

Coach Evaluation and Development

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Elite athletes are assessed and evaluated on a daily basis in order to optimize performance and achieve set goals. But what about the coach? What evaluation takes place to assist with coach development? Whilst the win-loss record is of primary importance, other factors may better demonstrate a coach's performance. Consequently, I propose that a systematic evaluation process must be an integral part of coach development at the professional level. This process must address the: why, who, what, how, and when. It is imperative that the coach and management are in agreement on these issues. This is particularly important in relation to what 'data' is collected e.g. process and product (McLean and Chelladurai, 1995) and what happens once the 'data' is collected.

In recognizing the importance of evaluation and development a number of professional clubs have preferred to have an external person involved for greater objectivity. This presentation will draw on my experience with three separate professional teams. In each case I have been asked to develop a system to evaluate the coaching staff and either conduct specific professional development workshops or create individualised developmental action plans. The evaluation process has involved the head coach, assistant coaches, support staff, players and management. This involved self-reflection, interviews, focus groups, perusal of planning and programming documentation, observation and/or filming of actual training sessions, meetings and game day coaching. The workshops or one-on-one sessions have covered generic skills for coaches such as communication, use of feedback, catering for different learning styles, critical reflection, planning training sessions and programming. The clubs have varied on who is involved in discussing the outcomes and formulating action plans. However, all relevant parties were consulted and agreed to the course of action prior to the commencement of the evaluation process.

The aim of this presentation is to share an example of how coach evaluation can be a part of professional coach development, and how this system was developed, implemented and evaluated. Furthermore, lessons learnt from the three cases have implications for other coaching contexts.

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of M.Ed(Coach Education) program. Donna has worked with professional teams in Rugby League, Rugby Union and Australian Rules Football, as well as the Australian Touch and Rugby Union teams. She is currently the strength and conditioner with the Opals (Aust Women's Basketball team).