



Performance Coach Award

Coaching Philosophy Task

BCAB Performance Coach - Coaching Philosophy Task

Introduction

As a well-practiced coach it is expected that you will have been developing your coaching practices through a wide range of learning opportunities and experiences. You will most probably have gathered a large body of informal knowledge and developed assumptions about coaching, about 'what works', and have a good range of practical coaching tools in your toolbox.

Developing your coaching philosophy helps you make sense of this, by giving you the opportunity to identify and clarify what is most important to you. Better understanding the values and beliefs that shape your coaching practice can, in turn, help steer the delivery of more effective coaching solutions, help steer your future development and help you gain more satisfaction from your coaching. It can help you better understand your relationships with other people, participants, coaches, or organisations by considering how your own values and beliefs compare with theirs, and seeing either parity or conflict. Shared values and beliefs provide a base for strong and effective working relationships. Whilst understanding differences can help you to resolve conflict, be more accepting of others, or help you professionally approach situations when there are unacceptable levels of disagreement.

Summary of the Task

As part of your development as a Performance Coach we invite you to develop, and then present, your coaching philosophy during your online Pre-Assessment Mentor Session.

To allow time to develop and refine your philosophy, you are advised to start this task at the beginning of your journey through the Performance Coach pathway and continue to develop and reflect on it throughout.

There are numerous, widely available resources that are designed to help coaches develop their coaching philosophy. Here we offer you a step-by-step process based mainly on thinking and writing. However, we encourage you to seek out different

ways, or use your own creativity to go about the task in a way that you find most effective. Do not feel constrained by the example offered.

A Step-by-Step Process to help you develop your Coaching Philosophy

Before you start, can you answer these two questions?

- What is a 'Coaching Philosophy'?
- Why is it important to have a coaching philosophy?

Do some research to check your thinking and perhaps develop it further. There is a lot of accessible information online or use coaching books if you have access to any. Having clarity about these two questions will provide vision and purpose for the development of a strong philosophy.

Step	Task	Example
1. Identify your values	<p>Make a list of three or more values.</p> <p>Prioritise the ones that are most important/essential to you.</p> <p>See appendix 1 for some example words.</p>	Respect, Fairness and Trust.
2. Pledge how your coaching practice will be impacted by your values	Provide an action statement for each value you listed in Step 1.	Fairness: I will treat people fairly and with their best interests at heart.
3. Develop personal mission statements	<p>Write personal mission statements describing how you aim to conduct yourself as a coach, and why.</p> <p>Build on your responses to the questions in steps 1 and 2.</p>	As a coach I commit to supporting every individual to become the best version of themselves, to maximise their potential and enjoyment.

Step	Task	Example
4. Determine personal standards of performance.	Write down personal standards for each of the following areas: a) How you treat others; b) Relationships; c) Personal behaviour; d) Knowledge/competence	c) Personal behaviour: I will be passionate and enthusiastic about what I and the participants are doing.
5. Identify the purpose of your coaching	Write a few sentences that describe what you believe is the purpose of your coaching.	The purpose of my coaching is to provide a safe and enjoyable environment for people to learn and achieve their goals.
6. Identify what impact your coaching will have on the participants	Write a few sentences that captures what impact your coaching will have on the participants. For example, what will they achieve, feel, learn, etc.	The participants that I coach will achieve success, feel valued as part of the team, and learn safe/effective skills.
7. Establish your definition of 'success'	Write down what you think 'success' looks like (for you or the participants): a) Personal behaviour; b) Team work; c) Paddling performance.	I will always do the best I can when I am coaching; I will help and expect participants to do the same.
8. Write your coaching philosophy statement	Utilise the work you have done through steps 1 to 7 to write your coaching philosophy (approximately 75–125 words).	See the British Canoeing Awarding Body Educational Philosophy for an example (page 6). Search for others on the internet or ask your fellow coaches if they would share theirs.

Adapted from the work of Mullem & Brunner (2013), and Hanson (2013).

Developing your Coaching Philosophy

A coaching philosophy should not be something that is done and then shelved away. It should be kept visible and alive, and be used to steer (and review) your coaching practice. Like all of our coaching practices, you should strive to continue to grow and evolve your philosophy as you gain more experience, more knowledge and more skills. You should also expect to become more sophisticated with the application into your coaching practice. By keeping your philosophy visible and alive you can review and reflect on it regularly and make changes as required.

To help you keep developing your philosophy and developing coaching practice that is consistent with it, we would encourage you to use the resources available to you. You may wish to think about the following mechanisms:

- Spend time with a Coach Developer exploring how your philosophy is lived out in your coaching practice;
- Spend time discussing your philosophy during your Performance Coach Mentor sessions;
- Ask for help in developing your philosophy at a Performance Coach Community of Learning event;
- Work through the task together with another Coach, sharing thoughts and ideas;
- Explore coaching books or information available online (including articles, images and videos).

Reflect on your coaching practice and philosophy either on your own or with a critical friend; using reflection for action, reflection in action, and reflection on action, to enrich your philosophy and to refine and increase the effectiveness of your coaching practice. Some reflective questions are provided overleaf to support you with this.

Reflective Questions for Consideration

These questions can be used for self-reflection, or as a focus for time spent with a Coach Developer, Mentor or a critical friend:

- Does your philosophy accurately reflect your vision of the best version of yourself as a high performing coach?
- Does your philosophy give you a realistic and useable guide to steer your coaching practice?
- Is there consistency between the statements? Check that there are no contradictions;
- Does your philosophy apply in all of your coaching roles/situations? If not, is the context clear?
- Check if you always do what you have said you will do (e.g. if you say you will be 'honest', can you think of any times when you might not be honest?);
- Does your philosophy reflect principles of a high quality, learning environment?
- Is it learner focused?
- Does it reflect that coaching, learning and paddling are all complex, dynamic and changing (check it does not over simplify it);
- How did your philosophy come to life in your last coaching session?
- How might you plan to integrate elements of your philosophy in your next coaching session?
- Do your participants know what your philosophy is? How could you share it with them?
- How do you know if your coaching practice does align with your philosophy? What are your measures? Where can you get feedback from?
- Is your philosophy compatible with the values of the organisation you work for? Is it compatible with the British Canoeing Awarding Body Educational Philosophy? Where does it match/mismatch? Are there any gaps?

References

HANSON, B. (2020). Coaching Philosophy Workbook; The Complete Development Guide. www.athleteassessments.com

VAN MULLEM, P., AND BRUNNER, D. (2013). Developing a Successful Coaching Philosophy: A Step-by-Step Approach. *Strategies: A Journal for Physical and Sport Educators*, 26:3, 29-34.

British Canoeing Awarding Body Educational Philosophy

British Canoeing Awarding Body believes in a participant-led approach when creating and enabling experience from which people will enjoy, learn and develop through paddlesport. The Performance Coach pathway is designed to support experienced coaches further develop and refine their coaching practices, and in doing so enhance their ability to deliver safe, engaging, empowering and enjoyable paddlesport sessions with the paddler at the heart of the process; whilst also fostering a sense of a paddling community and supporting the inherent social aspects of the sport. We hope, through this approach, that paddlers will achieve and celebrate success (this success being focused on the journey and not the destination).

The coaches' experience through the qualification pathway should also be safe, engaging and enjoyable; with the coach steering their own learning and development in areas they feel relevant and pertinent. The community of coach developers, course facilitators and mentors form a critical part of the coaches' resources, available to offer support, guidance and challenge through the process.

Appendix 1 - Value Words

Empowering	Communication	Dynamic
Competitive	People focused	Credible
Freedom	Perfection	Certainty
Success	Acceptance	Safe
Relaxed	Enjoyment	Conscientious
Accepting	Warm	Private
Active	Accomplished	Focused
Being important	Prepared	Enthusiastic
Power	Being right	Laid back
Caring	Acknowledged	Friendly
Professional	Succinct	Strong
Organised	Passion	Formal
Being valued	Calm	Demanding
Dominance	Vision	Daring
Integrity	Order	Decisive
Recognition	Tolerant	Modest
Security	Creative	Optimistic
Control	Pushing	Confident
Spontaneous	Transparency	Reflective
Supporting	Flexible	Patient
Honesty	Adaptable	Consistent
Winning	Loyalty	Composed
Comfort	Authentic	