

Submission for coaching research abstracts

Category: High performance coaching

Abstract

Over the past decades, the professionalization of sports has resulted in the in global demand for competitive advantage, otherwise termed the “winning edge”. The “winning edge” is highly sought after by both professional athletes and coaches. For coaches to meet performance demands, coaches must be able to keep abreast with global sporting trends to make informed decisions when it comes to their athletes. The primary purpose of this research study was to determine how high performance coaches accessed the knowledge of sport scientists and what was their perception of sport science information. Secondly, to determine the barriers and limitations high performance coaches encountered in the accessing and implementation of sport science information. The study was based on the research model designed and developed by Simonin (2004) in his study on “an empirical investigation of the process of knowledge transfer in international strategic alliances”. Over 90 questionnaires were distributed to high performance coaches across South Africa and a focus group session was conducted with top coaches to answer the research questions. There were four key areas addressed in the study, namely the learning intent of coaches, knowledge transfer and influence of sport science on coaching practices, coaches understanding of sport science and the accessibility of sport science knowledge to coaches. The results in the study suggest that coaches learnt a great deal from sport scientists. Collaborative relationships appeared to be an influential factor on knowledge transfer. Team sport coaches worked more often with sport scientists and engaged with sport scientists through consultation and thus responded positively to knowledge transfer. The findings from this study suggest that coaches perceive sport science to be integrated into their practice, however further research is required to determine to what extent this integration occurs. It is however safe to assume that key determining factors were met mostly by team sport coaches in terms of learning intent, learning capacity and sport science accessibility, these findings could be attributed to the differences in the organisational culture between team and individual coaches.

Presenting Author Biography

Chantelle Nkala is an aspiring young researcher who holds a Bsc in Sport Science and a Masters in Philosophy in Sport Science from the University of Johannesburg, South Africa. In the beginning of her career, Chantelle spent over two years working as a coach development coordinator at her National Olympic Committee, where she began conducting her research on the integration and influence of sport science knowledge on coaching practices. After which she left to pursue a career in coaching and strength and conditioning. She is currently a strength and conditioning coach and a running coach based in an Athletic Centre in Kuwait.