

**Coaching research abstract:**  
**Stream 8: Coach Developer**

Career pathways of elite coach developers

Coach development is a relatively recent innovation in the field of sport coaching. Coach developers generally differ from coach educators in terms of scope and scale (McQuade & Nash, 2015). As a result, there has been little empirical research within this area and few reports of the skills and knowledge associated with practitioners in this developing field. Effective coaches are recognised as those who adapt their behaviour to meet the demands of their particular coaching environment whereas coach developers must meet the diverse needs of coaches.

This study, using an interview approach, adapted from a previous study, examined the evolution of elite coach developers (n = 10) through various stages in their careers (Nash & Sproule, 2009). The main aim of this study was to ascertain if elite coach developers could explain their developmental process to perceived expert status. The coach developers selected were from eight different countries and were recognised by sporting organisations as satisfying the criteria for this study.

Following Miles and Huberman's research, preliminary findings suggested that these coach developers followed an idiosyncratic pathway during their 'career'. They also considered that their skills were transferable and transcended any specific sport. As a result of this, there was a perception that some sporting organisations did not value their skills but rather had a preference for more traditional technical/tactical approaches.

References

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- Nash, C., & Sproule, J. (2009). Career Development of Expert Coaches. *International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching*, 4(1), 121-138.

Presenter bio

Christine Nash is Head of the Institute for Sport, Physical Education and Health Sciences at the University of Edinburgh in Scotland, Honorary Professor, Institute for Advanced Study, Technical University of Munich in Germany and also Programme Director for the online MSc in Sport Coaching and Performance. She was a National Swimming Coach in the UK and coached in the USA. She is currently involved in supporting coach education with a variety of sports. She was a member of the Coaching Standards Group, the committee that endorses coach education courses in the UK. She also sits on the research committee of the International Council for Coaching Excellence.