

Coach Development Model Overview - Executive Summary

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Background

- In Canada, soccer is the most participated sport at the youth level.
- Soccer participation is severely skewed towards the 5-10 year old players
- Participation drops off severely as children reach their middle teenage years.
- Current philosophy of instruction for players is that the player has to be good in order to receive better coaching and access higher levels of competition.
- The progression of coaching development has been to prepare coaches to coach more elite and better athletes.
- 80% of the time and resources are spent to develop the 20% of the players that appear to have potential. Players who lack the skills to play at these top levels often receive mediocre coaching by comparison.
- By age 13, 75% of all children who play organized sports drop out and stop participating. Soccer is potentially affected the most by this staggering figure.
- Clearly, a shift in vision and thinking is needed in order to improve the overall level of coaching that ordinary and 5-9 year old athletes receive.

Coach Development Model

- Coaching as a pursuit can have a profound influence on athletes, be it positive or negative.
- Coaches are among the most trusted and influential people that children come in contact outside of their parents and often place higher than teachers.
- Number one reason why children participate in sports is to have fun!
- Number one reason why children stop playing sports is that it's no longer fun.
- Leaving coaching of beginner athletes in the hands of inexperienced people is a practice that can lead to dissatisfaction on so many levels.
- If not given the tools they need, new coaches may ultimately fail.
- Coaching is a multifaceted discipline – one needs formal training, continuing education, practical experience, cooperation and collaboration with others, support, feedback as well as identification and streaming of coaches.
- Coaching programs do an outstanding job of identifying and developing the more gifted and skilled players, however, by comparison, the progression and development of coaches is left more to chance. We need to rethink how we look at the impact of coaching on the development of all athletes, not just the more skilled ones.

Coach Development Model – Web Diagram

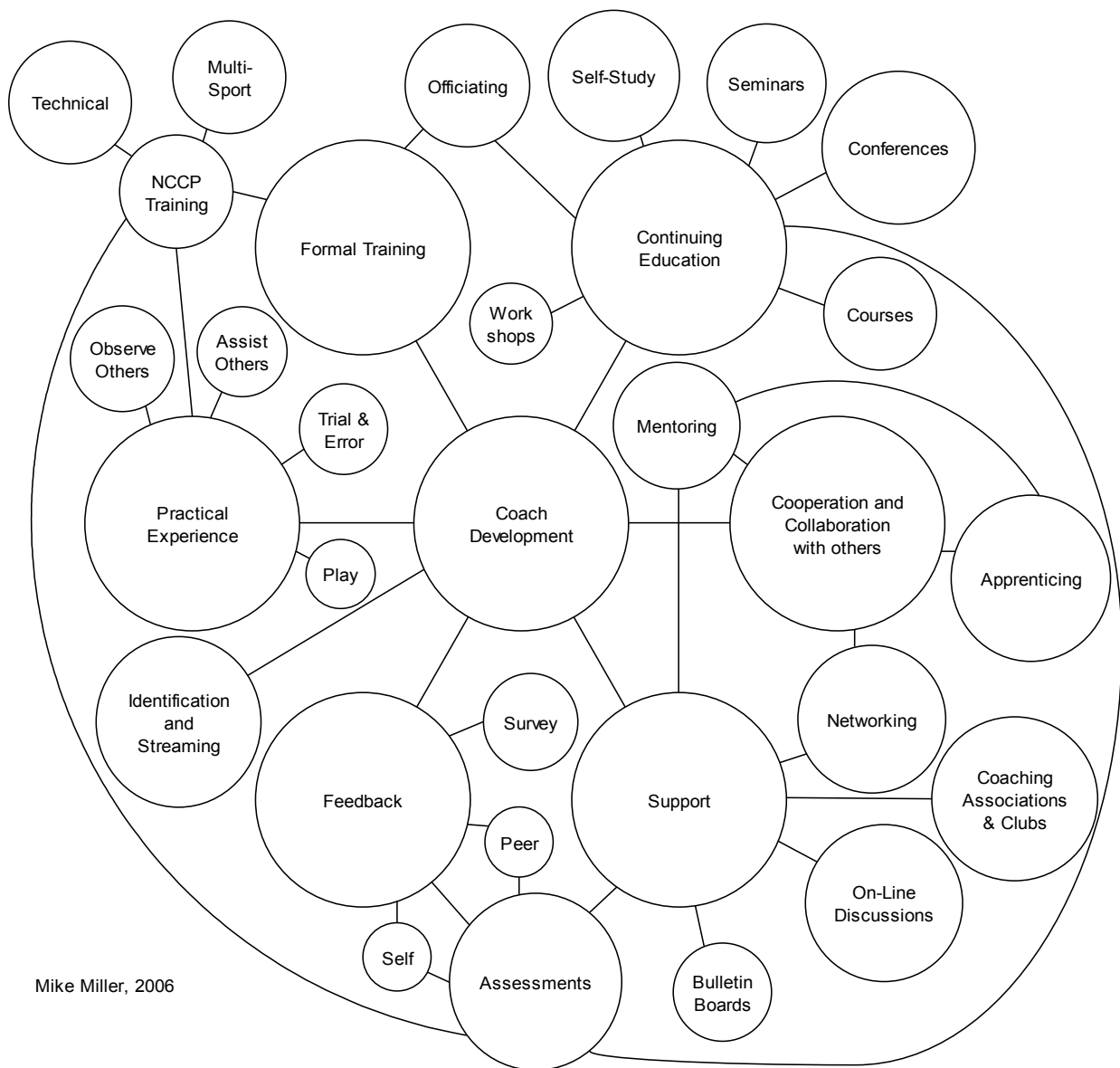


Diagram 1

Formal Training

- The current infrastructure for the formal development of coaches who aspire to coach elite athletes is well established.
- The type of knowledge imparted to the coach tends to be mainly of a technical nature – how to pass, kick, receive the ball, etc.
- The soft skills of coaching tend to be ignored or left more to chance.
- There is a need for a more multifaceted approach to developing coaches as well as keeping them motivated and enthusiastic.

Continuing Education

- No one knows everything about a given subject.
- Cannot stand still once your formal education has been completed as new approaches are developed and information reported.
- People need to be aware of new material, even in the coaching discipline.
- Continuing education has many different forms - Self-study, seminars, conferences, courses and workshops, etc.

Cooperation and Collaboration with Others

- Other coaches can possess a wealth of information and can be exceptionally helpful in fast-tracking someone to becoming a more competent coach.
- Mentoring and Apprenticing are two of the most powerful ways in which ideas can be exchanged

Support

- Support is a key to being successful and it is needed from different sources.
- Personal contact is best. Coaching Associations/Clubs provide an invaluable networking resource as well as support and information.
- Internet provides opportunities for such people to use on-line bulletin boards, or have on-line discussions with people anywhere in the world.
- Assessments are very important as they provide valuable information to improve performances with.

Feedback

- Self-assessments can often be skewed too far to the positive or the negative.
- Feedback from objective external sources is needed as well, even from athletes or their parents.
- Communication is paramount to achieving this success.

Practical Experience

- People learn best when they have an opportunity to problem solve.
- The opportunity to fail allows us to analyze what we could have done better.
- Experience can also come from playing the sport or by officiating it.

Identification and Streaming

- Minor sports do not do so well when it comes to identifying and streaming of quality coaches and officials - it is often left to chance.
- Coaches at the recreational level need to be observed regularly in practices and games so that coaches with potential can be identified and streamed.

Further Comments

- Need to refocus on Mini-Soccer for Under 5-9 year olds
- Develop Local Amateur Soccer Coaching/Referee Associations
- Develop Continuing Education Programs for Coaches
- Develop a Fundamental Goalkeeping Course
- Develop Web-based Bulletin Boards & On-Line Forums for Coaches

Coach Development:

There are potentially at least four types of coach development that could be undertaken for the betterment of soccer coaches everywhere, namely:

- *Part A – Teenage Coaches* (Providing youthful coaches with the tools they need to do an acceptable job and provide the person-to-person support & supervision required to ensure an adequate standard of coaching.)
- *Part B – Adult Novice Coaches* (Providing first time parent coaches with the tools they need to do an acceptable job; to provide person-to-person support & supervision required to ensure an adequate standard of coaching.)
- *Part C – Coach Apprenticing* (A full season apprenticing of a youthful or adult novice coach with an experienced senior coach in order to provide them with on-the-job training. In the following year, the apprentice can then handle a team on their own with an assistant. This would include Mini-soccer, House League Competitive and could be expanded to intermediate and senior coaches who wish to apply for their own Rep Teams as head coach or for those Level III Coaches wishing to achieve their B-License.)
- *Part D – Coach Mentoring* (A network of senior coaches whom would be available to take on a few protégés and be available to help with questions about any aspect of coaching soccer from parent concerns to technical/tactical problems. They could observe coaches during practices and make helpful and tactful suggestions for improvement to the coach.)