

Team Captains' Perceptions of Athlete Leadership

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The purpose of this study was to identify and examine the leadership behaviors exhibited by formal athlete leaders. Semi-structured individual interviews were conducted with six former university male ice hockey team captains. The results of the analysis revealed three higher-order categories: (a) interpersonal characteristics and experiences, which included elements related to their personal make-up and previous leadership experiences; (b) verbal interactions, which included interactions with teammates and coaches; and (c) task behaviors, which included responsibilities and behaviors relating to administrative matters and to improving team climate, norms, and functioning. The results revealed the importance of formally designated athlete leaders (e.g., team captains) by describing the nature of their experiences, the behaviors they displayed, how the behaviors were manifested, and when and where their leadership behaviors were exhibited.

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