

Developing Decision Makers: An Athlete Centred Approach



Attributes:



- Leadership
- Athlete centred
- Teaching Games for Understanding
- Questioning

Leadership



- **Sport is dominated by staunch conformists who wish to preserve status quo at any cost (Lombardo, 1987)**
- **Coach centred vs athlete centred**
- **People will rise to a challenge if it is their challenge**
- **Thinking is critical – find the answer for yourself**
- **Setting up learning environment is essential to enable decision making**

Wairua - Oneness



- Quality Leadership
- Success vs Winning
- Spirituality – individual's well being (holistic)
 - Attitudes and values
 - respect and trust
 - caring and concern for others
 - Sense of belonging
 - Significance
 - Learn from mistakes (search for continuous improvement)

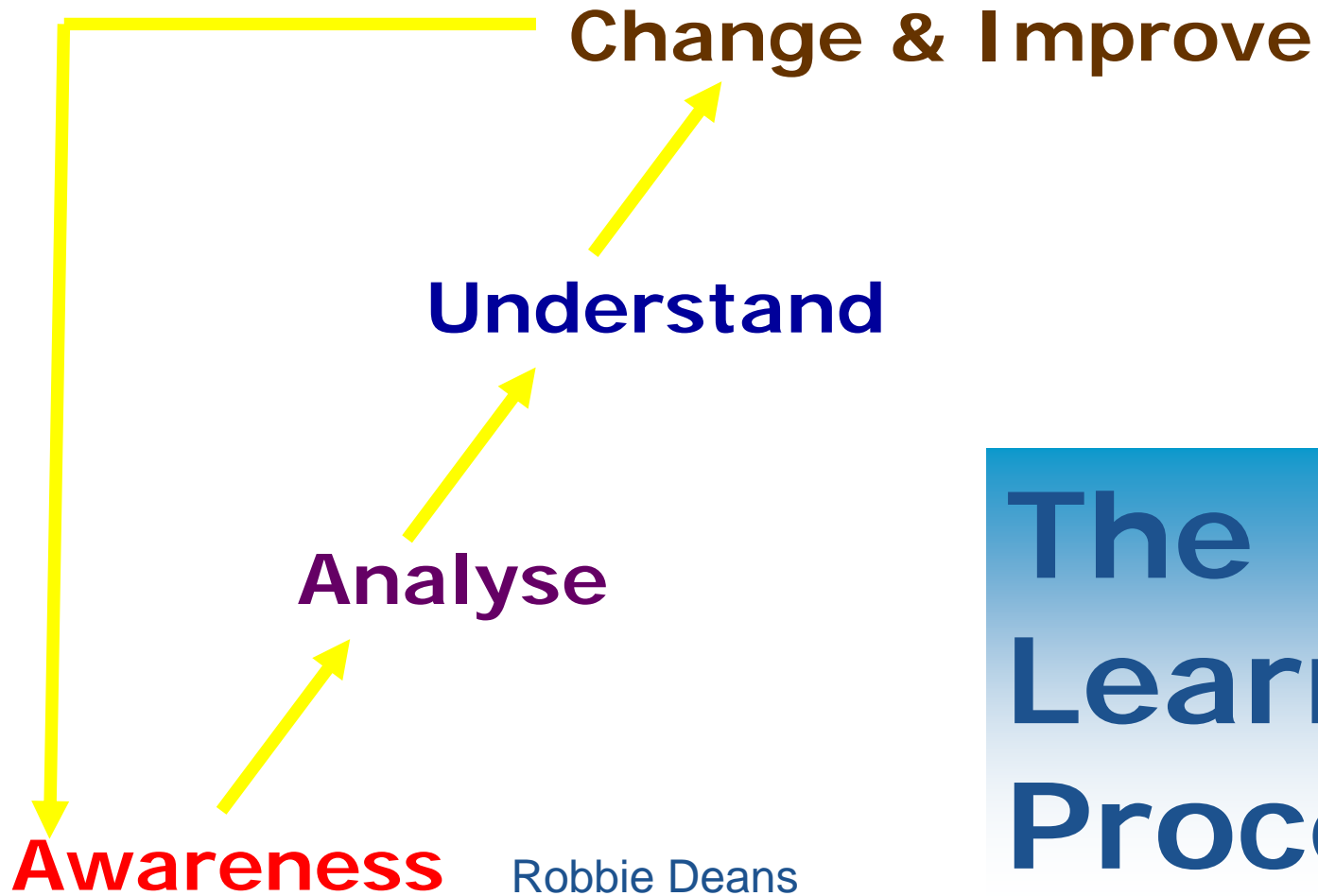
Athlete-centred Coaching



- Awareness
- Responsibility
- Ownership
- Self-belief

“People with high EQ will hold
back their knowledge to get
the best out of others”

Sir John Whitmore



The Learning Process

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Athlete Decision Making



- Coaching is about enabling the athletes to learn
- Create situations for athletes to learn, either through discovery or through problem solving.
- Gensemer (1980) reinforces: “the execution of most motor skills is essentially a fluid endeavor. The accomplishment of any motor performance generally requires that the performer be either versatile, adaptable, or self-expressive.... In no case, however, is everything static. Situations are always changing” (p. 54).
- Developing Intuition

What is Intuition?

It is decision-making without conscious thinking or analysis.

‘The power of thinking without thinking’

- It is based upon all of our previous learning experiences.

‘Habits learned from experience’

- It works subconsciously, below the level of cognitive awareness.

‘Instinct’

- In times of Decision Making complexity and pressure, it is:

‘The most effective form of decision making’

- Both conscious analysis and anxiety interfere with intuitive DM. Robbie Deans

Decision Making

- **Treat decisions and judgements as skills**
- **Focussed practice & questioning/feedback can improve them**
- **Work more on improving recognitional decision skills rather than analytical**
i.e. size up the situation & RECOGNISE the appropriate course of action rather than compare other courses of action

Recognitional Decision Skills



- **Key question is not “what do I do...?”**
- **It’s “what’s going on...?”**
- **What they see tells them what they should do**
- **There are no quick fixes – experience is the key**

How...?

**Deliberate practice/guided discovery
everything done for a PURPOSE....**

- **Simulation runs**
- **Game sense activities**
- **Questioning approach**
- **Accurate feedback**

What is Teaching Games for Understanding (Game Sense)?



- An approach that guides athletes to discover and develop the game.
- The game is the teacher, enables decision making

Purpose

- To provide a situation for athletes to understand the game they play while capitalising on the intrinsic motivation.
 - Rod Thorpe

The art of Questioning isthe
art of guided learning

Thinking itself is questioning

John Dewey

Types of Questions

Close-ended questions (low order thinking)

- What or where questions: (simple or single answer)
 - What part of the foot do you use to kick a goal?
 - Where should you aim when shooting in netball?
 - What is the distance between the wickets?

Open-ended questions (high order thinking)

- Application, Analysis, Synthesis, Evaluation
 - How can we get the ball down the court quickly?
 - Why should we push the defence to the sideline?
 - Why should the field be placed this way?
 - How many different ways can we balance?

Other Decision Making Ideas...



- Situation Awareness exercises (video) and DMGs (computer games)
- Multi-level decisions – how different team members perceive the same situation
- Everyone know the game plan (be part of it!)
- “what ifs.....?” for each opponent, each game
- Structured game review systems – team and individuals
- Decision making critique – debrief decisions made/not made or made/not carried out
- Visualisation – mental rehearsal to complement DMGs, physical practice and games

To lead people,
walk beside them ...
As for the best leaders, the people do not notice their
existence.
The next best, the people honour and praise.
The next, the people fear;
and the next, the people hate ...
When the best leader's work is done the people say,
"We did it ourselves!"
When the effective leader is finished with his work, the
people say it happened naturally.
(Lao Tzu)