS). For this chapter, the focus will be on the coach development programs (Pillar 2), with Table 2.1 providing an overview of the current selection of programs housed within the HPCDS, ordered with reference to the target audience, beginning with HP coaches coaching podium ready athletes and followed by podium potential and emerging athletes. A brief description of the program, its intended audience and the nomination process for coaches is provided. It is important to reflect on the latter two points of the strategy, as these can be viewed as both strengths and limitations (i.e., is the AIS limiting who is able to utilise these programs and thus leverage off the coach development opportunity or is the fact they are tailored to specific coach cohorts enhancing the learner experience?). The format of coach development and thus associated coach development opportunities is also depicted (Column D) to highlight the array of learning opportunities across the programs. This will become a pertinent point of discussion later when we consider the influence of level of coaching status and the preferred means of learning, and whether the current coach development opportunities meet the learning needs of the end user – the coaches. As described by Mallet et al. (2009), the following categorisation of learning can be used to illustrate the plethora of coach development opportunities within each program (Column E):

- a Formal: formal education, formal education institutions, formal learning programs, formal learning institutions (e.g., coach certification courses, non-award coach courses)
- b Nonformal: nonformal education, nonformal environmental education programs, nonformal learning settings, nonformal learning situations (e.g., coaching conferences, workshops)
- c Informal: informal learning, informal learning activities, informal learning experiences (e.g., discussion with other coaches)

In summary, the National High Performance Coach Development Strategy (HPCDS) aims to capture not only current high-performance coaches, but those who are also responsible for developing emerging and pathway athletes. With a number of these programs still in their early stages of delivery, and working towards the next two Olympic Cycles, the full extent of their value is yet to be fully understood.

Table 2.1 Overview of programs within the National High-Performance Coach Development Strategy, as described by Sport Australia (2022)

<i>Program</i>	<i>Aim</i>	<i>Target audience</i>	<i>Nomination process</i>	<i>Learning format</i>
Summit Program	Designed to meet the specific needs of coaches working at the highest level of the Australian Sports System. The program aim is to enhance coaches' ability to consider different perspectives and ways of thinking through engaging and meaningful discussions and the examinations of real-world experiences	Australian HP Coaches coaching podium-ready athletes	Nomination by HP-funded NSO or NIN HP director and assessment by independent panel	Nonformal, informal
Leadership and Culture Talent Programs	A number of leadership and culture talent programs aimed at providing resources to Australian HP Coaches to support their development in (1) Developing others (2) Stakeholder management (3) Women's talent programs (4) Team dynamics	Australian HP Coaches coaching podium-ready or podium athletes	Nomination by HP-funded NSO	Nonformal
Women in High-Performance Coaching	Part of the AIS Gender Diversity Project – aims to increase the representation and experiences of women among Australian HP coaches. Consultation focus group.	Australian female HP coaches	Nomination by HP-funded NSO	Nonformal, informal
National Coach Network	Develop and maintain a network of Australian HP coaches to facilitate connection, networking opportunities and ideas sharing. Members gain access to online coach development opportunities such as webinars, face-to-face gatherings and access to information on coach development programs targeted at HP coaches.	Australian High-Performance Coaches coaching Emerging to Podium athletes	Completion of an EOI and then selection via specialist Selection panel	Nonformal
Generation 2032	Designed to support coaches through enabling world-class outcomes at every level of the pathway with the overall aim of inspiring extraordinary sporting success in 2032 (refer to later section in Chapter)	Australian HP coaches coaching emerging, pathways and podium potential athletes within the NIN	Nomination by HP-funded NSO and NIN HP Director and assessment by independent panel	Nonformal
Elevate Coach Program	Bespoke blend of face-to-face and online support with the aim of supporting the development of Performance Pathway coaches.	Australian HP coaches coaching emerging developing or podium potential athletes	Nomination by HP-funded NSO	Nonformal

Mentorship Program (Pilot)	<p>Aim is to assist HP coaches with their growth and development by providing critical guidance and support during sensitive periods of learning and aims to establish a network of non-hierarchical developmental relationships between mentors and mentees.</p> <p>The pilot program commenced in October 2022 – with evaluation determining future strategies for the AIS support for coach mentorship</p>	<p>Australian High-Performance Coaches coaching Emerging to Podium athletes</p>	<p>Nomination by HP-funded NSO</p>	<p>Informal</p>
Individual Coach Development	<p>HP Coach Development team empowers NSOs to support the development of their coaches, facilitating strength-based conversations with coaches and creating individualised development plans with the aim of improving coach development planning nationally</p>	<p>Australian Pathway coaches and Community-based coaches – identified by NSOs</p>	<p>N/A – coaches identified by NSOs and plans developed accordingly by Coach Development team – currently being trialled in selected NSOs</p>	<p>Formal, nonformal</p>

Coach Development Opportunities for Pathway Coaches

Integral to the success of the HPCDS, is ensuring that the pathway coaches are not overlooked, and are continually supported as they develop their own skillset. Whilst these coaches are embedded within numerous programs described in Table 2.1, for the purpose of this chapter, the flagship “Generation 2023 Coach Program” will be explored. As noted in Table 2.1, this scheme has been named the Generation 2032 Coach Program (Gen 32). The reference to 2032 is that the Olympic and Paralympic Games will be held in Australia (Brisbane) in the year 2032. The intention is that this bespoke program involves working with participating coaches to develop contemporary ways of delivering coaching to the future generations of athletes including enhanced use of innovation and technology, developing interpersonal and leadership skills and providing the opportunity for these coaches to enhance their knowledge of athlete development. The two year program supports up to 30 coaches in each cohort, with coaches being nominated (and employed) by either their NSO or NIN. Every two years, a new cohort is selected (the first cohort commenced the program in 2022).

The full-time employment of each coach whilst participating in the program is collectively funded by the AIS, NIN and the NSO. Whilst employed, the ‘Gen 32’ coaches receive professional development support, in the form of an individual Coach Development Plan, as well as the AIS-led ‘Learning Labs’ – in which the coaches from a wide variety of Olympic / Paralympic sports come together in Canberra three times a year, and convene virtually, to gain cross sport insights and engage in peer learning while building their coaching network. In addition, coaches are given the opportunity to be immersed in daily training environments of high-performance programs within their sport, under the guidance of an experienced mentor coach.

The suggestion from the AIS is that this program can become the primary recruitment vehicle for new and longer-term coach employment positions within Australian sport. Thus, the expectation is that these coaches will transition into ongoing full-time employment with the NSO or within the NIN upon completion of the program. Considerations when selecting coaches eligible for this program include: (1) suitability of nominated coach and strength of their application (2) distribution across Olympic, Paralympic and Commonwealth Games sports (including new action/lifestyle sports) (3) diversity of the coaching candidates, with a minimum of 30% of positions being held by women coaches (4) and, consideration for established sports that already have sound coach development structures in place in order to support the nominated coach.

Overseeing this program are four AIS Coach Development leads who are based in the NIN; with their roles providing oversight of the program, co-ordinating and monitoring the progress of the coaches within the program. This includes:

- Inducting the Gen 32 coaches into the program;
- Contributing to the development and organisation of the AIS Learning Labs;
- Facilitating regular catch-up meetings with the Gen 32 coaches;
- Assisting the coach, the NSO/NIN representative and mentor coach to develop an individual coach development plan;
- Ensuring regular six monthly review meetings occur involving the mentor coach, the Gen 32 coach, the NSO/NIN representative and the line manager;
- Providing support and advice for Gen 32 coaches and their mentors as required.

Coach Development Opportunities for Community Coaches

Unlike the clear strategy of coach development for National HP and Pathway coaches, the opportunities for community coaches to engage in coach development are unclear. For the context of this discussion, within the Australian sporting context, most community coaches are volunteers at child or youth sport level, and a small minority being involved in adult sport where some of these roles are offered remuneration in exchange for their time (Pill et al., 2023). Consequently, the capacity for community coaches to engage in coach development is somewhat limited, due to limited perceived time to invest in coach development, as well as the perceived benefit of engaging in coach development (i.e., coaching is not their full-time role).

Recognising this, the ASC provides a suite of readily available resources online (Sport Australia, 2022) to community coaches, with the aim of educating them on the essential skills required for being an effective coach; focusing on inclusion and participation, fun and enjoyment, as well as safeguarding, with the aim of complementing the work of the NSO coaching systems. These resources are housed within the Community Coaching Essential Skills Course – available free of charge online, designed as an asynchronous course that coaches can complete at a time of their own convenience. There are varying versions of the Essential Skills Course, depending on which sport the coach belongs to. Major NSOs (Athletics Australia, Equestrian Australia, Netball Australia, Swimming Australia, Squash Australia) have their own bespoke courses, which have been co-designed with the ASC. All other sports that do not have a bespoke program are housed under the course “All other sports”. Each course, regardless of NSO, contains eight modules (1) Safeguarding in sport – protecting everyone in sport; (2) Who you coach – engagement; (3) Where you coach – space, equipment and facilities; (4) What you coach – session planning and preparation; (5) How you connect – communication; (6) How you engage and organise – stakeholder management; (7) How you deliver – group management; (8) How you improve – self-reflection and assessment.

Upon completion of this course, community coaches usually then complete coaching courses which are designed and implemented by their respective NSOs. These courses are typically designed with reference to sport-specific technical and tactical knowledge required at the various levels of coaching experience, rendering the content and delivery different for each NSO. These courses usually range from ‘Foundation’, to ‘Developing’ to ‘Performance’, or similar (depending on the NSO).

In addition to formal learning opportunities, it is necessary to highlight that research has shown that coaches, particularly novice coaches, benefit from having a ‘mentor’ to improve the quality of their coaching (Mallet et al., 2009; Pill et al., 2023). Depending on the NSO, a mentor program may be available, with this mentor potentially being a more experienced coach within the coach’s setting, or perhaps part of the Coach developer program, which is currently being trialled at a handful of NSOs (including, but not limited to Lacrosse Australia, Football Victoria & Queensland Touch Football). The model in which the role of a mentor fits within, is NSO specific, and may be driven by the NSO, the state governing body or even the local community clubs.

CASE STUDY – LACROSSE AUSTRALIA

When it comes to coach development, most community coaches tend to gravitate to informal and nonformal learning opportunities, thanks to the efficiencies in time and ease of accessibility of these experiences (other coaches within the same environment). For some sports, this may include employing the services of a Coach Developer to provide additional learning opportunities for these coaches. Within the context of one such NSO, the role description of the Coach Developer (CD)