



U.S. OLYMPIC & PARALYMPIC COMMITTEE

# QUALITY COACHING PRINCIPLES



# QUALITY COACHING PRINCIPLES



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# Introduction

The United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee (USOPC) views coaching as a key component to athlete well-being and performance: A quality coach can guide an athlete through learning and development, and ultimately lead to a positive sport experience and fulfilling athlete journey. On the other hand, a poor experience with a coach can have an adverse effect, potentially driving athletes out of sport.

With the intention of developing more quality coaches in the Team USA pathway, the USOPC has partnered with National Governing Bodies (NGBs) to define the key elements of quality coaching.

Coaching is a process of guided improvement and development. Quality coaching occurs when a coach translates these principles into practice, effectively enhancing the holistic development and sport experience for the athlete. A quality coach's objectives should be to:

- Demonstrate a knowledge of your program values;
- Define, identify and respond to what "quality" looks like within your organization and sport context;
- Value and continue to develop others' positive contributions that impact athletes and support staff, and provide growth opportunities for continuous improvement.

The *Quality Coaching Framework* is seen as the backbone for a holistic approach to coach development. The USOPC authored the Quality Coaching Framework, with guidance and support from Wade Gilbert and Human Kinetics, to emphasize elements that should be contained in a quality coaching education program and what skills coaches should have.

# What are the Quality Coaching Principles (QCP)?

The *Quality Coaching Principles* outline the skills and attributes that prioritize quality coaching. The Principles connect the foundational document (the *Quality Coaching Framework*) to quality coaching performance.

These Principles are designed to guide NGBs in integrating the contents of the QCF in their coaching programs, and to allow for flexibility while identifying areas of importance for skill development.

The Principles are specific enough so coach developers can integrate into their programming, but general enough to resonate with sports and coaches at all levels. They allow NGBs to find where their curriculum either already addresses each Principle, or creates opportunities for NGBs to complement their curriculum. The Principles are actionable and provide NGBs with autonomy on how to train coaches. NGBs may build on any of the Principles to address the unique culture and needs of their sport.

As coaching evolves with new learnings about human interaction and performance, the USOPC will consider these Principles a 'living document,' allowing for improvements and enhancements to these Principles as new research emerges.

For that reason, within the Principles document there are resources for each section along with a glossary of terms so that the coaches can fully understand the intention behind each Principle.

## Purpose

The purpose of the *Quality Coaching Principles* is to:

- Establish the depth and breadth of knowledge that is required of coaches;
- Define skills and knowledge all coaches should have;

Therefore:

- Assist coach developers in creating and disseminating a quality coaching curriculum;
- Provide guidance to coaches who seek further information and training in each area contained within the Principles;

Resulting in:

- Promotion of the advancement of the coaching profession through quality training;
- A coaching resource to help guide Team USA NGBs and improve coaching performance.



## Target Audience

The *Quality Coaching Principles* document is viewed as a bridge document from the *Quality Coaching Framework* that offers specific direction to all coach developers and coaches at all levels, in all sports, in a language that resonates with them. The two target audiences for this document are: 1. Coach developers, who can use it as a foundation to train coaches, and 2. Coaches, who can use it to identify what they should know and do.

## Interpreting the Principles

The *Quality Coaching Principles* offer guidance to coaches, at all levels of experience and competition, to understand what they should know and do before stepping into training and competition settings with athletes. Review the [Quality Coaching Framework](#) and consider practical ways to infuse the principles into coaching practices.

The Principles are broken up into five sections:

- Essential Coaching Knowledge
- Contextual Fit
- Athlete-centered Coaching
- Evaluation and Recognition
- Coach Well-being

Within each Principle, examples are provided to demonstrate what it looks like in action. Throughout the document you will see color-coded words and phrases. The **red highlighted** items are included in the glossary for further clarity and intent. The **gold highlighted** words and phrases are the underpinning intent, or basis, of each Principle.

The *Quality Coaching Principles* include one important build on the *Quality Coaching Framework*: Coach Well-being. The USOPC understands the value coaches bring to athletes and how they need to show up at their best. The aim is to emphasize coach health and well-being, and the impact it has on elevating the sport experience for all. The Principles in this section provide current context, content and language that coaches can use to identify areas in which they should be in touch with in order to care for themselves, their athletes, teams, families and friends. and language that coaches can use to identify areas in which they should be in touch with in order to care for themselves, their athletes, teams, families and friends.

# Acknowledgements

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# ESSENTIAL COACHING KNOWLEDGE

## Introduction

The following Principles comprise the Essential Coaching Knowledge (ECK) section of the Coaching Principles. Quality coaching rests on a strong foundation of essential coaching knowledge. The aim of this section is to help coaches recognize the foundations of quality coaching that consists of professional knowledge, interpersonal knowledge and intrapersonal knowledge.

PILLAR:

**ESSENTIAL COACHING KNOWLEDGE**

\* COMPONENT: SPORT EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE

**Principle ECK1: I know and apply knowledge of sport-specific rules, best coaching practices, and stay up-to-date with changes within my sport to maximize the athlete experience.**

**PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:**

- Engage in regular training and development opportunities to improve my coaching performance.
- Have the appropriate level of coach certification/licensure from my sport governing body commensurate with the level of athlete I'm coaching.
- Stay up-to-date and put into practice the rules and regulations.

**Principle ECK2: I integrate safety and safeguarding into all parts of our culture.**

**PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:**

- Engage in **safeguarding**<sup>1</sup> athletes and all other participants, including volunteers and parents.
- Prioritize accident avoidance and prevention.
- Provide equipment and facilities that meet or exceed safety standards required by my sport.
- Provide the opportunity for safe participation (physically, psychologically, socially).
- Follow my sport governing body policy (e.g., SafeSport and other resources)

**Principle ECK3: I respect the unique history, traditions and culture of my sport locally and nationally, and recognize the impact on athletes.**

**PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:**

- Study and observe the history of the sport.
- Establish a positive culture through learnings of the past.
- Build trust and confidence with all **stakeholders**<sup>2</sup> within the tradition of the sport.

**Principle ECK4: I use my prior life experience (in and out of sport) to be an effective coach. I use my prior sport experience (as an athlete) to my advantage, which is helpful but not required, to be an effective coach.**

**PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:**

- Strive to relate to and understand each athlete.
- Build confidence and trust with athletes.
- Understand that even if I played the sport I am coaching, it doesn't mean that makes me a good coach.
- Understand that I can be a good coach whether or not I played the sport.

<sup>1</sup>**Safeguarding:** To protect from harm or damage with an appropriate measure.

<sup>2</sup>**Stakeholder:** A person with an interest or concern in the sport activity such as parent, administrator, club board member, medical and performance staff, or others.

PILLAR:

## **ESSENTIAL COACHING KNOWLEDGE**

\* COMPONENT: TEACHING AND LEARNING ABILITIES

**Principle ECK5: I conduct **engaging training sessions** that maximize participation and athlete development.**

### PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. Assist athletes in setting challenging and relevant goals.
- B. Keep athletes mentally and physically engaged.
- C. Provide opportunities for the athletes to share input on practice design.
- D. Conduct competitive and game-like activities in purposeful and intentional ways.

**Principle ECK6: I use the four athlete learning principles to plan and facilitate **deliberate practice** sessions to maximize athlete development.**

### PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. Check for athlete's **prior knowledge** to assess readiness.
  - a. Understand how prior knowledge impacts current performance (both good and bad prior knowledge).
  - b. Assess athlete readiness (age, skill level, physical/mental/emotional maturity).
  - c. Design practices in a purposeful and intentional way to help athletes improve skills.
- B. Integrate **athlete motivation** to influence athlete learning.
  - a. Align athlete ability with their motivation.
  - b. Match learning activity with athlete skill.
  - c. Foster and promote athlete's level of trust and commitment.
- C. Apply appropriate teaching methods that lead to **skill mastery**.
  - a. Establish effective pathway and implement methods to develop skill expertise.
  - b. Teach athletes to master sport-specific skills.
- D. Provide targeted and specific **feedback** to improve athlete skill development.
  - a. Identify different types, frequency and impact of feedback

PILLAR:

## **ESSENTIAL COACHING KNOWLEDGE**

\* COMPONENT: APTITUDE FOR COMPETITION COACHING (PLAN, DO, REVIEW)

**PRINCIPLE ECK7: Prior to competition, I provide careful guidance to ensure the athletes are sufficiently prepared (pre-competition).**

PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. Ensure athletes are appropriately prepared<sup>3</sup> to compete prior to day of competition.
- B. Control what I can for athletes and coaches/myself.
- C. Individualize preparation based on my athletes' needs.

**PRINCIPLE ECK8: During competition, I am focused on guiding athletes to optimal performance, and intervene when appropriate (during competition).**

PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. Effectively implement the 3 Es of coaching: examine, encourage and educate.
- B. Am fully present/attentive/in the moment to fulfill my role as coach during the pressures of competition.
- C. Understand that over-coaching is a common mistake made during competition.

**PRINCIPLE ECK9: After competition, rest, recovery and reflection for the athletes and myself are incorporated into preparation for what's next in the performance cycle<sup>4</sup> (post-competition).**

PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. Assess and communicate with my stakeholders following competition (debrief) and shortly after (after action) to gain the necessary perspective on the last performance.
- B. Reflect on what we have learned in order to improve performance in the next training or competition.
- C. Take action on what we learned to inform and shape our rest and recovery for future performances<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup>**Prepared - Principle 1a:** In this section, "prepared" relates to pre-competition immediately prior to (day-of) the competition. Day-of competition (immediately before, post training) and includes all things that should be considered in the coaches' checklist that should be addressed 'on the day'. In this case it means in all aspects of pre-competition, including physical, mental, psychological, injury-related, as well as understanding their role in the pending competition and having all of their equipment available and ready for use.

<sup>4</sup>**Performance Cycle:** This is inclusive of preparation for the event, results in competition and preparation for whatever follows.

<sup>5</sup>**Performances:** In this case, 'performance' relates to what is next in terms of preparation of athletes to improve/impact their execution of skills at training and/or their next competition. This could be anything to impact their performance including proper rest, recovery and trainings toward next competition.

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## **ESSENTIAL COACHING KNOWLEDGE**

\* COMPONENT: INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

Principle ECK10: I have developed the ability to build **positive and productive relationships** with all stakeholders.

PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. Recognize and acknowledge that individuals have different communication preferences and unique needs.
  - B. Have developed the ability to coach **each individual**.
  - C. Have developed the ability to work and communicate **effectively with others** in the sport environment.
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PILLAR:

## **ESSENTIAL COACHING KNOWLEDGE**

\* COMPONENT: EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Principle ECK11: I am agile in responding to the emotions of others in order to make effective decisions in the following ways: perceiving emotions, using emotions, understanding emotions and managing emotions.

PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. Identify my feelings and the emotions of others.
  - B. Generate emotions to improve attentional focus, decision-making and problem-solving.
  - C. Identify and regulate my emotions.
  - D. Teach athletes how to identify and regulate their emotions.
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## **ESSENTIAL COACHING KNOWLEDGE**

\* COMPONENT: TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Principle ECK12: I serve, encourage and support the athlete to help them achieve their goals.

PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. **Serve** as a positive role model.
- B. **Inspire** others with a compelling vision.
- C. **Empower** others to lead by providing opportunities.
- D. **Prioritize** coach-athlete relationships and athlete enjoyment while contributing to improved performance.

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## **ESSENTIAL COACHING KNOWLEDGE**

\* COMPONENT: INTRAPERSONAL SKILLS

**Principle ECK13: I am self-aware enough to identify my core values, improve coaching abilities and sustain my coaching career.**

PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. Am aware of my own level of emotional intelligence and understand that I can continuously improve how I am **perceived by others**.
- B. Have a strong sense of my coaching **purpose**.
- C. **Align** my actions and communications with my purpose, vision and goals to improve my coaching.
- D. Model the same **high standards** I set for my athletes.

**Principle ECK14: I use questioning, analysis and introspection to reflect on my coaching.**

PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. Learn from my own experiences and observations to solve specific coaching problems.
- B. Utilize skills, practices and resources to improve my coaching performance.
- C. **Analyze performances** by asking probing questions.

**Principle ECK15: I constantly identify aspects of my coaching that need improvement.**

PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. Identify my core values as a **continual learner** to improve my coaching abilities and sustain a coaching career.
- B. Benefit from regular and rigorous **self-guided** study.
- C. Build strong learning and support **networks**.
- D. Realize this is a continuing and **ongoing process** to strive to close coaching performance gaps.



# ATHLETE-CENTERED COACHING

## Introduction

This section is used to explain the value of adopting an athlete-centered, coach-centered approach that emphasizes the holistic development and well-being of athletes. This approach is effective because targeted outcomes are determined by athletes' needs, and the process is guided by ethical decisions and actions.

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## **ATHLETE-CENTERED OUTCOMES**

\* COMPONENT: ATHLETE-CENTERED, COACH-DRIVEN APPROACH

Principle ACO1: I value adopting an **athlete-centered, coach-driven** approach to empower athletes while improving enjoyment, satisfaction, motivation and performance.

PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. Set goals with athletes that are realistic and in line with their age and abilities.
  - B. Encourage athlete input and initiative.
  - C. Provide a rationale for coaching decisions.
  - D. Recognize the athletes' goal progress as well as performance achievements.
  - E. Provide supportive, positive and constructive feedback.
  - F. Deliver coaching that meets the athletes' unique learning and development needs.
  - G. Account for life factors outside of sport that may affect goal attainment.
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## **ATHLETE-CENTERED OUTCOMES**

\* COMPONENT: HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING OF ATHLETES

Principle ACO2: I use a coaching approach that emphasizes athletes' **holistic development and well-being**.

PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. Take into account the **personal, emotional, cultural and social identity** of each athlete.
- B. Identify how a holistic approach influences **sport development and performance**.

Principle ACO3: Incorporate the **four C's** into my daily and long-term program development.

PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. Encourage athletes to improve their **competence** in developing a solid foundation of overall health, fitness and physical well-being.
- B. Instill **confidence** through self-belief to help athletes' optimize their performance in training and competition.
- C. Build **connection** to encourage athlete cooperation and support from others while training and competing together.
- D. Build **character** by describing and modeling expectations and acceptable behaviors by teaching core values and standards.



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## **ATHLETE-CENTERED OUTCOMES**

\* COMPONENT: ETHICAL COACHING DECISIONS AND ACTIONS

Principle ACO4: I coach in an **ethical manner by making decisions** and acting with integrity to demonstrate commitment to athlete welfare.

PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. Apply the principles of duty and virtue.
- B. Coach based on doing what is right and making morally sound choices.
- C. Utilize ethical behaviors and my organization's code of conduct to guide my coaching.



# CONTEXTUAL FIT

## Introduction

The most effective coaching is context-specific: tailoring your coaching to the athletes in front of you and the specific sport situation. The following Principles help coaches recognize how to factor in all circumstances in order to provide a tailored approach to their coaching. Coaches who customize their actions, interactions and prescriptions are more effective and provide a better setting for their athletes.

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## CONTEXTUAL FIT

\* COMPONENT: COACHING CONTEXT<sup>6</sup>

**Principle CF1: I recognize that athletes enter and navigate through participation and performance sport based on their stage of development.**

PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. Know that participation sport emphasizes involvement and enjoyment.
- B. Know that performance sport focuses more on competition and achievement.
- C. Celebrate the **difference** and value of both participation and performance sport.
- D. Adjust my coaching based on the **level of engagement** of the athletes as it relates to participation and performance.

**Principle CF2: I adjust and evolve my coaching to meet the athletes' needs and goals.**

PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. **Adapt** my coaching style (language, philosophy, etc.).
- B. **Modify** drills, practices and trainings to the athlete's age, skill and developmental level.
- C. **Respond** to the unique circumstance and setting in which I am coaching.
- D. **Decrease** the risk of burnout and overuse injuries.

**Principle CF3: I apply the principles of long-term athlete development (LTAD) to help athletes realize their full athletic potential, develop physical literacy, improve performance and engage in lifelong participation**

PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. Prioritize development of foundational skills based on relevant skills for the sport.
- B. Recognize that LTAD timelines require modifications based on the individual athlete.
- C. Am aware that common age recommendations are not provided when athletes may transition between phases, especially where elite performance commonly occurs at a young age and need to be cognizant of the athletes in front of me.
- D. Recognize that the American Development Model (ADM) and Developmental Model of Sport Participation (DMSP) are models of LTAD.
- E. Recognize specific athlete needs to establish an inclusive environment in order to make all athletes feel welcome and accepted.

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<sup>6</sup>Coaching context: The unique settings in which coaches endeavor to improve athlete outcomes (Côté, & Gilbert, 2009).

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## CONTEXTUAL FIT

\* COMPONENT: **AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT MODEL (ADM)**<sup>7</sup>

**Principle CF4: I implement the American Development Model (ADM) to create positive experiences at every level of sport participation.**

PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. Realize that the ADM underpins athlete development.
  - B. Keep more athletes engaged in sport longer.
  - C. Create a positive impact through my coaching in order to build a stronger sport community.
  - D. Implement ADM concepts through an athlete-centered, coach-driven approach.
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PILLAR:

## CONTEXTUAL FIT

\* COMPONENT: **DEVELOPMENTAL MODELS OF SPORT PARTICIPATION (DMSP)**<sup>8</sup>

**Principle CF5: I apply the principles of DMSP that enhance athlete development in three phases: sampling, specializing and investment.**

PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. Encourage **sport sampling (sport diversification)** because athletes who participate in different sports and physical activities tend to have a more well-rounded development process and overall better foundational movement skills.
- B. Am aware that **specialization** allows athletes to begin to focus on fewer sports due to increased training demands and further skill development needs.
- C. Know that in the **investment phase**, athletes commit to achieving a higher level of performance in a specific sport; this is limited to a small group of athletes who are identified as showing promise for high-level performance.

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<sup>7</sup>**American Development Model:** Helps athletes realize their full athletic potential, utilize sport as a path toward an active and healthy lifestyle through positive sport experiences.

<sup>8</sup>**Development Models of Sport Participation:** Grounded in the belief that, due to the unique demands of each sport and wide variance in individual athlete development profiles, no specified ages or lengths of time can be associated with each of its three phases.

**Principle CF6: I make coaching decisions based on athlete movement through different phases of the DMSP structure taking into consideration their level of participation and performance.**

**PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:**

- A. Identify and implement activities with the appropriate mix of **unstructured play (free play<sup>9</sup>)** and **structured practice (deliberate practice<sup>10</sup>)** along the continuum of unstructured play to structured practice to enhance the athlete's talent development.
- B. Utilize unstructured play to maximize enjoyment and intrinsic motivation, which is more closely aligned with sport sampling.
- C. Utilize structured practice as the athlete begins to specialize in a particular sport and moves toward the high-performance track.

**PILLAR:**

## **CONTEXTUAL FIT**

\* COMPONENT: MATCHING COACHING PHILOSOPHY TO THE COACHING CONTEXT

**Principle CF7: My coaching philosophy guides the decisions and actions I make within my coaching context.**

**PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:**

- A. Include the following factors in my coaching philosophy:
  - a. coaching context
  - b. athlete-centered outcomes
  - c. essential coaching knowledge
  - d. athlete development models
  - e. relevant policies such as a Coaching Code of Conduct (see figure 4.4)
- B. Recognize where my athletes are within their development and adjust my coaching philosophy to meet the given context and athlete needs.
- C. Stay true to my coaching philosophy to ensure an athlete-centered, coach-driven approach providing athletes with **developmentally appropriate<sup>11</sup>** instruction and performance support.
- D. Reflect on, evolve and can **articulate** my coaching philosophy as it relates to my coaching context.

<sup>9</sup>**Free play:** Play or practice that is athlete directed, unpredictable, creative, and self-regulated.

<sup>10</sup>**Deliberate practice:** Practice that is coach directed and includes targeted instruction and highly structured activities, with coach feedback.

<sup>11</sup>**Developmentally appropriate:** Meeting the athlete where they are — the coach needs to get to know the athlete well and to help them reach their goals that are both challenging and achievable. All coaching practices should be appropriate to athlete's age and developmental status, attuned to them as unique individuals, and responsive to the social and cultural contexts in which they live.



# EVALUATING AND RECOGNIZING QUALITY COACHING

## Introduction

The following principles outline how proper evaluation and identifying and recognizing good coaching should be part of quality performance and programming. It is important for coaches to identify systems of assessment including what and how to assess as well as ways in which to share the results. It is important to note that the principles explain how evaluation can be used for athlete performance, but also a coach's own coaching performance in order to positively impact the athlete experience.

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## **EVALUATION AND RECOGNITION**

\* COMPONENT: FAIR ASSESSMENT PROCESS

**Principle ER1: I use an **assessment process**<sup>12</sup> to integrate a values-based, ethically sound and effective approach to evaluate my coaching.**

PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. Define my assessment process.
- B. Utilize my assessment process.
- C. Implement the learnings from my assessment process to improve my coaching.

**Principle ER2: I have an established **evaluation process** of my coaching that includes feedback from stakeholders to improve athlete development, coaching practices and program management.**

PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. Determine the evaluation process and what to evaluate.
- B. Identify and involve key stakeholders to provide unbiased feedback in the evaluation process (including self, athlete, parents, administrators, other coaches etc.).
- C. Conduct systematic and periodic evaluation from preseason through postseason.

**Principle ER3: I use my **external network** to gain further feedback about my coaching to improve athlete development, coaching practices and program management.**

PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. Seek the feedback from my trusted network, such as administrators, opposing coaches, officials, formal or informal mentors, program alumni and trusted coaching colleagues, to gain further perspective with my evaluation process.

**Principle ER4: I make informed decisions based on data to foster athlete development, coaching practices and program improvements.**

PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. Gather the data efficiently and in the most useful form possible.
- B. Apply objective evaluation tools to measure observable behaviors by using ratings of coach's performance.
- C. Utilize subjective evaluation tools to measure intangibles like attitudes, work ethic and motivation.
- D. Integrate observation of my coaching to examine and improve my effectiveness in developing athletes.
- E. Use the observations to examine how I:
  - a. Facilitate athlete development.
  - b. Help the athlete achieve their intended learning goals.
  - c. Provide stronger opportunities to foster athlete development and achievement.

<sup>12</sup>Assessment process: Can involve a specific criteria and different tools to advance coaching practices.

**Principle ER5: I am accountable for sharing the evaluation results to all relevant stakeholders and implementing changes for coaching improvement and overall program growth.**

**PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:**

- A. Integrate both **formative<sup>13</sup> and summative<sup>14</sup> evaluations** to improve coach effectiveness and program management.
  - B. Implement formative evaluation to provide feedback on what is working well and what needs to be improved.
  - C. Apply summative evaluation to make judgments on coach and program quality.
  - D. Report evaluation results in a formal process such as written evaluations or end-of-season reports.
  - E. Record formal debriefs and sport trends throughout the season.
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**PILLAR:**

**EVALUATION AND RECOGNITION**

\* COMPONENT: **LONG TERM PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT<sup>15</sup>**

**Principle ER6: I structure and implement a shared purpose within my program that recognizes the unique profile and characteristics within the environment that it operates.**

**PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:**

- A. Follow the 10 characteristics of the long-term program development (LTPD) as it relates to respective phases.
  - B. Integrate the LTPD into my daily coaching in preparation for practices and approach to competition.
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**PILLAR:**

**EVALUATION AND RECOGNITION**

\* COMPONENT: **CLOSE HIGH-IMPACT PERFORMANCE GAPS**

**Principle ER7: I identify critical performance weaknesses and strategize to close prioritized performance gaps on high-impact implementations.**

**PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:**

- A. Implement performance adjustments.
  - B. Reinforce my sport's key high-impact principles that must be done correctly with athletes.
  - C. Prioritize adjustments.
- 

<sup>13</sup>**Formative evaluations:** Used to provide feedback on what is working well and what needs to be improved.

<sup>14</sup>**Summative evaluations:** Used to make judgments on coach or program quality, and they are often used to make decisions about whether to retain, reassign or remove a coach.

<sup>15</sup>**Long-term program development:** Is a holistic approach to optimize coach development and is most effective when coaches and sport program administrators have a clear sense of shared purpose, are sensitive to the unique profile and characteristics of the context and operate like a learning community.



PILLAR:

## **EVALUATION AND RECOGNITION**

\* COMPONENT: BUILD ON COACHING STRENGTHS

**Principle ER8: I develop a strengths-first approach to programming to help close performance gaps for all program stakeholders.**

PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. Focus on what is right, what is working and what is strong.
- B. Recognize that every person has strengths and deserves respect for their strengths.
- C. Recognize that our areas of greatest potential are in the areas of our greatest strengths.
- D. Realize weaknesses can best be fixed when we are making the most of our strengths.
- E. Encourage using our strengths in order to make the biggest difference.

**Principle ER9: I seek **input** and knowledge from my National Governing Body (NGB) and other sources on how to improve my coaching performance.**

PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. Know how to locate resources from my NGB to help develop my skills and knowledge, and remain updated of the coaching profession.
  - B. Locate and apply evidence-based resources to improve my coaching practices.
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PILLAR:

## **EVALUATION AND RECOGNITION**

\* COMPONENT: RECOGNITION OF QUALITY COACHING

**Principle ER10: I **value and reinforce** contributions that positively impact athletes and support staff.**

PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. Define what quality looks like within my organization and sport context.
- B. Reinforce what good is.
- C. Model and recognize contributions.

**Principle ER11: I find value in the result of my coaching by developing the whole athlete.**

PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. Measure success beyond the outcome or win/loss record.
- B. Recognize individual success in the development of the athlete.
- C. Appreciate whole athlete development.

# COACH WELL-BEING

## Introduction

This section addresses the connection between the *Quality Coaching Framework* and current research on coach well-being. While the previous sections of the Principles more closely follow the QCF, this section will align more closely with current research and practices in self-care that post-dates the publication of the current version of the QCF.

Athlete development suffers when coach health and wellness are neglected. Quality coaching requires mental, physical and emotional conditioning. Coach wellness starts with an awareness of common sources of coaching stress. Armed with this knowledge, coaches can take regular steps to refresh and reload so they can be at their best more often. To stay fresh, coaches should take time each day to fill their own tanks, and they should surround themselves with others who are energy givers. With well-being included as a quality coaching principle coaches can consistently perform at their peak while sustaining physical, mental, (spiritual) and emotional health.

Quality coaches invest in developing habits and learning the self-management skill of well-being to be their most effective and authentic self in order to best serve their athletes.

High tension, poor nutrition, sleep deprivation, family conflict and social alienation are common in coaching. Such self-destructive behaviors are neither desirable nor sustainable, and they must be recognized and discouraged. The coach is not the only one negatively affected when his or her well-being is compromised. And that is why it is important for coaches to exercise regular self-care – in order for them to be at their best for the athletes they coach.

Coach Well-being is how to **flourish**<sup>16</sup> more often (not just prevent burnout) and establishing habits that help keep us at our best include:

- Physical (sleep, rest, nutrition, exercise) – Self-Care
- Emotional (stress and flourishing) – Stress Protection
- Social (connection and network) – Support Networks
- Mental (mindsets and mastery) – Self Care/Stress Protection
- Spiritual (meaning, strengths and goals) – Self Care/Stress Protection/Quality Assurance

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<sup>16</sup>**Flourish:** To grow or develop in a healthy or vigorous way, especially as a result of a particularly favorable environment; CONSIDER: the result of creating a favorable environment in your personal and professional lives to sustain health and wellbeing.

PILLAR:

## **COACH WELL-BEING**

★ COMPONENT: PHYSICAL WELL-BEING

Principle CWB1: I focus on how I **move, rest, and nourish** myself throughout each season.

PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. Maintain regular sleep routines and hygiene at home and while traveling.
  - B. Plan regular breaks that effectively restore my energy each day.
  - C. Feel fueled and energized by how I eat, drink, and supplement each day.
  - D. Utilize exercise daily to help me prioritize energy, manage stress, and boost health.
- 

PILLAR:

## **COACH WELL-BEING**

★ COMPONENT: EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

Principle CWB2: I **react effectively** to changing demands and develop skills to **thrive under pressure**.

PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. Acknowledge my thoughts and emotions and respond effectively to stressful situations. (agility)
  - B. Recognize and manage my emotions to relieve stress, communicate effectively, empathize with others, and overcome challenges in real time (intelligence)
  - C. Know my triggers and typical responses to stress and regulate appropriately moment to moment. (stress and energy regulation)
- 

PILLAR:

## **COACH WELL-BEING**

★ COMPONENT: SOCIAL WELL-BEING

Principle CWB3: I **maintain** strong, supportive **relationships**.

PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. Rely on relationships (at home and at work) to feel supported through the highs and lows of my career. (Connection)
- B. Intentionally connect with peers to share ideas, express concerns, and work through challenges. (Peer Networks)
- C. Build the behaviors I want to see by regularly recognizing what's going well in training and competitions. (Recognizing and Effective Praise)
- D. Spend more time asking questions than telling. (Asking Questions)

PILLAR:

## **COACH WELL-BEING**

\* COMPONENT: PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

**Principle CWB4: I focus my attention where it is needed, understand how to prioritize, and adapt and grow from adversity.**

PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. Recognize how my assumptions impact what I say and do. (Mindsets & Habits)
  - B. Am curious about my thoughts and emotions and attend to the priorities of the moment. (Mindfulness)
  - C. Assess challenges and identify controllables. (Resilience)
- 

PILLAR:

## **COACH WELL-BEING**

\* COMPONENT: SPIRITUAL WELL-BEING

**Principle CWB5: I leverage what helps me be my best self in order to maximize motivation and sustain success.**

PRINCIPLE IN ACTION → AS A COACH I:

- A. Align my goals to my values to motivate and guide me, especially in times of crisis. (meaning and purpose)
- B. Focus on leveraging my signature strengths rather than fixing my weaknesses. (character strengths)
- C. I focus on my process, performance and well-being as a coach ensuring I am at my best so athletes enjoy the journey of being the best they can be (quality assurance)
- D. Am aware of when I am at my best with my athletes and adjust when I am not (quality assurance)

# Resources

## Essential Coaching Knowledge

- **Principle ECK6**
  - Winkelman, N. C. (2020). The language of coaching: The art and science of teaching movement. Human Kinetics Publishers.
- **Principle ECK7**
  - Gilbert, W. (2017). Coaching better every season. Human Kinetics. Chapter 8 – Ensure Precompetition Readiness; all the science/details; Kolb: QCF section: Aptitude for coaching.
- **Principle ECK8**
  - Gilbert, W. (2017). Coaching better every season. Human Kinetics. Chapter 9 – Coach Effectively on Game Day; see table 9.1 for description of the 3 Es.
- **Principle ECK9**
  - Gilbert, W. (2017). Coaching better every season. Human Kinetics. Chapter 9 – Coach Effectively on Game Day.

## Contextual Fit

- **Principle CF1**
  - Côté, J., & Gilbert, W. (2009). An integrative definition of coaching effectiveness and expertise. International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching, 4(3), 307–323. <https://doi.org/10.1260/174795409789623892>
- **Principle CF2**
  - Neelis, L., Faucett, A., & Thompson, M. (2020). Quality sport coaching: The role of the national standards for sport coaches. Strategies, 33(6), 7–13.
- **Principle CF3**
  - Balyi, I., Way, R., & Higgs, C. (2013). Long-term athlete development. Human Kinetics.
- **Principle CF4**
  - Quality Coaching Framework, Page 28–29. USOPC. (2020). American Development Model. <https://www.usopc.org/quality-coaching-framework>
- **Principle CF5**
  - Côté, J., Turnnidge, J., & Evans, M. B. (2014). The dynamic process of development through sport/ dinamicni proces razvoja prek sporta. Kinesiologia Slovenica, 20(3), 14.
- **Principle CF6**
  - Côté, J., Allan, V., Turnnidge, J., & Erickson, K. (2020). Early sport specialization and sampling. Handbook of sport psychology, 578–594.
- **Principle CF7**
  - Cahill, G. (2022). Coaching philosophy: Why we do things the way we do?". ITF Coaching & Sport Science Review, 30(86), 7–9
  - Jenkins, S. (2010). Coaching philosophy. Sports coaching: Professionalization and practice, 233–242.

## Evaluation and Recognition

- Principle ERI
  - Gilbert, W. (2017). Coaching better every season. Human Kinetics. Chapter 10 Design Evals, pg. 229.

## References

- **Principle ER2**
  - Gilbert, W. (2017). Coaching better every season. Human Kinetics. Coaching Better Every Season program evaluation questionnaire figure 10.4, pg. 238.
- **Principle ER3**
  - Gilbert, W. (2017). Coaching better every season. Human Kinetics. Program Climate Rating, figure 10.6, pg. 241.
- **Principle ER5**
  - Gilbert, W. (2017). Coaching better every season. Human Kinetics. Skills checklist, Position Performance, figures 10.14-15, pp. 254-255.
- **Principle ER5**
  - SWOT analysis; need clarification on how at different levels of coaching experience
- **Principle ER6**
  - Quality Coaching Framework. USOPC. (2020). <https://www.usopc.org/quality-coaching-framework>. Page 39, table 5.1.
- **Principle ER8**
  - Quality Coaching Framework. USOPC. (2020). <https://www.usopc.org/quality-coaching-framework>. Page 41-42.
- **Principle ER10**
  - Huber, J. J. (2012). Applying educational psychology in coaching athletes. Human Kinetics.

## Coach Well-Being

- **Principle CWB1**
  - Sleep
    - Grandner, Michael. (2019). [Sleep and Health](#). Academic Press.
    - Walker, Matthew. (2018). [Why we sleep](#). Penguin Books.
  - Rest
    - Jack Feldman, PhD. <https://bioscience.ucla.edu/people/jack-feldman/>
  - Nutrition
    - USADA/WADA, Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, Marion Nestle. [What to Eat](#) (2007).
  - Exercise
    - Andrew Huberman, <https://hubermanlab.com>; Wu Tsai Human Performance Alliance at Stanford.
- **Principle CWB2**
  - Agility
    - David, Susan. (2016). [Emotional Agility](#). Penguin Random House.
    - Loehr, Jim. The Power of Full Engagement. The Human Performance Institute.
    - Fredrickson, Barbara. [Broaden and Build Theory of Positive Emotions](#).
  - Intelligence
    - Daniel Goleman. [Emotional Intelligence](#).
    - Chan, Jonathan & Mallett, Clifford. (2011). [The Value of Emotional Intelligence in High Performance Sport](#).
    - Cliff Mallet: [Professor and HP Coach](#).
  - Stress & Energy
    - Nagoski, E. & Nagoski, A. (2020). [Burnout - The Secret to Unlocking the Stress Cycle](#). Ballantine Books.

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- Spiegel, David. [Meditation and Self-hypnosis Training](#). Published work at Stanford.
- Sapolsky, Robert. (2004). [Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers](#), 3rd edition. St. Martin's Griffin.
- **Principle CWB3**
  - Connection & Well-Being
    - Santos, Laurie. Yale University. [The Science of Well-Being](#). Publications - <https://caplab.yale.edu/>
  - Peer Networks
    - Royle, Cody. (2021). [The Tough Stuff – Seven Hard Truths About Being a Head Coach](#).
  - Recognition & Praise
    - Shelly Gable. <https://psych.ucsb.edu/people/faculty/shelly-gable>
  - Curiosity & Questions
    - Schein, Edgar. MIT. <https://mitsloan.mit.edu/faculty/directory/edgar-h-schein>.
    - Michael Bungay Stanier. [The Coaching Habit: Say Less, Ask More and Change the Way You Lead. Box of Crayons](#).
    - Todd Kashdan. (2009). Curious? [The Well-Being Lab](#).
- **Principle CWB4**
  - Mindsets & Habits
    - [Review on the Science of Habits; Meta-analysis on habits](#).
    - Rachel Dodge, et al. (2012). [The Challenge of Defining Well-Being](#).
    - Hansen, Morten. (2018). [Great at Work](#). Simon & Schuster. UC Berkeley.
    - Fogg, B.J. (2020). [Tiny Habits – The Small Changes That Change Everything](#). Houghton Mifflin.
    - Crum, Alia. [Mindsets – Stanford Mind Body Lab](#). (<https://mbl.stanford.edu/publications>)
  - Mindfulness
    - Henriksen, Kristoffer., Hansen, Jakob., Larsen, Carsten Hvid. (2020). [Mindfulness and Acceptance in Sport How to Help Athletes Perform and Thrive Under Pressure](#).
    - Yi Yuan-Tang, et al. (2019). [Promoting Psychological Well-Being Through an Evidence-Based Mindfulness Training Program](#) (hedonic vs eudaimonic).
  - Resilience
    - [Reivich, Karen. \(2003\). UPENN. The Resilience Factor](#).
    - Grant, Adam. Give and Take, Think Again, Option B, Originals. <https://adamgrant.net/>
    - Michael Gervais. Finding Mastery - <https://findingmastery.net/>.
    - George M. Aliger, et al. (2015). [Team Resilience: How Teams Flourish Under Pressure](#), Organizational Dynamics, 176-184.
- Principle CWB5
  - Goal-Setting/Goal-Striving
    - [Gabrielle Oettingen \(WOOP my Life\)](#) and [Peter Gollwitzer](#).
    - [Halvorson, Heidi G., \(2011\). Succeed – How we can reach our goals. Former student of Carol Dweck](#).
    - Alison L. Smith. (2016). [Coach Behaviors and Goal Motives as Predictors of Attainment and Well-Being in Sport](#).
  - Meaning & Purpose
    - C. Bailey, R. Yeoman, A. Madden, et al., "[A Review of the Empirical Literature on Meaningful Work: Progress and Research Agenda](#)," Human Resource Development Review 18, no. 1 (March 2019): 83-113.
    - M. Lips-Wiersma and L. Morris, "[The Map of Meaningful Work: A Practical Guide to Sustaining Our Humanity](#)," 2nd ed. (Abingdon, United Kingdom: Routledge, 2018).
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    - Peterson, Christopher & Seligman, Martin. (2004). Character Strengths and Virtues. Oxford University Press, [VIA Character Strengths Institute](#).
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