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Coaches' Learning Pathways:

A Collaborative Study With Triathlon Canada

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Global Interest in Coaching Science

- There is a steady increase in the amount of published research on coaches, the coaching process, and coach education (Gilbert & Trudel, 2004).

Coaching in Canada

- Coach education in Canada is guided by the the Coaching Association of Canada (CAC) and implemented through the National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP).



- Coach education in Canada is currently influenced by two major factors:

1. Introduction of the Long Term Athlete Development model (LTAD).

- There are calls for the LTAD to be used as a framework for coach education (Way & O'Leary, 2006; Van Neutegem, 2006).
- Trudel (2006) *disagrees* with this for *two* main reasons:
 - a. LTAD is based on physiological growth and development theories of adolescents. Coach education should be based on *adult* learning theories.
 - b. LTAD focuses on the "*what*" and "*when*" to introduce sport skills, but not "*how*" to teach-coach them.

2. Transition to the new NCCP.

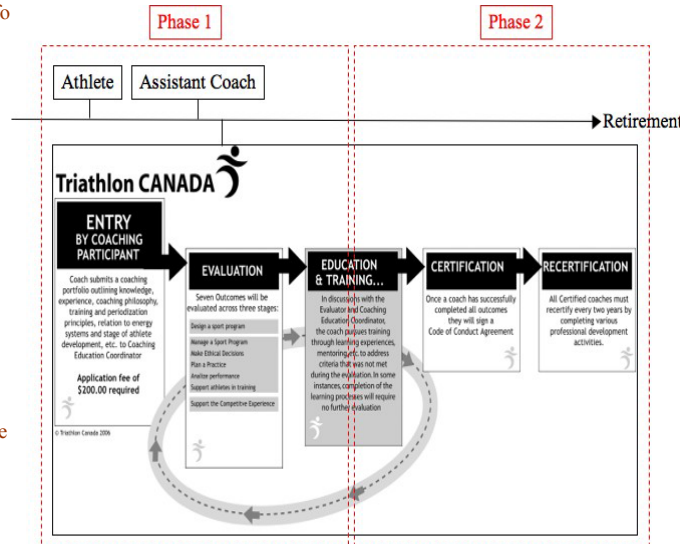
- Coach education has gone through a major shift in assessing the competency of its coaches.
- There are now three major coaching streams individuals can participate in (Instruction, Competition, Community Sport). Within these streams are different coaching contexts (CAC, 2006).
 - For example within the Competition Stream, there is the
 - Introduction context,
 - Development context,
 - High Performance context.

Past Research in Coach Education

- There are calls for research into the training and development of coaches (Lyle, 2007; Nash & Collins, 2006).
- Some of these studies examined the developmental paths of coaches using retrospective interviews, and as a next step should be looked at from a lifelong learner perspective (Cote, 2006; Gilbert, Cote, & Mallett, 2006).
- However, to the best of our knowledge, there has yet to be any longitudinal research looking at the developmental paths of coaches.

Process of Becoming a Coach

- The process of becoming a coach requires looking at coaching from a longitudinal perspective. Therefore, a review of literature is necessary on lifelong learning.
- A review of literature reveals two major themes:
 1. Self-directed learning.
 - a. Learners taking responsibility for their own learning and creating learning opportunities for themselves. (Deakin-Crick & Wilson, 2005; Lambeir, 2005).
 2. Ontological shift in our way of "*being*".
 - a. Knowledge is changing at such a rapid pace that learners must be open to new ways of knowing (Barnett, 2004, Bolhuis, 2003; Jarvis, 2006).



Why Do Research with Triathlon Canada?

- Triathlon Canada requires the submission of a portfolio to contextualize the participants prior experience. This is an example of *good mediated learning*.
- Triathlon Canada is learner centered. The participant *chooses* their education and training with guidance from the Coach Education Director.
- Triathlon Canada is *one of only a few* sports close to fulfilling the requirements to certify coaches in the Competition-Development context.

Purpose of the Study

Use a lifelong learner perspective and Werthner and Trudel's (2006) model of how coaches learn to document the *learning experiences* of coaches participating in the new NCCP (Competition-Development context).

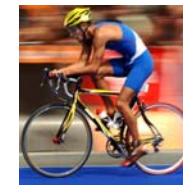
Design and Methodology

- Case Studies are the predominant research design because each participant will act as a single case. We intend to follow the participants for up to three years (Stake, 1998; Yinn, 1994).
- Once we receive the portfolio's, each participant will be interviewed. These interviews intend to explore:
 - a) Academic profile.
 - b) Previous life experiences in sport.
 - c) Knowledge of the NCCP.
 - d) Expectations for the coach education program.
 - e) How this education could contribute to their lifelong learning.
 - f) Other learning situations they frequently use.

Example of a Case Study Participant

- The portfolio will help shed light on:
- Past sport and academic experiences.
 - Training and coaching philosophies.
 - Periodization and planning.

In conjunction with the interviews, the portfolio will help reveal the cognitive structure of the participant (Werthner & Trudel, 2006).



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