

# PEOPLE + SPORT

Issue 01

COACHING  
LEADERS

7 TIPS FOR  
RECRUITING

MENTAL  
SKILLS  
IN SPORT

OLYMPIANS'  
TOP 10  
OBSTACLES  
& SUCCESS  
FACTORS

BEHAVIOR VS  
PERSONALITY

## FEATURING:

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Professional Coaches  
Top University Programs*

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## A MESSAGE FROM

# Bo Hanson

With Athlete Assessments, I have been fortunate enough to have worked with more than 15,000 coaches, athletes, and sports administrators. This work has spanned 24 different sports and several countries.

In all this time one thing is clear. Successful people all know what the defining factor for consistent high performance is. Technical or physical ability is never the defining factor for top performance. Always it is managing the 'people side' of sport.

To quote coach Mike Kryzewski  
*"A common mistake among those who work in sport is spending a disproportional amount of time on 'x's and o's' as compared to time spent learning about people."*

Research from the 2008 Beijing Olympics study supports this, showing the top factors contributing to a personal best or medal-winning performance were a strong coach-athlete relationship, and a high level of athlete self-awareness.

So how do you, your staff and colleagues fare? Whether you are an athlete, coach or in sport management, relationships and how well people work together is a defining factor in sporting success.

In this magazine there are articles on some of the most successful coaches, teams and educators. If you want to read more, use the unique links for the extended online articles.

**Technical or physical ability is never the defining factor for top performance. Always it is managing the 'people side' of sport.**

Top performers are always looking for ways they can continue to improve, and pursue the 0.1% to stay ahead of the pack. So what's your game changer this season?

*Bo Hanson*  
*Be prepared to chase the 0.1% improvements!*

# MENTAL SKILLS

## in Sport

Often people put too much emphasis on the physical capabilities of an athlete, when the mental skills they may have, or lack, are just as critical to their success. It's as though they don't acknowledge the fact that mental skills, self-awareness and the ability to understand and work with other people, are just as vital to your success as being able to run fast or step off of both feet, or throw a long ball.

Imagine that elite performance is about creating a perfectly circular wheel with spokes shooting out from the hub. The spokes represent all the different elements needed to create peak performance. This includes physiology, tactics, strategy, mental skills, conditioning, nutrition, and physiotherapy. In essence all of these spokes combine to create a perfectly round wheel which runs efficiently.

The New Zealand All Blacks used this analogy. However, in working on all of these different elements they found they couldn't achieve the big breakthroughs they wanted. So, they re-thought their approach to mental skills. They questioned, are mental skills really a spoke, or are mental skills more important than a spoke? If mental skills are more important than a spoke, what do they become instead? They reasoned, mental skills become the hub of the wheel and the breakthrough was made.

Think about mental skills being an athlete's hub. Every single decision they make is processed by their brain. So it is critical to acknowledge it is the hub of everything we do. It is not just an outer piece of the puzzle, it is a central and major piece of the puzzle. Consider your own experiences in sport. You have likely encountered athletes who didn't have all of the physical attributes that plenty of others did, but what they did have going for them was their ability to excel at the mental side of the game. These athletes are 'mentally tough' and this is just as important, if not more so, than their physical abilities.

.....  
The most valuable lessons on mental skills I've learnt were from the US Navy SEALs. Their approach is to:

1. Set short term goals
2. Talk positively to yourself
3. Manage your emotions
4. Visualize your successful end result

### Set short term goals

Setting short term goals keeps an athlete focused on productive actions. This avoids the mind wandering off into unproductive thoughts, which in turn impacts emotions and physiology. When I rowed, as a crew we would have technical focus points for 20 strokes, after each set of this, the focus moves to the next logical part of the stroke or race plan. After a series of these focus points the race is close to over and our mind had stayed on task.

### Talk positively to yourself

Talking positively to yourself is about knowing your internal dialogue. People who are mentally tough, have a sense of positive self-efficacy. They inherently believe they are going to achieve a positive outcome and their thoughts express this. The SEALs would speak encouraging words out loud which also benefits others around them. What an athlete says to themselves when they are behind on the scoreboard has a massive impact on whether they stay behind or take action to turn it around.

### Manage your emotions

The ability to manage your emotions to ensure you are in the most productive state to compete is a skill most elite athletes develop to some degree. It also includes the ability to stay composed to make quality decisions. The difference between

an athlete and a SEAL is the life and death situations. Athletes will never be in the position of SEALs. Staying composed as an athlete is a relatively simple task compared to what a SEAL must do.

### Visualize your successful end result

Visualizing a successful end result is a hallmark of mental toughness. Every coach knows that visualization is a key skill athletes can develop which helps them to become better at performing at their sport. This vital mental skill prepares an athlete's body to execute under pressure and to keep doing so in the heat of competition.

.....  
What I like most about the SEALs approach to mental toughness is not only the fact that these people truly know about mental toughness, but also the fact that each of these four areas can be learnt. Mental skills can be taught. It takes time and effort like any other aspect of becoming excellent. In many ways, developing mental skills takes far less effort and is far less stressful than physically training hard. To become excellent in this area requires acknowledgement of its value in what differentiates the best, when many other areas are almost equal.

# Coaching Leaders

## Developing your Athletes into the Leaders of Tomorrow

In 2011, the Mission Queensland Firebirds won the ANZ Championship, going undefeated and breaking numerous records during the season. In 2013, Senior Coach Roselee Jencke, and Performance Coach Tracey Robinson are making history again with three of their players (from a squad of 12) being named as Captains of their National teams: Laura Geitz as Captain of the Australian Diamonds; Romelda Aiken as Co-Captain of Jamaica and Demelza McCloud as Australia's Fast Five Co-Captain.

The Firebirds Coaches have a well-proven ability to develop leaders. Coach Jencke shares her insights here.

### **Leaders are developed, not born, and there is no one formula.**

This I know is true. You couldn't get more diverse leadership styles than with Laura, Romelda and Demelza. We focus on their individual leadership development, by playing to their strengths, drawing on their own experience, and valuing their input in decision making. We take our leadership development seriously and persistently.

*"My goal is to passionately build pride in what we do, and have the team buy into our purpose as a team and as individuals. My focus is to develop our players as whole people. When they eventually leave our program, they should be better people who can genuinely contribute to the world in a meaningful way. Our players know we care about them, beyond their sport."*



Bo has worked closely with the Mission Queensland Firebirds since 2009.

### **Clear Communication is Key.**

This is a skill we are constantly working on, with ourselves, our leaders and the team. Particularly with our leaders, we

work with them on their communication style, how they communicate with the other players and what the other players need from them. From listening skills to how to influence to media presentation, we continue to improve.

Leadership is a skill and therefore something we as coaches are able to teach.

### **Consistent Message.**

We ensure that our messages and expectations are consistent and dedicate time with our leaders, on a very regular basis, to ensure we're all on the same page, aligned and have a united focus that cascades throughout the team.

### **You're only a Leader, if others Follow.**

Our leadership development has a strong focus on how to be someone the players respect, look up to, and most importantly, follow. This relies on them providing strength, resiliency and role modeling the values of the team, always.

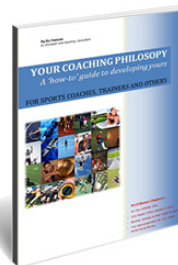
# Coaching Philosophy?

Coaches are constantly told that having a well-defined coaching philosophy is a critical component of a successful career. But, it can be a challenge to develop on your own, and it takes time to evolve.

## Want a head-start or boost in the right direction?

For a limited time, get your FREE copy of *'Your Coaching Philosophy Workbook: A how-to guide to developing yours'*

Access your FREE Coach's Pack at [bit.ly/18UIDUq](http://bit.ly/18UIDUq)



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# 7 things to get right when RECRUITING

#1

Recruit for technical ability *and* how they will fit within the team.

#2

Clearly understand your culture: Be able to easily articulate this to others.

#3

Define your Succession Plans and identify gaps now and likely in the future.

#4

Look for whether they have done their research on you too.

#5

Continually look for recruits who may not be looking for you (great people can be hard to find, never stop looking).

#6

Choose carefully who interacts with potential recruits - ensure they represent your values well.

#7

Be prepared to “battle” for the right candidate.

# Get on the road to SUCCESS

*The success factors and obstacles that U.S. Olympians face on their journey.*

## Top 10 SUCCESS Factors

1. Dedication and Persistence
2. Support of Family and Friends
3. Excellent Coaches
4. Love of Sport
5. Excellent Training Programs and Facilities
6. Natural Talent
7. Competitiveness
8. Focus
9. Work Ethic
10. Financial Support

## Top 10 OBSTACLES

1. Lack of Financial Support
2. Conflict with Roles in Life
3. Lack of Coaching Expertise or Support
4. Lack of Support from USOC and NGB
5. Mental Obstacles
6. Lack of Training/Competition Opportunities
7. Medical Problems
8. Lack of Social Support
9. Physical Limitations
10. Failure



# Darren Smith

Darren's constant pursuit for excellence in his coaching has made him the world's most successful short course triathlon coach.

In 2012 Darren made history when six of the triathletes in his squad were selected to compete for six different countries at the London Olympics. This unprecedented accomplishment is the result of his constant pursuit of excellence in his coaching.

Coach "Daz", as he is known to his athletes, is a master of technique. He emphasises the process, not the outcome, and the minute improvements in his athletes' skills make all the difference to their overall performance.

## Darren's Advice...

Getting the best out of people is a bit of push and pull momentum. The push is when I group talented people and expose them to excellence...they take care of the rest. The pull is from my own drive to improve, search for knowledge and ascendancy to world best...the athletes see me strive and they don't want to get left behind.



While a brilliant technician, Darren is also an expert on how to get the most from his athletes. Since 2008 Darren has used Athlete Assessments AthleteDISC Profile to tailor his coaching style to meet the specific needs of the athletes in his squad. The insight Darren gains from profiling allows him to better understand his athletes, ensuring he's a hands-on, attentive, and effective coach. This is what makes him the best in the world.

# POWERFUL WORDS

*Somewhere behind the athlete you've become and the hours of practice and the coaches who have pushed you is a little girl who fell in love with the game and never looked back... play for her.* - Mia Hamm

*You don't win with X's and O's. What you win with is people.* - Joe Gibbs

*The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place.* - George Bernard Shaw

*The key to teamwork... is to work less as individuals and more as a team. And the coach knows not to play his 13 best but his best 13.* - Wayne Bennett

*Mental will is a muscle that needs exercise, just like muscles of the body.* - Lynn Jennings

*Coaching is people management- getting people to do what you want them to do and like doing it.* - Vince Lombardi

*It's hard to beat a person who never gives up.* - Babe Ruth

*Speak when you are angry and you will make the best speech you will ever regret.* - Ambrose Bierce

*Nothing will work unless you do.* - John Wooden

*Not everyone in sport can win. For some the only prize can be the character they have built within. It can also be the greatest prize of all.* - Wayne Bennett

*When teams work well, it is because, and not in spite, of individual differences. These differences are at once a source of brilliance and tension, poised between entropy and synergy, tension and collective genius.* - Mark de Rond

*It's never crowded along the extra mile.* - Wayne Dyer

# Behavior vs Personality

- + Personality plays a major role in how someone behaves. However, personality is more about 'who you are' while behavior is about 'what you do, how you act'.
- + Importantly, we can change how we behave but we can't change our personality. Behavior is flexible, personality is not.
- + It is easier to coach based on behavior. We never ask an athlete to change their personality, but coaches constantly ask athletes to adjust their technique or what they do.
- + Behavior has context. We may behave a certain way when competing verse how we are relaxing with friends. (e.g. It may not be in someone's personality to be a loud communicator, but you can coach someone to behave this way when on the field. Afterwards they can 'switch it off'.)
- + Personality tests claim that certain personality types are stronger in sport and in leadership roles. Behavioral models say there is no best profile. (We have profiled some of the world's best and we see no pattern for who is more or less successful.)
- + When developing leadership skills, you can 'coach' someone to have greater flexibility in their behavior. You can teach leadership through building self-awareness and expanding the person's choices of behavior for what is best for the people they lead or situation they face.
- + With behavioral models, such as DISC, you can delve deeply into the theory and application, yet at its core is a simple four quadrant model. This is critical in sport, for coaches and athletes to quickly understand, remember and use. (Personality tests, such as MBTI, are psychometric assessments, are more complex and require extensive training to administer, yet don't have higher validity or reliability than DISC.)

The Athlete Assessments' DISC Behavioral Profiles are specifically tailored to sport, with customized Profiles for coaches, athletes and sports managers.

For more visit [bit.ly/1avpXR](http://bit.ly/1avpXR)

# Play the Game Your Way

## About Tony Meyer

- AAA Australian PGA member
- Golf Australia National Coach
- Golf Queensland Head Coach
- Completing his Masters at USC
- 2010 PGA Teaching Professional of the Year (Qld)
- Nominated 2013 Qld Sport Coach of the Year
- Previously coached at the Australian Institute of Sport & Golf South Australia

Coach Tony Meyer has a reputation for taking young golfers and getting them to deliver well above what others, including themselves, believe their potential is. Just one of the key areas he works on is aligning a golfer's game to their natural playing style, developing how they respond when the pace of the game is not their own and devising the best game plan to the individual golfer.

*Tony has been using Athlete Assessments' profiling and consulting services for the past 2 years.*



“I get an in depth understanding of each golfer with the Athlete Assessments' AthleteDISC Profile and we use a post-round survey to analyze when they play to “their Profile” and when they don't. What we're consistently finding is that their best rounds are achieved when they play to *their game*, and not get distracted by the golf course or their playing partners. Just on 'pace' alone, we see the person who can set the speed of play to their preference, gets the best results. And that's just one way I can improve my golfers.”

There are numerous ways Tony works with his golfers to fine tune their game. He works on everything from how they prepare in the dressing room, to their pre-shot routine, endless technical areas and importantly on building a strong, respectful relationship with their coach.



# A+ Academics

## How to Differentiate your Sports Management Program

### About David P. Hedlund

Assistant Professor of Sport Management  
at St John's University, NY

Ph.D. from Florida State University

>15 yrs in Sport, Business and Education

International Soccer Player and Coach

Researches and consults in management,  
marketing, consumer behavior, coaching  
and sport analytics.

### About St John's

International center for study in Sport  
Management

One of the largest programs in the USA

400+ Undergrads, 80+ Grad students

All students do internships

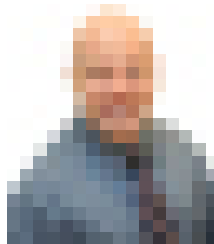
Sport Management started in the early  
1970's, so one of the oldest programs

David P. Hedlund is well recognized for his academic research and real life success in sport and business. Since arriving at St John's, David has quickly gained a reputation for his innovative teaching and student-focused professional education practices. The faculty at St John's are dedicated to strengthening their position as a top destination for students wishing to study Sport Management.

Here is David's advice to differentiate your Sport Management Program:

**1. Focus on students' academic and professional development.** Strive to provide students with both knowledge and professional skills, balancing academics with the real-world. Sport Management is an applied field and the ultimate goal is to prepare students for careers post-graduation. This includes skills that deliver success in the workplace such as written and oral communication skills, how to influence and work with others, and leadership.

**2. Hire faculty with diverse academic and professional backgrounds.** It's well recognized that both academically qualified



From one of David's students\*:

*"I just went on an interview and the hiring manager asked me what I considered to be my best strength and I can honestly say I have never been more prepared to answer that question. All in all, I have never known myself better."*

\*The Athlete Assessments CoachDISC and Sports ManagerDISC are used in both undergraduate and postgraduate programs at St John's.

and professionally qualified instructors are needed. Students benefit from a faculty with wide-ranging experiences, including those who work in sports on a day-to-day basis. To be effective, students must be educated in a variety of sports topics (e.g. management, marketing, finance, facilities, legal, HR), and this education should be provided by diverse instructors.

**3. Educate on professional opportunities.** Movies like "Jerry Maguire" and "Moneyball" are great examples of the work that sport agents and general managers do, however the vast majority of sports jobs are behind the scenes. Students and their parents often ask what employment opportunities exist after graduation so inviting guest speakers, running seminar series and holding career fairs is invaluable.

**4. Work in and engage with the community.** Sport is an important part of every community, from large cities like NYC to small towns. Internships are an opportunity for your students to get hands on experience while also making a significant contribution. There are enormous benefits to students, organizations and the community.

**5. Collaborate with cutting edge organizations.** Many advances and innovations in sport come from organizations outside the traditional academic setting. For example Athlete Assessments has created partnerships with Sport Management programs to share their leading edge in elite sport. With advances in video conferencing technology, this is even easier to engage.

# Will your students succeed?



## The success of your students reflects the success of your sport management program.

In today's competitive world, great technical ability is assumed. What differentiates the most successful sport professionals is their ability to navigate the 'people side'.

Find out how you can ensure your sport management program is ahead of the pack with Athlete Assessments services for Educators and Academics.

Visit [bit.ly/1a62Rgp](http://bit.ly/1a62Rgp)

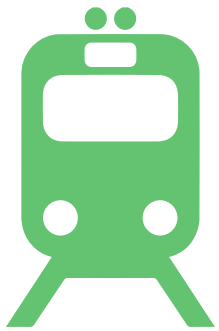


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# 3 Travel Tips

Make the most of your team's travel time with these valuable activities to deepen their understanding of each other and build team unity.



## 'Speed Dating' Game

- Rotate in pairs, and within one minute have athletes discuss:
- The most important thing you need to know about them for them to perform at their best
  - The two points to get right when communicating with them
  - What they find most motivating
  - How they best prepare for competition
  - How they 'recover'
  - The worst thing you can do to put them off their game

And for those who use Athlete Assessments DISC:



## Pick a song for your DISC Profile

Group your team according to their highest DISC Style. In these 'like groups' instruct them to come up with a theme song that represents their DISC Style (this brings a fun-factor). Then on a more serious note, in their 'like groups', instruct them to identify what they 'bring to the team' – what their strengths are, and what they need to be conscious about in working with others.

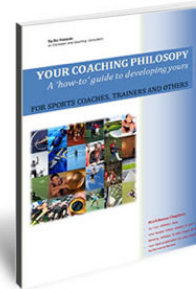


## Watching a movie on the bus?

Don't just watch the movie. Get your team to identify the DISC Profile of each lead character. Also ask them to articulate specific examples of the character's behavior, which demonstrate their DISC Profile. This helps reinforce their understanding of DISC and 'real life' examples. As an advanced level of this exercise, ask your team to identify when someone is 'adapting' their natural behavior.

## Fast track your coaching development FREE COACH RESOURCES PACK

Featuring...



### Coaching Philosophy Workbook

"When you have clarity about 'what you are all about', decisions and what actions to take become clear and are consistent."

### Ultimate Coach Handbook

Discover What Great Coaches Get Right and the 7 Strategies the Best Coaches Have Mastered.



And...

- Quick Access to our Top Video Resources
- A Selection of Most Popular Articles
- Special Offer on the CoachDISC Profile
- Introduction to our Newsletter



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Watch for our next  
issue on *Team  
Performance* and  
the special edition  
for *Educators*.

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*Find out where the top colleges, national and professional teams go to get ahead and stay ahead.*



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