

## **Building a Successful University Program: Key and Common Elements of Expert Coaches**

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The purpose of the present study was to determine how expert university coaches of team sports built their successful programs. In particular, key and common elements that enabled these coaches to achieve success were identified. Five expert Canadian female university coaches were interviewed individually. The results of the analysis revealed four elements for developing successful programs. First, coaches possessed a variety of personal attributes that enabled them to display appropriate leadership behaviors depending on the situation they faced. Second, coaches had a personal desire to foster their players' individual growth. Third, coaches possessed thorough organizational skills from which they planned the season and prepared their team for games. Finally, these elements were linked together by the coaches' vision, which involved the athletes buying into the coaches' goals, philosophy, and personality in order to achieve success. These results are discussed in relation to literature on coaching psychology and leadership.

Very few leaders are able to build a successful program, organization, or company and maintain a level of excellence for an extended period of time. Understanding what makes someone successful has fascinated researchers in various domains. Perhaps, the best way to understand what makes a coach successful is to examine the entire task or process of coaching. Two major bodies of research have shed light on different elements of coaching success and served as the conceptual basis for this research project. In particular, work from Chelladurai (1978, 1980, 1984, 1990) has described coaches' leadership behaviors, while Côté and colleagues (Côté & Salmela, 1996; Côté, Salmela, Trudel, Baria, & Russell, 1995) have created a Coaching Model (CM) to help understand the mental model of how coaches think and act. The combination of these bodies of research in coaching psychology has greatly influenced work in this discipline.

### **COACHING LEADERSHIP**

Chelladurai's Multidimensional Model of Leadership (Chelladurai, 1978, 1990) was the first behavioral model of leadership created specifically for sport situations. This interactive

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