

KEY READINGS

Ongoing Learning for Elite Sport Leaders

THE READING

Becker, A. J. (2009). It's not what they do, it's how they do it: Athlete experiences of great coaching. *International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching*, 4 (1), 93 – 119.

WHAT IS THE POINT?

Exploring athlete experiences of great coaching

HOW WAS THE INFORMATION OBTAINED?

A total of 18 in-depth phenomenological interviews were conducted with elite level athletes (9 male, 9 female) representing a variety of sports (baseball, basketball, football, soccer, softball, volleyball, and water polo). The interviews last 30-90 minutes covering coach attributes, the environment, relationships, the system, coaching actions, and influences.

WHY IS IT RELEVANT?

- The athletes experienced individuals who were not only coaches, but influential figures in life.
- Coaches used both direct (one-on-one) and indirect (through organization of practice) ways of communicating with their athletes.
- The quality of the coaches' communication was described by the athletes as clear, consistent, and honest. This was what athletes' preferred as well.
- The coaches used a variety of teaching styles such as verbal, visual, and physical methods. Athletes mentioned that they especially like how the coaches paid close attention to detail.