BUILDING A SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM:

PERSPECTIVES OF EXPERT CANADIAN FEMALE COACHES OF TEAM SPORTS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to assess the perceptions of expert coaches on the key elements for building their successful programs. Five female expert Canadian university coaches of team sports were individually interviewed with an open-ended approach. Data were analysed inductively, following the guidelines of Côté, Salmela, Baria, and Russell (1993) and of Côté, Salmela, and Russell (1995). The results of the analysis identified four key elements for the building of a successful program. First, coaches possessed a variety of personal attributes that enabled them to display appropriate leadership. Second, coaches possessed thorough organisational skills from which they set goals, planned the season, and prepared their team for games. Third, coaches had a personal desire to foster their players' individual growth, by empowering them and teaching them life skills. Finally, the aforementioned elements were interrelated and linked together by the coaches' vision, without which success was unlikely. Data also showed the correspondence of these four elements with a transformational leadership style that has been successfully used in business, military, industry, and educational settings.

RÉSUMÉ

Le but de cette étude était de déterminer les perspectives d'entraîneurs experts sur les éléments clés qui leur ont permis de bâtir un programme sportif avec succès. Cinq entraîneures expertes canadiennes ont été interviewées individuellement à l'aide de questions ouvertes. Les données ont été analysées d'une façon inductive selon le guide de Côté, Salmela, Baria, et Russell (1993) et de Côté, Salmela, et Russell (1995). Quatre éléments clés ont été identifés pour bâtir un programme sportif avec succès. Premièrement, les entraîneures possédaient une variété d'attributs personnels qui leur permettaient de démontrer un style de leadership approprié à toutes situations. Deuxièmement, les entraîneures possédaient d'excellentes habiletés organisationnelles telles que la planification saisonnière, et la préparation des parties. Troisièmement, les entraîneures cultivaient un désir personnel de développer chaque athlète en tant que personne en augmentant leur confiance personnelle et en leur enseignant des habiletés applicables dans la vie de tous les jours. Finalement, les trois éléments mentionnés plus haut étaient reliés par la vision d'excellence des entraîneures, sans laquelle le succès était peu probable. Les résultats on également démontrés la correspondance de ces quatre éléments avec le style de leadership transformationnel abondant dans le monde des affaires, militaire, industriel, et éducationnel.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Very few coaches, whether at the university or professional level, are able to bring their programs to the top level and then to maintain that level of excellence. Examples of highly successful coaches include Phil Jackson, who guided the Chicago Bulls to numerous NBA championships (Jackson & Delehanty, 1995), John Wooden, who won ten NCAA basketball championships in twelve years with UCLA (Tharp & Gallimore, 1976), Pat Summitt, basketball coach at the University of Tennessee who is considered one of the best college coaches of all time due to her numerous NCAA championships (Wrisberg, 1990), and Gary Barnett, who turned around an NCAA football program with a losing tradition by leading the team to a Rose Bowl performance within three years (Barnett & Gregorian, 1996). Highly successful individuals can also be identified in other fields such as business, where great leaders help their company reach the top of their profession for an extended period of time (e.g., Bill Gates, owner and inventor of Microsoft; Henry Ford, founder of the Ford automobile company; Oprah Winfrey, owner of Harpo Productions). Whether they are coaches, managers, mentors, or professionals, some individuals are able to build a legacy. What differentiates these successful performers from their peers? Is there a key to building and maintaining successful programs or companies? The current research investigating expert coaches provides answers to these critical questions.

Researchers have identified the leadership behaviours (e.g., Bloom, Crumpton, & Anderson, 1999; Chelladurai, 1978, 1980, 1984; Miller, Bloom, & Salmela, 1996; Smith, Smoll, & Curtis, 1979) and organisational skills of coaches as key ingredients for producing positive outcomes and success for sport teams (Bloom, 1997; Côté & Salmela,

1996, Desjardins, 1996). Some of the organisational tasks identified by sport researchers have included team selection, determining and casting a vision, setting goals, planning the season, preparing and operating in competition, and administrating various tasks (Bloom, 1997; Côté, Salmela, Trudel, Baria, & Russell, 1995; Côté & Salmela, 1996; Desjardins, 1996). Other organisational tasks are related to interpersonal relationships such as helping athletes with personal concerns, working with assistant coaches, and dealing with parents (Côté & Salmela, 1996; Côté, Salmela, Trudel, et al., 1995). Coakley (1986) also listed ten relationship roles that coaches are expected to sustain while working in a college setting. These included relationships with athletes, parents, media, support staff, fellow coaches, fans, the school, the federation, and the athletic director. In light of these many and varied tasks, coaching becomes a complex, demanding profession which includes far more than solely training athletes.

A model explaining how coaching tasks and variables influence the coaching process and athletes' development was recently created. The Coaching Model (CM, Appendix A) is useful for research in coaching because it provides a framework which explains how expert coaches think and function (Côté, Salmela, Trudel, et al., 1995). The CM demonstrates that a coach initially creates a mental image of a team's potential; this takes into account the athletes' personal characteristics, the coach's personal characteristics, and the contextual factors. This evaluation, or mental model, also includes the "vision" of the coach regarding the team's potential (Desjardins, 1996). The vision (Desjardins, 1996), or the mental representation of the team's potential (Côté, Salmela, Trudel, et al., 1995), gives the coach direction, confidence, and stability over the upcoming season. It influences the coach's overall organisation of the team around training and competition (Côté, 1998). Throughout the season, organisation remains

central to the coaching process as the coach strives to develop the team according to the mental model of the team's potential (Côté, 1998).

Since mastering leadership skills is an important factor in the organisation, development and success of a team, particular attention should be paid to individuals who have been successful in fields other than coaching. For example, organisational efficacy has been identified as a crucial element in the business world, where the manager is in charge of a team of people (Sashkin & Burke, 1990). In fact, the word "coach" is frequently used instead of "manager," referring to the parallel roles between coaches and athletes, and managers and employees. Interestingly, in the business world success is often examined in terms of leadership style (Fuller, Morisson, Jones, Bridger, & Brown, 1999; Podsakof, Mackenzie, Morrman, & Fetter, 1990). More specifically, a transformational leadership style was found to be key in achieving success when leading a group of people (e.g., Bass, 1985). This style of leadership manifests itself when there is a willingness of subordinates to follow the leader and work alongside a proposed vision (Bass, 1985; 1990). Transformational leaders usually display four types of leadership behaviours. They are identified as: inspirational motivation, idealised influence, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration (Bass, 1985). This suggests that a review of the literature on leadership in various fields would give insight into the possible success of the greatest coaches.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the current study was to identify the key variables that expert Canadian female coaches of team sports used in the development of their successful programs. In particular, what were the common elements that may have enabled these coaches to achieve success?

Significance of the Study

This study increases knowledge in coaching psychology, contributes to team sport literature, benefits aspiring coaches, and promotes expert female performers. The contribution to these areas of coaching could increase coaching effectiveness, and could result in more successful programs.

Delimitations

The delimitations of the study were as follows:

1. Five participants were interviewed. They were female coaches, employed at a Canadian university in either the sports of basketball or volleyball.

2. The interviews focused solely on the coaches' perceptions. The athletes' viewpoints was not examined or considered.

Limitations

The delimitations may have resulted in the following limitations:

1. The results may only be specific to female coaches.
2. The results may only be specific to coaches working at a Canadian university.
3. The results may only be specific to elite level coaches.
4. The results may only be specific to team sports, or more specifically, to the sports of basketball and volleyball.

Operational Definitions

For this research, the terms expert coach and organisation will be defined as follows:

Expert coach: A coach is considered to be an expert if she has coached for at least ten years at the university level or higher (Bloom et al., 1997; Côté, Salmela, & Russell,

1995; Ericsson, Krampe, & Tesh-Römer, 1993). She must have developed at least one player that has participated in an international competition such as Olympic Games, Commonwealth Games, Jeux de la Francophonie, Pan Am Games, or World University Games. She must have built a successful program throughout her career, as evidenced by at least one national title or five conference titles. Finally, she must be identified as one of the top coaches in this country by an expert panel that is familiar with coaching in Canada (Salmela, 1996). This panel will include a member of the Canadian Interuniversity Sport (CIS), the Coaching Association of Canada, and the present researcher.

Organisation: This is "a prerequisite step to help coaches prepare for training and competition. It is the coaches' organizational skills that allow a season to be seen from the broadest perspective and then to sequence events through a planned process" (Bloom, 2002, p.451). Côté and Salmela (1996, p.250) defined organisation as "the knowledge used by coaches to establish optimal training and competition conditions by structuring and coordinating various coaching tasks." This includes establishing a vision, planning the mission, selecting the team, setting goals, promoting team cohesion, working administratively, planning the season, recruiting, vision sharing, dealing with parents, working with assistant coaches, helping the athlete with personal concerns, and fund raising (Bloom, 1997; Côté, Salmela, Trudel, et al., 1995; Desjardins, 1996; Gilbert & Trudel, 2000).

Leadership: The behavioural process of influencing the activities of an organised group toward a specific goal, as well as toward the achievement of those goals (Barrow, 1977; Stogdill, 1974). Leadership has also been defined as a psychological contract between the follower and the leader, where the follower complies with the leader because

advantages are expected (Schein, 1970). Researchers have recently suggested that successful leaders are individuals that are able to direct the follower's commitment and energy towards the group and its goals (Bass, 1985, 1990; Graham, 1987; Maxwell, 1999). This type of leadership is known as transformational leadership.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Understanding what makes someone successful has fascinated a number of researchers in various domains. Leadership and organisation are two common factors that have been researched in order to better understand how success may be reached in different disciplines. More specifically to sport, studies on coaching expertise provide valuable insight into coaches' success by exploring both their leadership and organisation within their working environments. For these reasons, the following focuses on research in the fields of leadership and coaching expertise. In addition, a section on qualitative research in sport psychology is provided.

Leadership

Successful coaching is better understood when the topic of leadership is explored. According to Martens (1987), excellence in a team is a product of superior leadership by individuals who cast a vision of the future and inspire people to pursue that future. Because great leadership is synonymous with success and is one of the most sought after and expected characteristics of coaches (Bloom, 2002), the following review of leadership literature discusses leadership styles in the world of business and sport, as well as transformational leadership and the positive effect of this leadership style on subordinates.

Leadership in Business

Prior to World War II, research focused on assessing specific personality traits of effective leaders (Cox, 1998; Martens, 1987; Weinberg & Gould, 1995). Most researchers believed that leaders were born not made. The "great man theory," which purported that successful leaders possess common personality traits, was an example of

such ideology. Although this theory was never attributed to one author, it has been referenced as a train of thought by many sport psychology textbooks (e.g., Cox, 1998; Martens, 1987; Weinberg & Gould, 1995).

After World War II, most researchers began to test the relevance of trait theories and the research influenced by the "great man theory" (Cox, 1998). For example, researchers from Ohio State University and the University of Michigan examined the behaviours of business management workers in the 1940's and 50's (Cox, 1998; Martens, 1987; Weinberg & Gould, 1995). These researchers believed that great leaders were made rather than born. Research influenced by this new way of thinking showed that two behavioural characteristics described effective leaders: consideration and initiating structure (Halpin, 1966). Consideration was defined as a reflection of a mutual relationship of trust and respect between a supervisor and an employee. Initiating structure was characterised as how leaders organise themselves and their environment to attain their goals (Halpin, 1966). Successful leaders were found to score high on both "consideration" and "initiating structure". Stogdill (1974) later exchanged the terms "consideration" and "initiating structure" for "employee-centered" and "production-centered". In business, the dichotomy, comprised of the organisational and relational aspects of leadership would later be incorporated into a single term. Superior leadership came to be described as "transformational".

Leadership in Sport

Similar to the world of business, the coaching domain is expected to produce effective leaders. Research in sport psychology has tried to appraise the success of coaches and has tried to understand what makes a great coach (e.g., Bloom & Salmela, 2000; Côté, Salmela, Trudel, Baria, & Russell, 1995; Miller, Bloom, & Salmela, 1996).

Leadership style, in particular, is an area researchers have investigated to address that issue (e.g., Chelladurai, 1978, 1980, 1984; Fiedler, 1967; Hersey & Blanchard, 1969; House, 1971, 1977; Sage, 1975). Sport leadership research can be divided into two different areas: those investigating common traits or characteristics of coaches (e.g., Bloom & Salmela, 2000; Hendry, 1974; Ogilvie & Tutko, 1966) and those looking at common coaching behaviours (e.g., Bloom, Crumpton, & Anderson, 1999; Chelladurai, 1978; Lacy & Darst, 1985; Lacy & Goldston, 1990; Tharp & Gallimore, 1976).

One idea that leadership research has investigated is the notion that leaders may have similar personality traits. Early coaching research, which was anecdotal, identified the qualities of a typical coach as one who was inflexible, domineering, emotionally mature, and needing to be in control (Hendry, 1974; Ogilvie & Tutko, 1966). However, Sage (1975) did not agree with this stereotype, believing that the methods used by the previous researchers did not produce conclusive data. The small number of samples, the means of assessment, as well as the sampling techniques employed were deemed inappropriate (Sage, 1975). From the 1970's to today, research has proposed various traits that may be found in coaches (Cox, 1998). However, conclusions from this research have been refuted because no universal traits have been found to truly distinguish successful coaches from less successful coaches (Cox, 1998).

Recently, Bloom and Salmela (2000) identified personal characteristics of expert Canadian team sport coaches. Their goal was not merely to investigate personality traits, but rather to focus on characteristics found in expert coaches. The coaches in their sample had accumulated between twelve and twenty-nine years of experience at the university level or higher. Interviews were conducted with sixteen expert coaches in basketball (n=6), field hockey (n=3), ice hockey (n=4) and volleyball (n=3). Coaches

were asked to talk freely about their work, including coaching styles and leadership behaviours. Findings showed that these expert coaches have an on-going quest for individual growth and learning, have persistent ways of acquiring knowledge, display a strong work ethic, communicate effectively, empathise with players, have fun during training, are good teachers, and exhibit a personal coaching style.

In another study on expert coaches, Miller et al. (1996) focused on some of these characteristics and found that they were already present in these coaches while they were athletes. For example, it was found that during their athletic careers, the expert coaches exhibited strong personalities, accentuated by a tenacious work ethic in training. By being selected as team captains, many of these future coaches exhibited strong leadership and communicative qualities. During their athletic careers, most of these expert coaches began acquiring teaching and coaching skills by coaching younger teams. This may have contributed to the expertise these coaches attained later in their careers.

It can be concluded from the two aforementioned studies that expert coaches do possess some common characteristics. However, coaches may exhibit these characteristics in various fashions. For example, it may be possible that two coaches may be recognised as effective communicators, although they communicate differently; or that a desire to learn may be present in two coaches, but be satisfied through different means. For that reason, coaches possessing common characteristics but utilising different leadership styles, may attain success.

Although research has found conclusive data in regards to particular characteristics of successful or expert individuals, some academics have instead focused on the coaching strategies used by successful coaches to increase their team's performance (e.g., Bloom et al., 1999; Gould, Hodge, Peterson, & Giannini, 1989; Lacy

& Darst, 1985; Lacy & Goldston, 1990; Tharp & Gallimore, 1976). These researchers were interested in the behaviour of a leader, rather than what constitutes a leader.

The first behavioural model of leadership created specifically for sport situations was Chelladurai's Multidimensional Model of Leadership (Chelladurai, 1978, 1990; Appendix B). Chelladurai identified an interactive model that evaluated leadership effectiveness through the satisfaction and the performance of athletes (Chelladurai, 1978). According to the author, athletes' performances and satisfaction were the product of three types of leadership behaviours: required leadership behaviours, preferred leadership behaviours and actual leadership behaviours (Chelladurai, 1978). These behaviours, in turn, were influenced by three factors: characteristics of the environment, characteristics of the athletes and personal characteristics of the coach.

In the model, required behaviours were the pre-established boundaries and norms of behaviours considered appropriate and expected from a coach. These could relate to the coach's behaviours with players, spectators, media and the organisation itself. Preferred behaviours were those favoured by the athletes or by the organisation. It was found that preferred behaviours could vary as a function of gender, type of sport, and culture (Chelladurai, 1984; Chelladurai & Arnott, 1985; Weiss & Friedrichs, 1986). Finally, actual behaviours were those exhibited by leaders, regardless of the standards or demands placed on them. Consequently, it was hypothesised that performance and satisfaction were optimum when the required, preferred, and actual behaviours were congruent (Chelladurai, 1978). Later studies found that athletes were more likely to achieve desired outcomes if they found themselves compatible with the coach's leadership style (e.g., Chelladurai & Saleh, 1978, 1980; Horn & Carron, 1985; Riemer & Chelladurai, 1995; Weiss & Friedrichs, 1986).

Chelladurai's model became very useful for coaching research since it emphasised the external pressures, demands, and influences of coaches' success. In other words, the model implied that coaches were not successful only because of their great leadership skills. Rather, coaches were successful because of their capacity to display actual leadership behaviours that responded to a combination of demands from the environment, the players, and the coaches themselves. Furthermore, successful coaches were able to adjust to these demands by incorporating the required and preferred behaviours into their actual behaviours. The Multidimensional Model of Leadership (Chelladurai, 1978, 1990) suggested that in addition to leadership, other factors may be involved in successful coaching.

In the same period of time, other researchers focused on understanding successful coaches by observation of their behaviours. For example, Tharp and Gallimore (1976) observed the practices of John Wooden, one of the greatest basketball coaches of all time (won 10 NCAA championships in 12 years with UCLA). They used the Coaching Behavior Recording Form, a 10-category system revised from a teaching research observation tool. Each time coach Wooden exhibited a certain behaviour (giving instruction, for example), it was recorded. In doing this systematic observation of Wooden's methods of coaching, it was concluded that Wooden's system of coaching basketball focused on teaching and drilling skills. This seemingly successful approach led to a new way of seeing quality teaching behaviours as a means of coaching success. According to Tharp and Gallimore, Wooden was successful because of the quality of his teaching, interventions, and instructions.

Bloom and associates (1999) also examined the teaching behaviours of another expert basketball coach, Jerry Tarkanian from Fresno State University. Bloom et al. used

systematic observation with a Revised Coaching Behavior Recording Form. For the first time in the coaching literature, a coach's instructions were distinguished and recorded according to three instructional categories: "general", "technical", and "tactical". Data showed that Coach Tarkanian gave over 13% more tactical instructions than any other kind of instruction or behaviour during the practice sessions. Just like the study on John Wooden (Tharp & Gallimore, 1976), the coaching behaviours of Jerry Tarkanian left the overall instruction category far ahead of any other behaviour in a practice. Again, this demonstrates the importance of teaching skills for expert coaches.

Transformational Leadership

A review of the literature in business and sport demonstrated that the most effective leaders were strong in both relationship behaviours (i.e., employee-centered or people-oriented) and organisational skills (i.e., production-centered or task-oriented) (i.e., Neil & Kirby, 1985; Stogdill, 1974). In the 1990's, a proliferation of books and articles discussing a leadership concept including both of these dimensions emerged (Bass & Avolio, 1994); called "transformational leadership." This style seemed to give insight into the success of leaders in different fields.

The idea of a superior leadership style emerged when Weber (1947) presented his seminal work on charismatic leadership. Yet, the first actual appearance of the word "transformational" occurred in 1973 from a sociologist named Downton (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Downton (1973) titled his book on transformational leadership, Rebel Leadership. The idea of transformational leadership was further investigated by researchers such as (Burns, 1978), Bass, and Avolio (e.g., Avolio & Bass, 1991; Bass, 1985; 1990; Bass & Avolio, 1990; 1994). Later, a bulk of research was derived from Bass and Avolio's ideas of transformational leadership, as well from the use of their 1990 Multifactor Leadership

Questionnaire (MLQ) (Bass & Avolio, 1990; 1994). To date, research and writings about transformational leadership have been found mostly in the fields of business, management, industry, spirituality, politics, education, health care, and military (e.g., Avolio, Waldman, & Einstein, 1998; Bass, 1985; 1990; 1998; Carless, 1998; Deluga, 1988; Fuller, Morisson, Jones, Bridger, & Brown, 1999; House, Spangler, & Woycke, 1991; Howell & Avolio, 1993; Kane, Tremble, & Trueman, 2000; Leithwood, 1992; Maxwell, 1999; Medley & Larochelle, 1995; Seltzer & Bass, 1990; Wallis, 1982; Warren, 1995; Yammarino & Bass, 1990). With regards to coaching, Horn (1992) stated that most attempts to apply general leadership theories to sports have yielded minimal success. In fact, apart from the non-empirical work of Armstrong (2001), no empirical research has connected transformational leadership to coaching.

Charismatic and Transformational Leaders

Armstrong's (2001) ideas of transformational coaching often used the word charismatic. However, other literature has made a clear distinction between a charismatic and a transformational leader (e.g., Avolio & Bass, 1991; Barbuto, 1997; Gardner, 1989). In fact, transformational leaders were defined as those having the ability to elicit extraordinary outcomes from their followers (e.g., Bass, 1985). Some researchers have identified this ability as being charismatic (e.g., Armstrong, 2001; Avolio, Waldman, & Einstein, 1988; Bass, 1985, 1990; Seltzer, & Bass, 1990; Shamir, 1991; Weber, 1947). For this reason, many researchers assumed that a transformational and a charismatic leader were one and the same (e.g., Bass, 1985; House, 1977; Shamir, 1991; Stogdill, 1974). This definition posed a problem to some researchers (e.g., Barbuto, 1997; Gardner, 1989), who felt that a distinction needed to be made between charismatic and transformational leaders. In charismatic leadership, the emphasis was solely on the

leader, and the subordinates perceived their leader as possessing exceptional skill or talent to the point where the leader virtually became their "saviour" (Conger & Kanungo, 1987; House et al., 1991; Weber, 1947). In addition, according to Downton (1973) and Graham (1987), charismatic leaders tended to keep followers weak, dependent, and unquestionably loyal and obedient. These leaders worked at gaining compliance from personal competition or power (Conger & Kanungo, 1987). In contrast, it has been shown that transformational leaders also aroused strong emotions (Graham, 1987) and increased their follower's identification with them (Bass, 1985) but were further able to empower their followers to function effectively even without a leader (Bass, 1990). In other words, transformational leaders fostered their followers' autonomy (Bass & Avolio, 1994). They enhanced commitment and involvement by transforming the followers' beliefs and attitudes from being strictly self-centred to being directed towards the common good of the organisation's mission and goals (Burns, 1978). Barbuto concluded, "Leaders can be 'transformational' without necessarily employing a 'charismatic' style, just as 'charismatic' leaders may not be 'transformational' (p.690). Transformational leaders would then be more appropriately qualified as inspirational rather than charismatic (Barbuto, 1997). Even if inspiration and charisma seemed essentially similar, inspiration did not have the same social consequences as charisma in that it did not require sacrifice or competition on the part of the followers (Gardner, 1989). Interestingly, in 1991, Avolio and Bass replaced the term "charisma" by "idealized influenced," which refers to being an influential leader who demonstrates ideals and who serves as a role model.

Transactional and Transformational Leaders

Another important distinction to make is between transactional and transformational leaders. In an article summarising 20 years of research on transformational leadership, Bass (1999) expressed that transformational leaders motivate, empower, involve their subordinates, and uplift the morale and morals of their followers. Transactional leaders, however, were found, to attend to and satisfy their followers' immediate needs, or in other words, to meet their follower's own self-interests. A full range of leadership styles was proposed from transactional to transformational, which established that the two styles were independent, yet complementary (Bass, 1999; Bass & Avolio, 1990).

Interestingly, Bass (1999) discovered that the leadership ideal carried in people's minds included both the transformational and transactional styles. To this effect, Avolio and Bass (1991) found that followers were the most satisfied and leaders were the most effective when the leadership style was more transformational and less transactional. Bass (1999) went on to state that "changes in the marketplace and workforce... have resulted in the need for leaders to be more transformational and less transactional if they were to remain effective" (p.9). Bass also added that transformational and transactional leaders could be both authoritarian and democratic. The author mentioned examples of Nelson Mandela who was, at times, authoritarian and transformational, democratic and transformational, authoritarian and transactional, and democratic and transactional.

Qualities of a Transformational Leader

It has been suggested that successful leaders displayed a variety of styles at various times according to the situation and the followers' needs. A series of papers and writings published by Bass and Avolio (Avolio & Bass, 1991; Bass, 1985; 1990; 1998;

1999; Bass & Avolio, 1990; 1994) suggested that transformational leaders were, among other qualities, inspirational motivators. This indicated that leaders were able to envision the future, articulate a vision, sell it to the group, and gain commitment from the followers to achieve the vision (Bass, 1985; 1998). According to these authors, inspirational motivation was one of the four "I's" that characterised a transformational leader (Bass, & Avolio, 1990). The three other characteristics were idealised influence, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration (Bass, 1985). Idealised influenced suggested that a leader engenders respect, admiration and challenge by being a role model. Grouped as one single component, the first two "I's," idealised influenced and inspirational motivation, would make followers want to identify with one who leads by example, who sets high standards of performance, who displays determination and confidence for achieving the vision articulated (Bass, 1998). Equally important to transformational leadership was intellectual stimulation. This referred to leaders who ask their followers to be innovative and creative by offering input and by participating in problem solving. Individualised consideration reflected the responsibility of the leader to be aware of the followers' needs and to help foster their development, growth, and potential. Transformational leaders treated each employee individually and promoted an individualised development by creating a supportive environment and climate.

Considering the four characteristics described above, it is not surprising that transformational leadership was eventually defined as the ability of a leader to elevate the interest of their followers and to foster their commitment and energy towards the group and its goals (Bass, 1985, 1990; Burns, 1978; Gardner, 1989; Graham, 1987). It was seen as a superior leadership performance which elicits exceptional outcomes from the followers (e.g., Bass, 1985; Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Kouzes & Posner, 1987; Sashkin

& Burke, 1990; Seltzer & Bass, 1990). Particularly in business and management literature, transformational leaders were found to give regular feedback, implement a participative decision-making process, provide solutions to crises, and promote a cooperative and trusting work environment (e.g., Bass, 1985; Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Kouzes & Posner, 1987; Sashkin & Burke, 1990).

Thus far, this section has focused on empirical studies that have investigated transformational leadership. However, some non-empirical writings have also contributed to the body of knowledge and information concerning the transformational leadership style. Dr John C. Maxwell, a popular speaker and author on leadership, included concepts of transformational leadership in his work, without necessarily using the academic term. For example, Maxwell (1999) expressed the idea that leaders were effective because of their personalities, who they were on the inside. By their inspiration, motivation, and influence, leaders fostered desires of high achievement in their protégés. Maxwell's philosophy suggested that people were attracted by leaders that enjoy life, have a positive attitude, are generous, communicate well, have character, are competent, demonstrate initiative, are committed, practice listening, are passionate, have a vision, stay focused, and display servanthood (Maxwell, 1999). Promoting individual consideration, Maxwell emphasised putting others first. To this effect, he upheld a practice called "putting a '10' on everyone's head" (p.11). The author pointed out that seeing the good in people is one of the best things someone can do for them, as this will help them think more highly of themselves. Maxwell wrote, "If you appreciate others, encourage them, and help them reach their potential, they will love you for it" (p.11). Other authors also expressed the positive influences and outcomes of transformational-like leadership for both leaders and subordinates. In his book on coaching psychology,

Martens (1987) suggested that leaders who were autocratic in their style (i.e., gave instructions as commands, left no room for cooperation) displayed a "top-bottom" leadership style. However, Martens (1987) concluded that more effective leaders were likely to display "bottom-top" leadership, where the leader was more democratic, supporting and encouraging the development and performance of the followers.

Currently, Armstrong (2001) has written the most direct account of transformational leadership and coaching. In his non-empirical examination of this topic, Armstrong (2001) suggested that transformational leaders did not merely display a strict "top-bottom" hierarchy, but that they provided a relationship where a "transformation" occurred in both directions. He asserted that transformational leaders could be found to be autocratic at times and democratic at others. Both coaches and players would grow from such a two-way relationship. Coaches viewed their athletes as being capable of bringing contributions to the team and treated them with respect in this regard. Since the author believed in the benefits of including players in decision-making concerning the team, he suggested that developing the follower's own leadership skills was essential. Hence, coaches were to be educators helping players understand life lessons, not just their sport. For example, Armstrong discussed that while winning was no less important to these coaches, great emphasis was put on fair play, total group effort, and honesty. Maintaining high ethical standards was valued. The coaches led by example in all these areas. This helped followers duplicate the coaches' behaviours and philosophy (Bass & Steidlmeier, 1999).

In fact, Gardner and Avolio (1998) found that one of the two elements that differentiated transformational leadership from any other leadership style was the strong identification of the followers with the leader. The other component was the leader's

ability to articulate the vision. Articulating the vision encompassed much more than verbally exposing it. It was suggested that the behaviours and attitudes of the leader, such as leading in a way that was consistent with the beliefs and the vision of the team, was essential (Kouzes & Posner, 1987). Therefore, establishing a vision was not the sole key to success (Armstrong, 2001; Bennis, 1989). Transformational leaders had to also win their followers' commitment and enthusiasm so that the team could become one in their mission. Effectiveness and performances would then be enhanced by a strong spirit of team unity (Armstrong, 2001; Bennis, 1989). Supporting the importance of a leadership style that envisioned the future, Martens (1987) wrote,

> Leadership is simply... to give others direction by having a vision... to achieve the goals the leader has charted. Excellent coaches–leaders–give the team vision, and know how to translate this vision into reality. (p.33)

Leadership, then, became a collective process, where the group and the leader influenced each other and work together towards a common goal (Martens, 1987). Likewise, Crawford and Dierks (1995) talked about setting a direction which made the team's goals achievable. Lashway (1997) also brought an interesting perspective to the mystery of achieving a vision in stating that it is "evolutionary and dynamic." In conclusion, with the transformational leadership data available in the literature, it could be suggested that most elements of effective leadership elicited in this review could be included under one of the four "I's" (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 1990).

Effects of Transformational Leadership on Subordinates

Research on leaders who displayed the four "I's," have suggested that transformational leadership behaviours were positively related to a number of organisational outcomes (e.g., Fuller et al., 1999). These included extra effort, organisational and citizenship behaviours, and job satisfaction. In addition, it was noted that members of a transformational team cared about each other, stimulated and inspired each other, as well as identified closely with the team's goals (Bass & Avolio, 1994). For that reason, Careless (1998) mentioned that transformational leadership recently became a popular model in business organisation. Armstrong (2001) supported these findings for coaching, a field where transformational leadership data is limited. The author asserted that transformational coaches elicited greater team cohesion, better individual performances and overall positive team morale.

Insights into why transformational leadership would bring so many positive outcomes were also provided. It was suggested that subordinates of transformational leaders developed trust, admiration, loyalty and respect toward their leaders (Bass, 1985; Katz & Kahn, 1978). These feelings were likely to develop active and emotional relationships between the leader and the followers (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978; Howell & Avolio, 1993; Yammarino, Spangler, & Bass, 1993). Such relationships elevated the aspirations of the followers, allowing them to realise a greater portion of their potential (Bass, 1985), thus performing at a higher level than what was expected (Bass, 1985; Katz & Kahn, 1978). It seemed that intrinsic motivation was fostered by the leader's genuine, respectful and trustworthy relationships with followers. Therefore, it was not the goal of the leader to merely gain success but also to build up each individual member to a higher level of maturity. Kouzes and Posner (1987) concluded that partaking in the maturity

process of followers, by enabling them to become leaders themselves, increased both the coach's and the team's effectiveness. Non-empirical data supported these findings. Peters and Austin (1985) perhaps explained it the most clearly:

> Coaching is face-to-face leadership that pulls together people with diverse backgrounds, talents, experiences and interests... [treating] them as full-scale partners and contributors. Coaching is not about memorising techniques or devising the perfect game plan. It is about really paying attention to people--really believing in them, really caring about them, really involving them. (p.326)

Links to Other Leadership Theories

To develop healthy relationships with followers, individual consideration and genuine interest in the subordinates seemed essential. Three decades ago, Hersey and Blanchard (1969) proposed that effective leaders could and should adjust their leadership style to respond to the needs of their followers and to their environment. In order to succeed, leaders had to spend time investigating the needs of their followers. The ideas of a supporting and encouraging leader (Maxwell, 1999) and a leadership style that responds to the followers' needs (Hersey and Blanchard, 1969) were found to be similar to House's (1971) Path-Goal Theory. In fact, the Path-Goal-Theory stipulated that leaders were facilitators who helped their subordinates achieve their goals. In that theory, the coach focused on the athletes' goals and helped them reach it. In other words, they were a tool for the athlete, a facilitator for success. The theory also placed emphasis on the blossoming of the followers, rather than on increasing the power of the leader.

Maxwell's (1999) emphasis on the follower actually paralleled Bandura's (1977) theory of self-efficacy. Bandura stated that the creation of a positive environment conducive to the development of the self-efficacy of the followers partially explained the

success of some leaders. In a similar manner, "putting a 10" on a person's head (Maxwell, 1999) was likely to increase self-efficacy in that person. Great leadership may well be related, therefore, to the ability of a leader to increase self-efficacy in others. Some sport researchers have found a positive relationship between self-efficacy and successful performances (Feltz & Mugno, 1983; Gould, Weiss, & Weinberg, 1981; Lan & Gill, 1984). The creation of a trustworthy environment where the athletes felt good about themselves enhanced their self-efficacy, resulting in positive performances. Thus, it can be seen that the concepts of transformational leadership could serve the coaching field just they have the business world, leading to get extra effort and extra effectiveness from team members (Fuller et al., 1999; Kavanagh & Hausfeld, 1986; Weinberg, 1985).

Research in Coaching Expertise

The current section focuses on research with expert coaches. The Coaching Model (Côté, Salmela, Trudel, et al., 1995) which explains how coaches work and why they function as they do will be presented. The description of the organisation component of this model will be explored. Finally, the vision component of organisation will also be discussed.

Coaching Model

Without a theoretical framework, it is difficult to explain which factors and which relationships among these factors are most important to success and effectiveness in coaching (Thomas, 1992). Côté, Salmela, Trudel et al. (1995) suggested that models for studying coach and athlete interactions, as well as the coach's leadership style exist, but they do not provide a framework that works toward understanding other variables of coaching. Lyle (1993) and Woodman (1993) have described coaching as a dynamic and systematic process that involves more than leadership and relationships. Various steps

such as observation, assessment, development of a plan of action, implementation of that plan and reassessment are among the daily tasks of a coach. Without a general model that includes all aspects of coaching, the knowledge accumulated through research remains disconnected from the practicality of the coaching work (Côté, Salmela, Trudel, et al., 1995).

A recent model, the Coaching Model (CM) was proposed with the aim to structure and further comprehend the complexity of the coaching domain (Côté, Salmela, Trudel, et al., 1995). The researchers used a qualitative interviewing technique in order to better understand the work of seventeen expert Canadian gymnastics coaches. By asking the experts to talk freely about their careers and coaching tasks, they found data leading to a better understanding of the work and involvement of each coach. In fact, the analyses of data revealed the existence of similar ideas among the best gymnastics coaches in Canada. These sets of ideas were gathered into six specific categories, from which the CM was proposed.

Central to the CM is the coach's mental interpretation of the athlete's potential. Influencing the mental model are the three peripheral components of the CM: the coach's personal characteristics, the athlete's personal characteristics, and the contextual factors (Côté, Salmela, Trudel, et al., 1995). It is from this mental model or assessment that specific coaching behaviours regarding training, competition, and organisation will be elaborated as the coach strives to develop the athlete.

The three core components of the CM, training, competition, and organisation are each included in the process of a coach's work. They are shaped by the coach's mental representation of the athlete's potential and are designed to optimally develop the athlete. The training component of the coaching process includes the intervention style, the

technical knowledge applied, the mental training techniques used, the tactical strategies employed and the physical conditioning imposed on players (Côté, 1998). The competition dimension of coaching mainly relates to coach-athlete interactions before, during and after competition (Côté, 1998). Finally, the organisational aspect consists of planning training and competition by establishing a program. It also includes working with assistant coaches, interacting with parents, and helping athletes with personal concerns (Côté, 1998).

A single-case study with a university ice hockey coach validated all components of the Coaching Model (Gilbert & Trudel, 2000). For that study, data were collected in three intervals during the season: early season, mid-season, and late season for a total of nine practices and six games. Each time, semi-structured interviews were performed before and after these practices or games. The results showed congruency between the six components of the CM and the components that emerged from the study of this coach's work (i.e., organisation, training, competition, coach's personal characteristics, athlete's personal characteristics, and contextual factors). However, since none of the existing studies focused solely on investigating the organisation component of the coaching model as a primary purpose, Côté, Salmela, Trudel et al. (1995) suggested using a single component of the CM to study coaches in different sports.

Organisational Skills

One of the core components of the CM is organisation because it has a direct impact on the development of the athlete (Bloom, 1997; Côté & Salmela, 1996; Côté, Salmela, Trudel, et al., 1995). Côté, Salmela, Trudel, et al. stipulated that organisation involves "applying one's knowledge towards establishing optimal conditions for training and competition by structuring and coordinating the tasks involved in reaching the goal"

(p.9). Central to the structure and coordination of the season is, in fact, the mental representation of the team's potential. This image will give the coach direction for over the upcoming season. It will influence the overall organisation of the team, relating to such aspects as training and competition for example. Organisation plays a key role in the coaching process (Côté, 1998).

Côté (1998) found that some of the behaviours included in organisation are planning and establishing a training and competition program including the team preparation; working with assistant coaches by communicating effectively with them; working with parents by interacting with them and scheduling meetings; and helping athletes with personal concerns such as school and relationships. Some organisational tasks of coaches, however, might well be particular to a certain sport.

Desjardins (1996) alluded to the organisational tasks of expert Canadian team sport coaches. The twenty-two coaches in the study came from professional, national, and university teams. They were identified by their national sport associations as being among the most knowledgeable and respected coaches in their sport. It was found that the organisational aspect of their work included a wide variety of tasks, such as establishing a vision, planning the mission, selecting the team, setting goals, promoting team cohesion, and working administratively. Along the same line, other research has identified organisational skills including seasonal planning, recruiting, goal setting, vision sharing, dealing with parents, working with assistant coaches, helping the athlete with personal concerns, and fund raising (Bloom, 1997; Gilbert & Trudel, 2000). Hence, the organisational tasks are present before, during, and after the season, and represent more or less the foundation of the team. Moreover, a coach's ability to organise the season and to deal with the organisational issues reveals much about his or her coaching and

management skills. If a coach is organised, there will be a solid foundation from which to begin the season, hence, training sessions will be more effective (Bloom, 2002). Perhaps, this would also improve the coach's training sessions and the team's success at competitions (Bloom, 2002).

Vision

One of the fundamental variables of organisation relates to establishing a vision. Desjardins' use of the word "vision" is a part of the mental representation of the athlete's potential (Côté, Salmela, Trudel, et al., 1995) and should occur at the beginning of the season as a projection of what the coach believes the athlete or team can achieve. A vision can also be transformed into a long-term goal such as program development. Desjardins stated that once the vision was established, the expert coaches transformed this vision into a mission statement; a tangible written statement that would give the team direction for the upcoming year. That mission statement influenced the seasonal plan, daily practices, training required, team selection and goal-setting. Desjardins also mentioned that expert coaches drew up a complete plan for the upcoming season taking into consideration the mental, physical, tactical, and technical aspects of training. In other words, a mission statement was not merely a target to aim for; it was the organisation's (or team's) absolute reason for being (Warren, 1995).

Maxwell (1999) stated that vision was central to superior leadership and indispensable to success for leaders in all domains. Maxwell suggested that vision comes from within and that people without visions should try to affiliate themselves with a leader whose vision resonates from within. An example of a successful businessman that has achieved success is Walt Disney (Capodagli, 1999). Disney once envisioned an amusement park where illusions of joy would not evaporate and where children and

adults could enjoy a carnival atmosphere. Roy Disney, Walt's brother, did not create the vision, but he rallied with Walt and supported him until the dream was realised; he "bought into" the vision. It is because of these brothers that Disneyland and Disneyworld are still among the most popular amusement parks today. Walt Disney not only created the vision, but he was able to share it and sell it. His brother "bought" his vision (Capodagli, 1999).

Desjardins (1996) agreed with the importance of selling the vision to one's followers. Coaching means selling. Desjardins noted that, "the coach is responsible for selling a product - his vision - to an often sceptical clientele, his athletes" (Salmela, 1996, p. 71). Bloom (1997) and Salmela (1996) clearly explained that although setting a vision is essential for coaches, selling the vision to the team is of equal importance. Casting a vision and establishing mission statements are present in the religious, business and sport worlds.

Two non-empirical examples of expert coaching aptly explain the importance of establishing and selling a vision to a team (Barnett & Gregorian, 1996; Jackson & Delehanty, 1995). Phil Jackson is renowned for his success while coaching the Chicago Bulls and their superior player Michael Jordan. Coach Jackson differed from other coaches in his approach by building his entire team system around a vision of teamwork (Jackson & Delehanty, 1995). Even his set offence, known as the Triangle offence, was designed so that "the player with the ball would have the opportunity to pass the ball to any of his teammates" (Jackson & Delehanty, 1995, p. 88). More than merely a mission statement, Jackson also reinforced team play, passing and selflessness. Jackson remarked, "What appealed to me about the system was that it empowered everybody on the team by making them more involved in the offence, [putting] their individual needs

second to those of the group" (Jackson & Delehanty, 1995, p. 89). This system of selflessness was contrary to that which Jordan had grown accustomed to in the NBA. Jackson's biggest challenge was to convince Jordan that the selflessness system was the way to go. Eventually, Jordan bought into the vision and helped the team obtain many NBA Championships. Jackson and Delehanty recalled:

> I flashed back to 1989 when I took over as head coach and had talked to Michael about how I wanted him to share the spotlight with his teammates so the team could grow and flourish. In those days he... had to be cajoled into making sacrifices for the team. Now he was an older, wiser player who understood that it wasn't brilliant individual performances that made great teams, but the energy that's unleashed when players put their ego aside and work toward a common goal. (p.21)

Coach Gary Barnett (Barnett & Gregorian, 1996), who took over a losing football tradition at Northwestern University, is another example of a successful coach that established and "sold" a vision. Before the start of his first season, Barnett planned a detailed step by step mission statement that influenced the team's overall organisation including practices, games, selection and recruiting. After only three years at the helm of Northwestern's football program, Coach Barnett's vision was realised when he brought his team to a Rose Bowl final. Part of Northwestern's mission statement was:

> Our mission is based on the values of family, successful attitudes, and team chemistry. We believe in honesty, integrity, strength of character, care, and confidence. We embrace a commitment to excellence, loyalty, selflessness, trust, and humility. We teach overcoming adversity, establishing priorities, goal setting, and the value of diversity. (Barnett & Gregorian, 1996, p.19)

Desjardins (1996) stated that expert coaches consistently articulate their vision and demonstrate a high commitment to it, in the hope that athletes will make this vision their own. In order to realise the vision, coaches also communicate the goals of smaller segments of the season to athletes. For example, winning a National Championship is a process, and there are shorter-term goals that need to be achieved along the way. A clear example of that is given by Pat Summitt, head coach of the women's basketball program at the University of Tennessee (Neving & Greenberg, 1997). When the team lost three games in a row before Christmas, Coach Summitt knew it was not time to panic. After the game, Summitt told her team they were right where they should be, that none of the girls should be upset and that with two more months of practices, they could beat that team. Summitt knew that winning a National Championship was a process, resulting from a vision and a series of short-term goals. The day the team took the bus ride to the 1996 National Championships finals, a video of Summitt talking to her team after the earlier defeat of the season was on. The team was silent when Summitt expressed that two months later, they were indeed ready to win. That night, Tennessee won its ninth National title. Bloom (2002) concluded "a coach who is organised will have a solid foundation from which to begin his or her season, including more effective training sessions" (p.24). Positive outcomes will be the result.

Qualitative Research in Sport Psychology

Qualitative research has a long history in the humanities such as sociology and anthropology (Denzin & Lincoln, 1984). In the early 1900s, for example, researchers wrote objective accounts of habits, behaviours or relationships within a foreign society (Denzin & Lincoln, 1984). At that time, qualitative inquiries mainly consisted of exploring unfamiliar cultures (Denzin & Lincoln, 1984). Slowly, qualitative research was

used in other disciplines of the social and behavioural sciences such as history, political sciences, medicine and business (Denzin & Lincoln, 1984). This was the beginning of a quest to interpret an individual's point of view and perspective, rather than purely reciting an objective account of what had been observed. For that matter, researchers started to use different methods such as case studies, personal experiences, life stories, artefacts, and cultural texts in order to understand a particular milieu (Denzin & Lincoln, 1984).

In sport psychology, qualitative research has been used most frequently in the last fifteen years (e.g., Bloom, Durand-Bush, & Salmela, 1997; Bloom & Salmela, 2000; Côté, Salmela, Trudel, et al., 1995; Salmela, 1996; Strean, 1995; Weiss, Barber, Sisley, & Ebbeck, 1991). Although qualitative research has become more popular in the field of sport psychology, some researchers noted that there was still some reticence from within the field to accept this kind of inquiry (Dale, 1996; Denzin & Lincoln, 1984: Flick, 1999). One possible hindrance may be the existence of many methodologies under the umbrella of qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 1984). It seems that these various research practices suggest that no distinct methodology exists for a particular study. Flick (1999) acknowledged that "there is available a great variety of specific methods each of which starts from different premises and pursues different aims" (p.1). However, the author also mentioned that qualitative research, unlike quantitative research, can very accurately analyse a phenomenon over a specific period of time (Flick, 1999).

In coaching research, Côté (1998) referred to different methods available, such as qualitative observation and various interview procedures. The author positively endorsed the outcomes of these methodologies by noting that qualitative investigations with coaches have provided valuable and important information regarding coaches' work (Côté, 1998). The author further added that the use of various qualitative methodologies

with coaches would provide a broader knowledge base for different sports (Côté, 1998). In particular, the use of qualitative studies would be useful to investigate coaches' organisational work (Côté, 1998). The author concluded, "By focusing on different coaching variables and methods, each paper offers a significant contribution to the development of a general theory of coaching" (Côté, 1998, p. 9). Sparkes (1998) expressed a similar viewpoint: "For sport psychology to grow and qualitative forms of inquiry to fully contribute to an understanding of sport psychology phenomena, different methodologies and the varying forms of knowledge gained from them must be appreciated, encouraged, and embraced" (p.365). According to Sparkes, if the sport psychology field would reject the validity of qualitative research, then it would restrain the understanding of the field and discard many legitimate ways of increasing knowledge.

The goal of this research is to qualitatively investigate coaching expertise and, more specifically, success in building a sporting program. Following the direction that has been set by Côté and colleagues (Côté, Salmela, Trudel, et al., 1995; Côté & Salmela, 1996; Côté, Salmela, & Russell, 1995), as well as other researchers in coaching (Bloom & Salmela, 2000; Bloom et al., 1997; Gilbert & Trudel, 2000), interview techniques will be employed as the mode of inquiry in this study. The next chapter will explain this method of interviewing as well as the rest of the methodology.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the participants, procedure, interview technique, data analysis, and trustworthiness components of the study are explained. The qualitative methodology that was employed was similar to methods that have recently been used in research on expert coaches and generally follows the guidelines of Côté, Salmela, Baria, and Russell (1993) and of Côté, Salmela, and Russell (1995).

Participants

The five participants in this study were expert Canadian female coaches at the university level in volleyball and basketball. The study was limited to coaches of these two sports because of the similarities of the sports. Both sports required the management of a small number of players, the planning of a seven-month season, the preparation for competitions almost every weekend, as well as other similar organisational tasks such as recruiting, fund raising, every day practices, etc.

The selection of these expert female coaches was based on five criteria. First, they had to have accumulated at least ten years of coaching experience at the university level or higher (CIS, National Team, professional team) (Bloom, Durand-Bush, & Salmela, 1997; Côté, Salmela, & Russell, 1995; Ericsson, Krampe, & Tesch-Römer, 1993). Second, they had to be present Canadian university head coaches. Third, they had to have developed at least one player who took part in an international competition (e.g., Olympic Games, Commonwealth Games, Jeux de la Francophonie, Pan Am Games, or World University Games). Fourth, they had to have built a successful program throughout their careers, as evidenced by one national or five conference titles. Finally, they had to be identified by an expert panel as one of the most knowledgeable and respected coaches in

their sport. The panel included one member of the Canadian Interuniversity Sport, one member of the Coaching Association of Canada, and the current researcher. Although it was not a requirement, some of the selected coaches have been or are still active on the coaching staff of their respective national teams. Coaches' demographic information can be found in Appendix C.

To guarantee the participants' anonymity, a coding system for each coach was used. A label (i.e., "C" for coach, followed by a number from 1 to 5) identified all tapes, transcripts or research material referring to the participants. For example, the first coach interviewed was attributed the label "C1".

Procedure

All five coaches were interviewed individually for a period of one to two hours. The interviews took place in their respective cities across Canada, with locations varying from their offices to a restaurant or a room in their university. A semi-structured, open-ended interview approach was utilised, which required an interview guide (Appendix D).

Each interview session followed a predetermined format. To begin, the researcher built rapport with the participant. Then, each participant signed a consent form (Appendix E), as well as filled out a general demographic questionnaire (Appendix F). Once the participant was ready to begin, general information regarding the purpose of the project was stated, after which the recorded interview began. During the interviewing period, coaches were given the opportunity to discuss the successful programs they built in their respective universities. Although some coaches have had experiences with national teams, the interview questions referred only to their knowledge as a university coach. To conclude the interview, participants were allowed to add any pertinent information they felt was not included in the interview.

Interview Technique

There were several procedures and techniques that were employed during the interview. These included pilot interviews, rapport built with the subject, semi-structured interviews, conversational repair, and probing.

Since the researcher built the interview guide specifically for the current study, the questionnaire had to be tested for accuracy. Prior to beginning the study, the researcher conducted three pilot interviews with successful coaches. The first pilot interview was observed and evaluated by an expert interviewer with feedback given to the researcher about the interview techniques and the questionnaire. The last two pilot interviews were completed by the current researcher without an experienced observer being present, although they were tape-recorded. After each of the three interviews, a constructive discussion was held with the interviewee regarding the possible improvements of the interview techniques and interview guide. This phase was essential in building the researcher into a more competent interviewer and in creating an accurate interview guide for the study.

Once data collection was set to begin with the expert coaches, the researcher made sure that the interviewee felt welcomed and at ease. Establishing an honest and constructive personal relationship with the participants was essential to a successful interview (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This was done by building rapport with each coach before the interview session by explaining the confidentiality of the analysis and by emphasising the fact that there was no right or wrong answer to the questions. Furthermore, each coach was informed that a full verbatim transcript of the interview would be sent back for approval and editing. During the interview, the researcher used positive body language such as nodding and words of thanks to encourage the

participant's response. This type of relationship with the coaches during the interview helped create a context in which they felt comfortable expressing their knowledge (Patton, 1990).

To encourage a maximum freedom of expression, one of the most widely used techniques in coaching expertise research was the use of a semi-structured interview questionnaire. This method has recently been used by researchers (e.g., Bloom et al., 1997; Bloom & Salmela, 2000; Côté, Salmela, Trudel, Baria, & Russell, 1995), because it allowed them to suggest the topic for discussion, while providing the interviewee with an opportunity to answer freely, with few restrictions (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). This type of interview gave the subjects the opportunity to stress points they believed to be most important, as opposed to them having to rely solely on the investigator's notion of relevancy (Dexter, 1970). Rather than asking questions that supposed pre-set answers, the open-ended and semi-structured interviews resembled an ordinary conversation, with the participant doing most of the talking.

Given the conversational angle of the study, semi-structured interviews left room to correct confusion (Rubin & Rubin, 1995) and eliminated any misunderstandings (Schegloff, 1992). Although qualitative interviews were more focused and detailed than normal discussion, it was possible to ask for clarification if the researcher was unsure about what was said. Rubin and Rubin mentioned that linguists called such exchanges "conversational repairs". If a conversational repair was needed, an intervention from the researcher was made at the end of the interviewee's response in order to clarify an expression or a thought. For example, the researcher summarised what was understood from the participant's specific response. In the same way, if the interviewee

misunderstood one of the questions, the researcher listened to the mistaken reply and without making reference to the mistake, rephrased the question more clearly.

Another procedure called "probing" was used to redefine terminology and correct misunderstandings (Patton, 1987). Probing also provided the opportunity to explore any topic brought up by the participants which was relevant to the study. This procedure helped direct the interview, when any further elaboration or details were desired. Contrary to normal conversation, the interview was guided by the researcher and encouraged the participant to answer in depth and at length. Therefore, if the participant mentioned a specific topic of interest as part of her response, the researcher probed to discover more details about that topic. Probing consisted of taking the interviewee's own words and, through further questions, asking her to express her thoughts in regard to a specific area. In short, probing was used to ensure a proper understanding of the interviewee's overall message. In addition, each participant was given the opportunity to elaborate or clarify any issue she felt was important or she felt has possibly been misunderstood. Each interview ended with the following question: "Would you like to add anything else related to our interview?"

Data Analysis

The objective of the analysis was to build an organised system of categories, which emerged from the unstructured data, regarding the organisational skills and leadership styles of expert female coaches of team sport. The analysis was inductive, in that the categories emerged from the interviews. Once the interviews were over, full verbatim transcripts were sent back to each participant for authentication (Miles & Huberman, 1994), upon which the coding of data began. The coding followed the guidelines of Côté, Salmela, Baria, et al. (1993) and of Côté, Salmela, and Russell (1995).

In the coding process, each transcript was analysed line-by-line and divided into pieces of information known as meaning units. A meaning unit was a segment of text comprised of words, phrases, or entire paragraphs that expressed the same idea and related to the same topic (Tesch, 1990).

As a second step of analysis, each meaning unit was named or tagged based on its content. Meaning units of the same topic received the same tag. For the purpose of this study, only meaning units relating to organisational skills and leadership styles were included.

As a third step, the researcher grouped similar tags into larger divisions. These divisions were referred to as properties. At this point, a new tag was given to each new property formed. It was the tags (not the meaning units) that was compared and grouped into properties. For example, if a first tag was titled "planning training" and a second "planning the season", these two formed a new property with a new tag (e.g., planning).

Finally, a fourth level of classification consisted of grouping similar properties into categories. Again, it was the tags of the property that was listed and grouped. In doing so, this analysis created a small number of higher-order categories. In a sense, this step was similar to the earlier stage of creating properties, except it was done at a higher and more abstract level of analysis (Côté, Salmela, & Russell, 1995). The data were examined until a saturation of understanding was reached (Côté, Salmela, & Russell, 1995).

Trustworthiness

Considering the qualitative method used and the possibility of misinterpreting or misplacing the information given by coaches, suggestions put forward by Lincoln and Guba (1985) were followed to increase the trustworthiness of this analysis. These

methods were labelled as prolonged engagement, persistent observation, member's check, participant review, and the use of the NUD*IST 4.0 software (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 1990).

First, credibility was established by having a knowledgeable and competent researcher conduct the interview. Prior to the interviews, the researcher gained interviewing knowledge by reading research material such as Qualitative Interviewing by Rubin and Rubin (1995) and other articles and books on qualitative research (i.e., Bloom & Salmela, 2000; Côté, Salmela, & Russell, 1995; Sparkes, 1998; Flick, 1999), as well as attending two university level qualitative research classes. Furthermore, the researcher was trained by an individual with much experience in interviewing techniques. The researcher was also an assistant researcher for four focus group interviews with expert coaches; she conducted three pilot interviews; and she presented a qualitative research project in a sport psychology conference. Through these experiences, the knowledge the researcher gained regarding qualitative research methods was substantial.

Secondly, the researcher's qualifications complied with Lincoln and Guba's (1985) term known as prolonged engagement. Prolonged engagement was defined as an investment of time in learning the culture and building trust with the participant. In the current study, there was a particular culture in the coaching world that the researcher had to be familiar with (e.g., jargon, coaching context of each participant, knowledge of coaches and players). The interviewer met this criterion, given the ten years of experience she had in coaching basketball, including the past three years at the university level. In all cases except one, the researcher had already met the participants previous to the data collection. The researcher spent time learning the culture of coaching and therefore, was likely to be able to build a good rapport with the participants.

Another activity of trustworthiness suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985) consisted of persistent observation. According to these researchers, persistent observation was the ability to focus on the most important points being relayed to the researcher, while ignoring irrelevant facts. The coaches were probed (Patton, 1990) to ensure that the participant's point of view was clearly understood. For that reason, the researcher's knowledge as a basketball coach at both the university and the national level increased the quality of probing and observation.

Peer review was another form of data analysis verification used in this study. For this specific study, one researcher in coaching and another graduate student were provided with a list of all the tags established by the researcher, and each were asked to examine 25% of the meaning units. The peers placed each meaning unit under the tag that best represented the idea of that unit. Discrepancies were discussed between the peer and the researcher until a consensus was reached. The same process was repeated for the grouping of tags in broader divisions. This method allowed the researcher's analysis to be evaluated by two competent people, and perhaps reassessed. In addition, Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggested that regular peer sessions would enable profitable discussions of the analysis process.

A software program called NUD*IST 4.0 was used to assist the researcher in the data analysis. This software was specifically designed for qualitative research and helped the researcher perform coding and numeric analysis. For example, the software was capable of creating an index system, which easily retrieved any stored data. In addition, NUD*IST 4.0 was also designed to link meaning units, tags, or categories as desired by the researcher. This software allowed the researcher to create a computerised index system through which all meaning units were easily retrieved. The use of the NUD*IST

4.0 software ensured greater validity, because the chances of error in the analysis and the risk of losing data was reduced through the electronic handling of the data (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Finally, participant checks were used, beginning with a debriefing session at the end of each interview. At this time, the researcher briefly summarised what was heard from the participant and gave each participant an opportunity to verify the accuracy of the interview. A second check consisted of having each participant review the full verbatim transcript of the interview. Again, the participant clarified or eliminated certain sections if desired. Finally, a third check consisted of sending a summary of the results to all participants for further examination. Lincoln and Guba (1985) pointed out that this allowed the conclusions drawn by the researcher to be evaluated by the expert team sport coaches who provided the information.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This chapter provides the results of the qualitative analysis of the perspectives of expert Canadian female coaches of team sports on the building of a successful program. The information collected from five interviews is explained with the help of the three higher order categories that emerged from the analysis, along with one essential property that impacted all of the categories. Seven properties and 49 tags also emerged from the analysis, and they were supported by 473 meaning units (MU). Finally, a Conceptual Model was created to visually explain the perspectives of the five expert coaches on building a successful program (Figure 1).

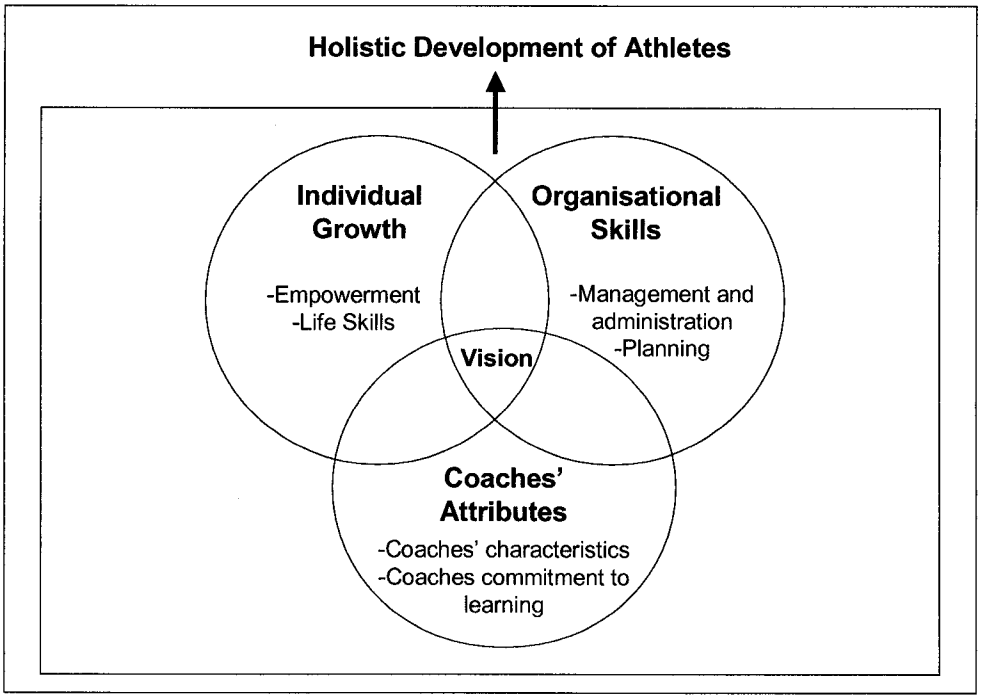

Figure 1. Conceptual Model of Expert Coaches' Perspectives on Building a Successful Program.

Nature of the Data

A total of 473 MU emerged from the analysis, from which 49 tags were inductively created to represent the essence of these MU. The occurrence of tags by coaches constituted the bulk of data and a tabular illustration of the frequency for these tags by each coach can be found in Appendix G. The same inductive interpretation was performed again in grouping the 49 tags into seven properties. A tabular illustration of this level of analysis is also available in Appendix G. Finally, the inductive interpretation was performed one last time in grouping the seven properties into three higher order categories. Tabular illustrations for these three higher order categories, as well as for one essential property, will be presented in this section. The properties and the categories were derived from all five expert coaches' interviews. In other words, each expert coach was represented in each property and category.

As can be seen in Appendix G, the frequency of MU under each tag differed from one coach to another (from 0 to 17). In addition, the number of MU in each interview was different for every coach (from 74 to 112). As a result of the interview style, the frequency of MU per coach for each interview (74 to 112) or per tag for each coach (0 to 17) did not necessarily reflect the greater importance a coach placed on a particular tag in comparison to another. Both of these statistical data were the result of the open-ended nature of the interview. For example, a tag may have been discussed to a greater extent with a certain coach in relation to specific issues raised during the interview. In addition, a tag such as "goal of organisation" (which included 2 MU) was more of an introductory theme while "recruiting" (which included 27 MU) was more frequently discussed due to the nature of the research questions. Even though the frequency of MU from one coach

to another is not meaningful, the total frequency of MU for one tag may indicate an overall emphasis, or the importance of that topic for building a successful program.

The following section describes the analysis process. Each one of the three higher order categories is discussed, as well as the one property that was essential to all three categories. Each category is detailed by the properties included in that category, by the tags involved under each of these properties, and by examples of MU quotations from each of the expert coaches supporting that category. The one property essential to all three categories is also described by its relationship to each category, and relevant examples of MU are included as well. Lastly, the relationships among the three higher order categories themselves are also explained. This process should enable anyone to recreate the inductive analysis that started inversely with the coding of MU, then the creation of tags, followed by the creation of properties, and finally with the creation of a category representing the sub-groups. However, due to the large number of MU, only a portion of the citations will be used to represent the general perspectives of the expert coaches on the building of a successful program. It can be assumed that the information presented applied to all expert coaches examined in this study unless otherwise specified.

Coaches' Attributes

This category referred to the personalities, traits, behaviours, and characteristics of the successful expert Canadian female coaches interviewed for this study. It described the persona of the coaches and the basis from which their leadership styles were derived. The results demonstrated that the coaches' attributes were omnipresent in the philosophy, strategy and in all organisational behaviours of the programs they built. The inner makeup of the coaches promoted a relentless driving force of excellence that was key in bringing success. The attributes of the coaches were distinguished by two properties:

coaches' characteristics and coaches' commitment to learning. A tabular illustration of properties in this higher order category is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Frequency of Meaning Units Within the Coaches' Attributes Category

Category and properties	N	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5
Coaches attributes	**94**	**21**	**11**	**14**	**25**	**23**
Coaches commitment to learning	49	6	9	8	9	17
Coaches characteristics	45	15	2	6	16	6

Coaches' Characteristics

The participating coaches were equipped with specific characteristics that enabled them to be successful. These characteristics were displayed both on and off the court and influenced the development of their successful team sport program on a long-term basis. It was commonly noted that these coaches were passionate, balanced, caring, open-minded, composed, genuinely interested in their athletes, and leaders by example. Yet, in two cases, they were perceived as intimidating.

The analysis suggested that participating coaches knew when care and support were required, and when it was time to be tough and demanding. It seemed that they had a particular ability to discern how players needed to be handled in given situations. Coaches expressed this leadership dichotomy very clearly.

> I have a little saying in my office that says, "Kids don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." That is how I care about them. However, I am not going to lie to them. They know that I am not so close to them that I am not the coach. I keep thinking of a benevolent dictator, but I am not sure that is the word I am looking for. I am tough on them, but I really care about them. (C4)

> I would say I am between authoritarian and democratic. I do not look like someone authoritarian, but I think my message is clear. The girls know I will not take out the whip, but if I am not happy, they know. I do not need to get out the whip. (C5)

These coaches also mentioned the importance of a balanced life as part of their coaching philosophy. They were aware of the subtle traps awaiting them if they let competition and power take over their thought processes. They aimed at creating a healthy environment to ensure the progress of both their players and themselves.

> You have to have balance in your life, otherwise you drive kids crazy. Again, that is all part of your development, however you find it: maybe it is a family; maybe it is not. Coaches get paid to coach; athletes pay to go to school. And even though a lot of them are very committed to the game, and they want to do well and they want to play for a lot of years; it is not their career. If you are too obsessed, then it is like a job to them. You have to have that balance. (C3)

> I knew it was a trap. I saw coaches... falling into habits with regards to alcohol, power trips, family life and everything together. This is why I like the word "balance."... You [might] not have balance when you spend four summers, which means 12 months [coaching], but it is the search for balance [that matters]. (C5)

Along with promoting balance, coaches mentioned their passion to coach and teach. Their personalities made them high achievers, motivational speakers, and great leaders. One coach primarily saw coaching as a great opportunity to extend her career in sports, until she became very passionate about the profession. Most other coaches considered their involvement in coaching a definite calling.

> I think to be honest, from the time I was probably ten years old, I loved to teach. I always knew that I wanted to be a teacher. I never, at any time, thought of another profession that I might want to be in. (C1)

> I think I probably wanted to coach right from the time I started playing at university. I came from a small town and at that time you were not recruited. This was where I wanted to go to school. I wanted to take Phys. Ed., which I did. I think right from probably the middle of my second year, I started to think like a coach. I was always analysing everything. (C3)

> I was so passionate. I loved playing. I would have done anything to continue playing, but I did not have options to go play somewhere. I did not make the national team. Pro at that time in Europe was not an option. So [coaching] was kind of convenient. It gave me something to do. (C2)

Along with their passionate character came other great qualities of a leader, such as the art of discipline and control over stressful situations. Most of the time, coaches dealt with issues in a composed and reassuring way. This was true for pressure situations such as tied games and dealing with referees. Coaches were aware of their influence on the behaviours of their players. They demonstrated that they were in control and that players could trust them.

> Discipline in terms of coaching in a game situation to "not lose it." To "not lose it" on officials, to always be in control of what is going on the court, so that I can translate that composure to my athletes. I said way back that athletes reflect the coach. If you are in control and you are disciplined, then I think your athletes are going to have more of a chance to be that way. (C1)

> As a coach, I really believe in our calming influence and its effect on players. I also believe that there is a time for you not to be calm and, if you are not happy, to change the level of activity or hyperness; to be that gung-ho person. But once the game is on, you cannot be a cheerleader. You have to be calm and in control. And I believe I have been that through our National Championships, even in those that we did not win. (C1)

Having balance and perspective as a coach did not mean lowering demands. The demands put on the athletes by the coaches were the same demands that coaches placed on themselves. These coaches led by example.

> I think you have to be disciplined. I think discipline is huge in terms of the requirements for success. If you are not disciplined as a coach, then your athletes are not going to be disciplined and you are not going to get there. So discipline, dedication, commitment, all the things that we know. (C1)

> It is the same thing for the coach. When I expect things... I have to do it myself. I cannot say, "You cannot do that" but then do it myself in front of them... I am their role model in some ways. (C5)

> I think you have to establish a certain level of work ethic. Everybody has to be willing to work. I think the head coach is the hardest working person and a leader. If players were doing weight training early in the morning, I did not miss those sessions. I just did not say, "Ok, just do it." I had to show them that I believed it was important. I had to make the commitment too. (C4)

Rather, the coaches set very high standards and were highly demanding of their players in every area (this will be discussed further in the vision section). However, balance in being a demanding yet caring leader was a determining factor in building trustworthy relationships with players. Without being invasive, the expert coaches worked at establishing strong personal relationships with their players by being interested in their lives outside of sport. They were genuinely interested in their athletes and cared about them as people, not merely as athletes bringing home championships. Trust emerged from these relationships, and it became a solid pylon for the successful program.

> Always go in... and make it a habit to talk to the kids before practice about things outside of [sport], like their families, their boyfriends, their girlfriends, their social lives, and their school. You know like, "How are your parents, how is your brother, how is your sister?" I think all of that ties [in]. It is the fact that they know you care about them. (C4)

> The message was clear. I tell them that the door is always open for individual meetings. Come in and chat, "What is the last movie you saw; your last book?" And in our discussions, we talk about all kinds of things. There are other things in life than [sport]. (C5)

Essential to the ongoing healthy coach-athlete relationship was the player's respect for the authority of the coach. Sometimes coaches came across as intimidating. This perception that athletes had of their coach was mentioned by two of the participants. Although the coaches did not necessarily display intimidating behaviour, this perception seemed important to success because it instilled respect. Perceptions of intimidation were a consequence of coaches' highly respected reputation, their passionate personalities, or their high standards and demands. Players did not want to disappoint their coach.

> Players are always afraid of me. It does not matter what level you coach at. You come in with a certain reputation, and they are afraid of you until they get to know you a little bit better, and sometimes they remain afraid. (C1)

> So I think I have a management style that when first and second year athletes come to the program they feel a little bit intimidated and scared of me because I have a strong personality. I am intense, and I am business-like when I am in the gym... Once we go on road trips, if they are really brave, they will sit in the passenger seat of the van, we will start talking and we get to know each other at a more personal level. It is not until about the third, fourth, or fifth years that they feel a little bit safer around me. How I perceive myself is not necessarily intimidating... [but] I have heard it enough now that I believe they certainly have that image. (C2)

Taking time on the road to get to know the players was a common habit. In fact, one coach mentioned that she would have liked to get to know her players better. In turn, she also believed players would have benefited from knowing her better.

> I feel I have changed and developed as a coach over the years. I would spend more time getting to know my athletes than I did in my first couple of years. And inversely as well, letting them get to know me better. (C1)

Memories of players or of successful years were a delight for our expert coaches. Three coaches mentioned the pride they felt seeing their players succeed in life. They enjoyed the fact that they participated somehow in the growth and maturity process of their former players. The successful professional careers of their former players brought them great joy. Coaches cared for each of their players, during their university careers as well as after their graduation.

> I like to think about what some players have become in life. It is fabulous to see your players 5 or 10 years down the road with a successful job. One of my players became a plastic surgeon, another one a physiotherapist. Some of them came back with their babies. I like to think that I have contributed, in some way, to their success by teaching them to believe in themselves. (C1)

Coaches' Commitment to Learning

Coaches' commitment to learning was defined as a personal desire the coaches had for constantly acquiring knowledge. The expert coaches demonstrated a thirst for learning, and promoted the importance of continual education.

> You have to continually be developing yourself as a coach. You have to stay on top of it. Even this past weekend, when I went to this coaches' [clinic], I got three or four new drills.... You do not just have to be working with people that are coaching at the next level, you can learn from people that are coaching high school, or junior high, or whatever. I think you always have to be working on your own game. (C3)

> I understand that in some circumstances there may not be any resources around you, but I have trouble believing that. Given this day of technology, you are an email away from an expert, there are web sites, and there are so many resources out there. (C2)

All the coaches agreed on the importance of camaraderie with other coaches, and the importance of learning from them as well. Some mentioned their assistant coaches, coaches at higher levels, clinics they attended, or even a retreat where coaches spent a weekend exchanging ideas. The goal was to establish networking, to create a healthy work environment through good relationships, and to learn from each other in order to increase their knowledge in the field. Books, scientific journals and articles were also among their personal choices for acquiring the latest knowledge in the field.

> If I was starting over again and had that knowledge behind me, I would try to do some of the things that I am doing now. For example, we are starting this coaching retreat for three days at one of our CIS coach's cabin. There will be six of us I think, and we are going to spend three days together, talk [about our sport], just share. (C1)

> It was interesting because the summer before [the year we won]... I read Pete Carril's book, The Smart Take From the Strong. Someone had recommended it to me. And that was kind of my bible, in some ways, for that year and it has been since then. (C3)

> I think professional development is really important [whatever] the opportunity [you have] to get it done. I think for me, when I was young, I used to go to clinics all the time.... I think that you have to always be growing as a coach.... When I had the opportunity to work with the National Team in all those different scenarios, it was great for me. (C3)

> I read a lot of books, especially in sport psychology. Also, [I like] being influenced not only by coaches, but also by leaders such as a maestro, or a play director. It is a way of learning, because it is managing people. It is not just in the sports world... I continually try to perfect myself. Last weekend, I bought some books... and I will buy another one on mental preparation for team sports, as well as the second of Pat Summitt that I have not yet read. (C5)

Some coaches were not afraid to mention that they learned from past mistakes. They reinforced that they were human beings and that coaches, like players, were allowed to make mistakes. For this reason, coaches put an emphasis on self-evaluation.

> You learn from your mistakes.... The first years, you have to learn from your mistakes. You do not want to make the same mistake twice. (C5)

> I have made mistakes with players like anybody, and I would like to take some words back that I have said or actions that I have done. But it is a part of life to accept that we are in roles, where, in some respect, we learn through trial and error. We do not always know what the right solution is, so we have to take a risk. (C2)

> I evaluated myself a lot when I first started coaching. I looked at myself in the mirror saying, "I like that." "That does not work!" (C5)

Some coaches stated that their early coaching experiences really helped them in building the basis of their program. Others stated that mentors or past coaches had enormous influence on their own coaching style. Coaches took what they liked from other coaches and left out what they did not.

> I started to think about if I would have a program, if I were ever a head coach, what are the things I would like to do; what would I not want to do. Then I did four years of high school before I took over [at that university]. I had been two years as a university assistant, a year over in [another country] coaching and then four years of high school. So, seven years of coaching before I took over at [this university]. (C4)

All the participants affirmed the importance of mentoring in coaching and saw it as a valuable experience for any successful endeavour. One coach mentioned the importance of investing in prospective coaches as an expert coach. Yet another realised she missed an opportunity to learn in her early career and wished she could have experienced a mentoring relationship.

> [My mentor and I] remained in very close contact for a number of years until I developed a little more confidence. [My mentor] really facilitated everything like my preparation all the way through to when we won our first championship. He was there in the stands feeling probably close to what I was feeling. Without him, I might still have succeeded, but I think the odds of it are pretty slim. (C2)

> [Mentoring] is not always possible. I am really excited because [our university] is talking about bringing a coaches' route back, a mentoring program with a Master's or PhD Degree where someone can come in and coach with us. That could be wonderful. I think it is really important. (C3)

> If I was to start over, I would have liked to have some mentoring as a young coach. I never had it at any level. I think that could really help. I would love to spend time, if I was starting over, with the best coach in our country or maybe in another country, and learn before I actually started. (C1)

In summary, coaches were found to possess great leadership qualities that spread throughout the entire program. Their persona influenced their ways of coaching, teaching, thinking, and establishing an environment that promoted growth and performance. They were leaders by example, passionate, and sometimes perceived as intimidating. Yet they were also caring, open-minded, and genuinely interested in their athletes. Secondly, integral to the coaches' attributes was their own desire to learn, as well as to contribute to other's learning process. Our expert coaches not only wanted to receive from others, but also were eager to give of themselves and invest in others to keep their sport at a high level of excellence. This indicated unselfish and non-arrogant personality traits, which appeared as a common attribute in all the successful coaches. The following sections will

explore how the attributes of the coaches set the tone for the strategy they used to foster a player's individual growth.

Individual Growth

This category is comprised of the overall philosophy and strategy coaches used in building their successful programs. First, the expert coaches aimed at developing each player into a high level athlete, equipping each one with skills, strategies, disciplines, and values that would build them into a champion on the court. In addition, the coaches purposely used the university team sport experience as a platform to build highly self-confident individuals able to be successful in life. Both of these are done through life skills development and through constant empowerment. The result is the transformation of young athletes into champions and of young women into successful individuals. A tabular illustration of properties in this category is presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Frequency of Meaning Units Within the Individual Growth Category

Category and properties	N	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5
Individual growth	**148**	**27**	**33**	**17**	**26**	**45**
Empowerment	96	21	20	16	19	20
Life skills	52	6	13	1	7	25

Life Skills

All coaches equipped their athletes with tools that they could use in life. Some coaches expressed this clearly within their philosophies, while others talked about more indirectly how sports skills can be applied in everyday life. All of them, however, agreed

that their teaching went beyond the sport scene; it would help these women to become successful as people.

> This is my philosophy: [our sport] is life skills development. When the players finish their third, fourth, or fifth year, I hope their toolbox will be full and that it will help them to succeed in life. (C5)

> Being a champion is in every part of their life. They become champions in everything; in how they carry themselves. It affects those decisions they make around eating, sleeping, and hydrating. It is the whole package! It is a commitment to working out even when you do not feel like it. It is building that whole package. (C2)

> I work with people, not numbers. Actually, I work harder into developing people than I work to win banners.... If I win a National Championship, and the following year six girls quit school, I will not be proud of myself.... Basketball is a means, not an end. This is why I focus more on the development [of my athletes]. (C5)

The coaches specified that building a successful program was not merely developing the physical side of athletes. Although developing a program included that aspect, it also included teaching young women to grow and become more mature in every facet of their lives. For example, two coaches mentioned how they trained their players to deal with emotions such as winning, losing, being angry, or feeling hurt.

> So it is interesting that it has nothing to do with technical or tactical. My strength as a coach is around management, around managing the emotional side of the sport and on the psychology of what it takes to think like a champion. How a champion thinks ultimately affects all their behaviours. (C2)

> I teach the athletes that there are things you just cannot do. How you react to the referees; I mean boiling characters. To learn how to control your character and deal with your emotions [are things I teach]. These are things that will serve you all your life. I do parallels with the work forces. I teach things for basketball, but at the same time, it is also for after. (C5)

Along the same line, coaches taught players to recognise areas of the game they have control over and to focus on these tasks; rather than on things that are out of their control.

> Getting them to think of the things that they have control over. They do not have control of the scoreboard, they do not have control of how much time they play in a game, and they do not have control of what the other team is going to do. They can only control what they are doing and what they are focusing on. That is what we try to do. (C3)

> There are a lot of things you cannot control. I am focused on what I can control, and I try to teach this. This is why [someone] could not believe how well the girls reacted to the referees' bad calls. Well, it is because we teach them that they do not have the control over referees. They must forget quickly and be ready for what is ahead. (C5)

> There were a lot of issues around being able to physically hang in there. It is much harder mentally when you are dealing with the physical.... But really, if you are not focusing on your fatigue, your body can handle it.... It is those great athletes that can disregard the now of what they feel like that are able to rise to unbelievable levels.... Controlling the mind is really the key. Training the mind to do what you want it to do, rather than just being out of control. (C2)

As part of teaching life skills, coaches provided an environment that surrounded the players with trust, respect, and great communication. These were noted as key elements characterising their programs.

> We treat other teams with respect, we treat each other with respect, and we are going to play with class... We talked about treating each other with respect, and your opponents with respect, and your university with respect. (C4)

> For me, it is a part of loyalty not to humiliate or yell to my athletes in front of everybody. It is when we are regrouped in a team that we settle that; during a time-out when we are close to each other. (C5)

> Respect for each other and for your staff. It has to be there. You have to have respect. Loyalty, there is got to be loyalty with everyone in the program, or you are going to have problems. (C1)

> And you have to be very careful that your athletes respect and believe in the abilities [of your assistant coaches] as well. As a head coach, you can go a long way in helping that [respect]. In the way that you treat them. So if I treat my assistants with respect; if I, in every opportunity that I have, show that I have confidence in them, that I believe in them, then the kids are going to see that as well. (C1)

Trust arose from developing healthy relationships with players. The consequences of trust were positive on and off the court. First, athletes developed trust in the

knowledge of their coaches and in their capacity to bring them to higher levels of achievement. Later, they developed an even higher level of trust, a deeper confidence for sharing personal concerns.

> And then you have the athletes backing you up. They know that is where they want to get. They trust in me, and I mean the kids trusted in me, no question about that. [They trusted] in my ability to take them there, then they came along happily, and once we started playing and winning, that was pretty easy. (C1)

> When they say things they trust you... And I [am genuine], I want to know! It is not like I am [listening to them] just to set them up. I am interested. I think you have to really like kids. (C4)

> Depending on the athlete, some are outgoing and confident and they have no issues around intimidation. Others, it is like pulling teeth. I would say generally though... by their fourth, fifth year, they feel that they could probably tell me virtually anything. And that is what I mean about being open... That is what I am talking about when I talk about a safe environment. It is a supportive environment. It is safe. They can do anything. They can say anything and we will deal with it. (C2)

Again these values were reinforced on and off the court. A coach gave an example from a road trip:

> Talking about the standards of excellence, I can remember one time on a road trip. One of my players was rude to a waitress, and I just said: "I need to talk to you outside." I just went up and I said... "You being bright, and you being athletic, and you being from a good family does not mean you can think you are better than that person. And do not ever, ever, ever talk to a waitress like that again". I do not think anyone had ever told her that was just rude. "And you are representing our school, and we do not do that. If it is poor food, then we say 'sorry this is not good.'" But she was really rude. (C4)

Respect and trust brought forth better communication between all members of the team, and standards of excellence in these areas were highly valued. Two coaches recognised that their reputation, regarding their communication skills, was passed down from athlete to athlete and gave them credibility towards new recruits.

> I used to talk about these things with my team, of where I am coming from and what I am expecting of them. And now we do not talk about it anymore, because it is more of a norm. This is what it is like to be on the team. And I think there is, not as much as I would like, but I think there is a fair bit of passing down from athlete to athlete. (C2)

> I have credibility with recruits. I do not need to prove myself. It helps, but at the same time, I do not take things easy. I try to develop an atmosphere of trust. (C5)

Aware of the career limitations females are facing with basketball and volleyball, all coaches talked about the importance of academics. They agreed that studies were to be prioritised, reinforcing a holistic development of the player.

> I think in sports for women, generally speaking, your elite level athletes do not have much trouble in the classroom. That is what I have found over the years. And I am positive that it has to be that way in any sport you are involved in. We are not at the level where ball is all that it takes to be successful, and you can get by as a female. It is just not going to happen. Mommy and Daddy would not let their girls play if they could not be successful in the classroom.... And that is important at the CIS level. (C1)

> At the same time, being in an academic institution, my role was to ensure that the girls would end up with a university degree, not a basketball degree. These were the criteria I established from the start, according to my values. I would use basketball to develop them as a whole person. (C5)

> Within the university, they were going to go to classes and they were going to graduate. (C4)

Empowerment

Empowerment can be defined as how coaches upheld, encouraged, and valued athletes' and support staff's independence, ideas, personality, potential, roles, and growth within a team concept. Coaches recognised different personalities in athletes and did not necessarily try to change them. By respecting differences, coaches were able to develop player's intrinsic motivation, which became a key to success. By instilling internal motivation, players took ownership of their training and performances. Therefore,

empowerment included the ability of coaches to foster and facilitate athletes' and support staff's intrinsic motivation, satisfaction, and performance outcome as part of the team.

Results suggested that building self-confidence was the foundational basis for the empowerment process and influenced the entire development of the player. In fact, instilling self-confidence in the players was a determining element in each of the coaches' strategy towards success. All coaches realised that, in general, their players came in with very low self-confidence. It was, therefore, a main area on which to work. Some coaches referred to gender differences as being one of the factors affecting their athletes' self-esteem.

> Women are amazing because, compared to guys, they have no self-esteem. If guys make mistakes, it is someone else's fault. Women tend to really take a lot of blame and tend to really take responsibility for [their action]. Especially with this young group that I had last year. I think I was more encouraging and more positive with them, because they needed that kind of nurturing to build up that self-esteem. (C3)

> At the start, when I began coaching, I developed my philosophy and the strategy needed. As an athlete, I had an experience that shocked me. I promised myself, that I would do my best to coach the girls so that they would never have to experience the same thing. So, at the beginning, the fundamental philosophy was through the intermediary of basketball that they would learn to appreciate and have confidence in themselves. A tendency women often have, is to beat themselves over the head and put themselves down. (C5)

Building self-confidence in players was not an easy task. It required constant persuasion and positive reinforcement. The expert coaches had to continually express their beliefs in each of the players.

> You had to make them aware of what it was that they could accomplish; what we could do together as a team. [There was] a lot of talking and a lot of individual [persuasion]. Stroking is almost the word, though I did not think of it as that, just building confidence. To me, the factor that is going to be the most important in determining your success is that you believe in yourself. If you have confidence in your ability to do something, you will get it done. There are going to be hills to climb, and it is almost impossible to get up there if you do not believe that you can. (C1)

Another tool used by coaches to enhance self-confidence was their own attitudes. Coaches carried themselves as confident people. They believed that their own manner influenced the overall confidence of the team. They invested in building self-confidence with words and actions.

> I think your players very much reflect your attitude as a coach. And I did not change anything about what I felt. If someone ever mentioned anything about not being as good, or at a lower level, that was unacceptable. So we always spoke of ourselves as winners, as successful women, who would have no reason to look back at ourselves. We did everything that we could to give ourselves an opportunity to be successful. (C1)

One of the coaches mentioned using team building activities such as the power of teammates' opinions to increase self-confidence in her team. She realised that if players felt appreciated and loved, they would perform better.

> We keep self-esteem books; we have little books and we write to each other in them...it has a picture of them in the front. We [might write] their favourite saying such as a quote to put in their books... [or write] 10 things that they contribute to the team on or off the court. They write those and read them out loud. Then people add to that list.... We also do what I call confidence cards. We bring recipe cards, and I write everybody's name at the top. Then we pick one of those and write nice things. We put it back in the pile and we have to try to guess who wrote about us. That usually ends with a couple of big hugs. (C4)

Encouraging the development of self-esteem required the creation of a safe and positive environment. Consequently, coaches purposely invested equally in every team member. While some might expect high level coaches to spend less time investing in players of lesser roles, results demonstrated the opposite. It was clear that the expert coaches valued tremendously players of lesser "on-court" roles. This genuine care sent the message to both extremes (bench and star players) that their worth was not calculated upon their achievement. Hence, players felt encouraged to continually invest in their own personal development (internal motivation). Coaches gave great descriptions of the pride

and respect they had for each players from the most successful to the least. One coach expressed how she delegated leadership to a player of a lesser role on the floor.

> I had one player who was the captain of our team, and her minutes went down as the year went along... And I remember, leading up to the Nationals, she did something for the team every week. She would give everybody an individual saying on their locker that applied to them. When we went to Nationals, it must have been killing her not to play. You would never know that. She was just all about the team. She did so many neat things. As a coach, you would love to have more [players like her]... So I gave her free reign to do whatever she wanted, and I was lucky to have someone like her. (C3)

This ability the coaches had to value players equally brought life to an important team philosophy. Some coaches expressed that unless there was team unity, winning was almost impossible. Therefore, coaches brought about an environment where accepting one's role was facilitated. Coaches taught each player to invest for the team's benefit.

> When I look at last year, it was one of the best years of my career. We had a strong team where the players accepted their roles in terms of training hard without necessarily playing a lot... The girls that accepted their roles knew their limits, gave good minutes, and at the same time were valued. But because it was their role, they did not try to do more. That was a key element. To remain within their limits was not always easy... but once understood, it made all the difference. They were valued. They were getting subbed after three minutes and knew they did the work that was needed for the team to win this game. I think it was the most important criteria. (C5)

While increasing self-esteem and teaching role acceptance, coaches also valued player's input on and off the court. Coaches reinforced that they were the chieftains, while at the same time including players in many decisions. They were careful not to over-coach. This could have taken the instinct and initiative out of a player. There was a time when coaches felt that they had to be in charge, as well as other times when they felt it was important to let the players be involved.

> I try to take advantage of every opportunity I can to solicit their opinions and to really pick their brains. I do not know what is going on with them as an individual or as a team, because you do not really know until you are on the court with them. So I really try to get that information from them. (C2)

> It is not democratic. It is not majority wins. That is not the way I am. But having said that, I still believe that it cannot be my way or the highway. They have to have input, so my leadership style is empowerment. I believe in listening to those who should have input into whatever decision it is that you are making. (C1)

> I am definitely in charge but at the same time, I am involving as many people as possible in decision making and I have a very open, transparent style to decision making. But it is situational. There are times when you cannot do that, times when it is the best way to conduct business. (C2)

> As the head coach, the boom lowers on you so you are the one that is ultimately responsible for all the decisions that you make. [However], I like to have as much input from those who will be affected before I make any kind of decision. (C1)

Empowerment, then, included valuing player's decision on and off the court, as long as it was in line with the coach's philosophy. According to all coaches, on-court responsibility was important because the players were the ones playing. The coaches mentioned that their perspective was not necessarily the same as the player's perspectives, hence the importance of considering a player's opinion.

> Sometimes I will call a time out and say, "So what do you feel better with, the zone or the man? What do you want to run?" When I first did that... my players looked at me like, "Should we answer?" So many of us dictate so much! I do not do that all the time with a young team, but as the players become more experienced... just asking them and giving them some responsibilities [is healthy]. (C4)

> I let my point guard for the most part call the offence and the defence, and then I correct. [This is] instead of me calling it and them not taking any initiative. I did have one point guard who just was not any good at it, so I had to take over more. Letting them call offence and defence change up... I think those are some of the things I do. (C4)

However, when the heat was on, our coaches became authoritarian. Their composure and discipline demonstrated that they were in control of the situation. Exchanges and discussions would mostly happen after games or between practices. Their

open and transparent leadership style encouraged discussions among every member of the team, whether players or assistant coaches. The goal was to make the best decisions possible for the team in order to win the most games possible.

> I am not going to have a discussion of when to have a timeout. I am not going to discuss key decision making that you have to make in competition. I will ask for feedback after, and anything is open for discussion between me and my athletes or coaching staff. However, it is situational. It is specific. There are times when it is not appropriate. (C2)

> Open door policy. I think in a nutshell that is the way I lead.... I will try [my ideas] and then listen to the players and the coaches in terms of their evaluation. Was it of value, was it not? And then [I] adjust accordingly. Innovative, sometimes. Fair, I hope all the time. Unfortunately it does not always turn out that way. Autocratic. I think as a coach, you have to be. (C1)

> We are running particular offences; we are running particular defences. But I want their feedback on how they think it is going or how they think they are performing within those things. So really I think I am most authoritarian in the technical area. [For] the rest, if they can convince me there is a better way [to do things], I am open to that. (C3)

Furthermore, coaches depended on players' decision when it pertained to matters outside of games and practices. For team meetings, curfews, gear to wear and others, coaches would mostly let the players consult each other and make their own team decisions.

> We involve the players making the decisions. I do not set curfews anymore, the kids do. It becomes pretty simple when you set your original goals together. So together is the way I like to operate as a group, as a team where ultimately I am the leader, the head of the group. To be on the same page, rowing in the same boat they have to feel that they have had input, that they have been empowered to help guide us to where we are going to go. That is how I do it, or like to think that I do it. (C1)

> I think when it comes to decision making, like team rules, I let the team determine those for the most part, depending on the maturity of my team. The team has set the rules for dress code and the curfew. I am open to any kind of feedback that they can give me, any of the things outside of the technical realm. (C3)

As mentioned by some coaches, the maturity of the team was determining for how much room players would have in decision making. One coach thought giving the opportunity to a mature team to make more decisions was one of the key ingredients that helped her program reach success.

> Strategy wise we let them make a lot more decisions because it was a more mature team and a very experienced team. We empowered them more than any other team. They were good enough to empower, to let go, and to make more decisions. We just knew our personnel really well and how to use them. (C4)

Empowerment also consisted in equipping the athletes with the ability to be effective leaders. Coaches felt they did not have much power and control over a game if the leadership of their team was low. Players needed to feel responsible for the team's performances and the outcomes of the games.

> The years that we have won, the key element was leadership on the court and leadership within the team. Without it, we are so powerless as coaches. Really we are just talking into the wind if no [player] is taking it and running with it. I think that there is a myth that all coaches have: [they] get way too much credit. I really do not think coaches have that much effect. We can provide an environment and we can facilitate, but it is the athletes that do it. (C2)

> I always feel like we are in it together. It is their team too. It is just not me leading. I want them to lead too, so I am cooperative with the players. (C4)

Coaches challenged their players at opportune and strategic points in time. They appealed to their sense of pride and reminded them that they were the ones who "would make it happen." Hence, complementary to a safe and positive environment, coaches promoted challenge and responsibility. The team could not be entirely coach-driven.

> It does rely on an athlete that is committed to being independent, committed to taking control over their own development and their own performance. And I know that they do not all come in at the same point of the continuum, but my goal is to get them to a point where they have control and they do not need me... They like having me there because it makes them feel more comfortable, but they are fine.... They can find those solutions on their own. They are independent. That is the big philosophy of sport for me. (C2)

> Am I authoritarian? To a degree, but I would not use that as an adjective to describe me.... I am not sure how to describe that or what the word is in the books for that kind of leadership. The biggest thing that I want to accomplish is to have your athletes accept responsibility for what they do, so you empower them to a degree to do things with the knowledge of where it is you want to go, and what you want to accomplish. Ultimately the responsibility is mine, but they have to accept some ownership for the decisions they make. (C1)

The best performing years for the coaches were the years they experienced strong leadership among players. Leaders were a link between the coaches and the team. Ultimately, the leaders would pull their team along on the court and would lead it to victory.

> I think the thing about that group was that I did not have to convince everyone. I only had to convince two of them and they were both strong enough leaders that they could grab the rest of the team and run with it. (C2)

> I have sat down and talked with alumni about what it takes and what a team needs [to win]. Their perceptions are really interesting. It definitely takes two on the court to feed off of each other. It is bad enough if you have no leaders, but if you only have one leader it is not a whole lot better, because they are powerless.... A good example of, "How did you [bring your team] to success?" I tried the same thing this year and it did not work. So you have to have the leaders that take the message of the coach and run with it. (C2)

Coaches did not only expect their players to be more responsible, they actually trained and equipped them thoroughly:

> [Players] become your brain on the court. When we practice, I [train] them: "You have one more time-out. You can change your strategy." They have fun, and at the same time, they will challenge the other team. They are proud if they succeed, or if they can make adjustments without my interventions. (C5)

Finally, the expert coaches valued and respected their support staff's work, opinions and comments the same way they did those of their players. This emerged in their overall leadership style from how they interacted with players to how they interacted with other people in the program. Expert coaches were not afraid to speak highly of the

work accomplished by their assistant coaches. They surrounded themselves with coaches that were strong in areas where they themselves were weak.

> Absolutely a huge part of our successes is having the advantage of having [this particular assistant coach] on the coaching staff.... [This coach] is a real gym rat.... So starting January of that year [this coach] became a full-time assistant coach.... I would say that from an actual quality of coaching perspective, it certainly has improved since [he] arrived. (C2)

> The other thing too, is who you surround yourself with. I think that I have been lucky, in some ways, that I had a woman that worked with me for five years. I have another woman with me now that is going into her fifth year. But the first one is gone, and I really miss her. It is amazing how much you miss having that person that helps you and reinforces what you do. In order to be successful you have to have some successful people there with you to help you. (C3)

> Then as a coach, you find your strengths and weaknesses; are you a defensive, or an offensive coach? With your assistant coaches, you create a team that complements your strengths and weaknesses. (C5)

Support staff such as physiotherapists, sport psychologists, doctors, athletic directors, and secretaries also received the same respect and value. Their work in helping build a successful program was noted.

> You have to surround yourself with good staff; good support staff. I have had very good assistant coaches, I have had outstanding physiotherapists; just great people.... Surround yourself with good people. (C4)

> And I think there are more resources out there as far as being able to get more people involved in the program. So I will not do it alone. There is no way.... I cannot do it alone... People have to recognise that while it may only take one head coach to coach a team, it takes more than that to have a program. And I do not care if it is football, hockey, volleyball, really any of the sports in the CIS. (C2)

> Something I think that we have been good at is working hand in hand with people; with strength and conditioning staff, medical staff, sport psychologists.... I think that is a big part of my job; facilitating and encouraging [team work]. And even at the coaching level, I have surrounded myself with people that compliment me. It is all being about what is best for your team. And at the coaching staff level, trying to remove certain people's power and control, and look at what the team needs. (C2)

In conclusion, the teaching of life skills and empowerment were two important dimensions of fostering the player's individual growth. Life skills were taught by using

sport as a platform to equip athletes with tools they can use outside of sport. Empowerment was done through increasing intrinsic motivation, enhancing self-confidence, promoting on-court decisions, including players in team decisions, and upholding the player's leadership on and off the court. All coaches put an extraordinary emphasis on these concepts. The next section will focus on the organisational skills of coaches and on how their *motus operendi* influenced their success.

Organisational Skills

The "organisational skills" category was best summarised as the *motus operendi* of the coaches, or in other words, how the coaches worked their strategy to completion. The results demonstrated that it was through displaying excellent organisational skills that our expert coaches were able to fulfil their vision and bring it to reality. It was found that each coach valued most of the same organisational skills, although some were situational. Two sub-divisions distinguished the organisational skills category: planning and management/administration. A tabular illustration of properties in this category is presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Frequency of Meaning Units Within the Organisational Skills Category

Category and properties	N	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5
Organisational skills	**111**	**18**	**23**	**25**	**25**	**20**
Management/administration	58	6	18	7	19	8
Planning	53	12	5	18	6	12

Planning

The planning property was defined as the tasks, actions, demands, and procedures related to planning the season, preparing the practices, and ensuring readiness for games. During the interview, all coaches referred to their seasonal plan as an essential tool for establishing an overall plan of action. Out of the seasonal plan, smaller planning divisions emerged. Coaches mentioned that although smaller planning portions differed each year, their overall plan was a model that remained much the same. Any changes that were made in the smaller planning segments depended directly on the maturity of the players, the talent of the team, and what coaches thought their team could achieve that specific year.

> Exactly what we do, and when we do it; that changes. Offences we run, defences we do; that changes. But, no, I think pretty much from year to year, it progresses the same way. The rate might change a bit depending on the maturity of your athletes. We try to adapt to the kids we have. We may, in one given year, spend more time in the classroom; spend more time doing bonding things... It depends on the make-up of the team and what we feel we need. I think I am flexible as opposed to rigid. (C1)

> Yeah, again, it will depend on the youth of my team. If we are a little bit older, we will get through the fundamental stuff faster, because they know what I expect.... But we will progress at about the speed of the median of the group. What we do does not really change that much from year to year. I play anywhere between six and nine competitive games in the pre-season. We like to go to two tournaments and host one, depending on the year. We like to go somewhere at Christmas, to get back into game shape. Then, the rest is all determined for you by the league... It is well set up for you. (C3)

> I will change maybe what tournaments we go to and the exhibition games. The last couple of years [my assistant coach] took over the physical training, so the actual physical training changed a little bit. Generally speaking, the program itself will look very similar to my first season. What is very different is what we are actually doing when we are in the gym. That is something that has really changed over time as far as the type of practices, and the types of [drills] the athletes are doing. (C2)

Two coaches emphasised their program was a 12-month program, and selling this philosophy to their team was a determining factor in their success. Therefore, the planning and involvement of a coach was year-round.

> [In the summer] we finalise stuff. The summer months are skill building and strength and conditioning development. So we start there with new recruits and returning players... It is off time, but it is not off time. With us, it is a 12-month program. One of the elements of success is that it is a 12-month program. (C1)

Thorough planning included the possibility of losing your best players to injuries. One coach mentioned that a well-polished structure and well-organised plan helped her team remain strong, even though injuries occurred.

> We pretty much stuck with the same [yearly plan], and we have managed to peak most years at the right time. You know, injuries have sometimes hurt us, but I think if you structure your offence and your defence well, one injury is not going to kill you, because you can move somebody into place. (C4)

To minimise changes due to injuries and maximise peaking, coaches schedule several periods of rest in the seasonal plan. At different times in the year, players were in need of mental and physical rest. Recovery was possible by cutting practices or by taking time off.

> At the beginning of the year, I do core body strength before practice. By the time we do that, some of the practices in the pre-season are 3 ½ hours. But by the time we get into February and March, [we practice] 45 minutes at high intensity level. I mean, even late January, I must say, I rarely go 2 hours. I really cut back, unless sometimes I get a little angry with them and keep them. I think you need to give them some time during the year to rejuvenate a little bit. (C4)

> So we really tried to cut back and let them go to Nationals fresh and excited about playing, and not fatigued, beaten up and tired. We did a really good job of using all 10 players, cutting back at practice, and keeping things fresh. (C4)

> When we have a weekend off, I tell the girls that it is important to have nothing to do with basketball. And it is good not to be with the team... For physical training, they can do it whenever they want, but that is only to energise them. It is also a time to get back on track with studies... it might only be me, but always following a schedule [is annoying]. (C5)

Taking an extended break at Christmas was also very popular among our expert coaches. Coaches mentioned a more or less complete break from training that might last between six and nine days.

> December is exams and we do… optional small group training through until about December 22nd. [Then we] take a complete break and come back as late as we can, depending on when our league starts again, usually about a week prior to the league starting. We start up again and then we go like crazy, usually until March. And then take a few couple weeks off, depending on the year. Then it is pretty much shut down until we begin again in September. (C2)

> I have always given them time off at Christmas because I would like to be with my family and also I think it is important that they are with their families. I think the least we ever took was six days, and that is when we went to the Bahamas. We are usually between seven and nine days off at Christmas. I send them home with stuff to do, but basically I say to take that time off, mentally and physically. (C4)

The end of the season was another important time for rest and recovery. Most coaches left a good interval of time to rejuvenate from any specific sport training.

> When the season is over, there are always a couple weeks to rejuvenate and rest. Then we get back in the gym for fun; the girls play with the guys. Sometimes we give them until the beginning of May, and then they start training again. (C5)

Getting mental, physical, and even emotional rest throughout the season was important for coaches as well. One coach mentioned that she learned how to take more time for herself during the season. She created an effective coping strategy that helped her be more efficient as a coach.

> What I learned with experience is [how] to say "no." [How] to have a better schedule… The first few years, I did not have any time for me. Everything was for the team. [In our profession] you can be working 24 hours a day, all week long! I tried not to do it, but at one point, I got right back into that habit! Now, I ask if it is urgent. If they say no… we push it back until tomorrow. (C5)

After assessing that the players were physically ready, coaches invested in their tactical preparation. Included in overall planning was the readiness to face opponents. Scouting reports and watching videotapes were common methods of preparation.

Coaches aimed at gathering as much intelligence data as possible about their opponents. Coaches noted that their teams performed best when they and their players were the most knowledgeable about the other team. In other words, when the opposition could not come up with any surprises, coaches knew that they had prepared their team well.

> Game analysis, watching video, breaking down the plays, and breaking down the tape. Over the years it has become a huge part [of my work]. I look back and I go, "How did we ever coach without videotape and computers?" I do think that to be able to watch a tape and actually break down what five kids are doing is a big part of coaching. [Then] to diagram that and give it to your kids in one way or another. Maybe it is written, maybe you do not get to write it down, and maybe you just show them on the court, whatever. (C1)

> I said to them, "If we are going to win, we have to really do everything perfectly." I spent a little more time on game prep and opponent preparation, than I had in the past.... Now they always get a scouting report on who we are playing, the key players, their basic offences and defences. Then, we can prepare for them and we can deal with the odd things that they are going to throw at us that are different. If you are seeing things you have never seen before, it is a lot harder to cope with it. (C3)

Preparing the team also meant helping players to improve their understanding and knowledge of their sport. Coaches aimed to develop the coach within the player.

> I think [I make] them more game smart; [I show] them what they did and why it worked or why it did not work. Before, we would watch video and I would not say anything, and they would be laughing [at themselves]. Now I analyse the tape more from what I see, and I share that with them. I think that I sometimes assumed they knew the things that I knew, and many times they did not.... I think they were able to analyse the game better and carry that over into helping them prepare for the next opponent. (C3)

For these reasons, coaches created game-like situations as part of their daily practices. Players who had experienced these simulations were more likely to react appropriately to new situations.

> [We do not do] "pylon" sort of exercises, where people will dribble through pylons. Every skill that we work on, we work on in a game-like situation... We say, "Game shots, game spots at game speeds." We even work on fundamental skill at game speed. Most of our drills get quite complicated fairly early, but the emphasis is still on the fundamentals within those drills. (C3)

> For me, [it is] a real emphasis around ball control training. We spend a lot of time doing training involving ball control. I think a critical factor for athletes is that they are in the gym, feeling the same kind of pressure that they feel in competition. And if we fail them, that is where we fail them. We create an environment for them so that when they get to competition, [they have already experienced it]. (C2)

Our coaches purposely wanted to prepare effective and enjoyable practices. Enjoyable did not mean relaxed! To the contrary, it meant hard, efficient and diverse practices. Athletes needed to be committed. Coaches usually varied their practices in order to keep the attention of the players. When a new drill was presented, players needed to pay more attention, which increased the overall concentration, commitment and dedication of the team in that drill. Coaches also mentioned the significance of their own pleasure in practice.

> I came back from that summer with tons of new drills. All of a sudden, all of my veteran players (and that was the year that we won as well) had to pay attention in practice. I could not say, "Ok we are doing this drill," and then off they would go, and after a while they would just go through the motions. I had so many new drills that they had to pay attention again. (C3)

> I think you have to have fun. You are going to be more successful if your players are there because they love the sport. (C1)

> When I was a player, it was important for me to have fun while I was working hard. I kept that as a coach. I also took it from one of my coaches. When she was coaching, she seemed to have fun. We are not professional athletes, so it is important to have fun while working hard.... We can perform, be the best in our country and still have fun! (C5)

Management/Administration

The "management/administration" property included the tasks and demands in the job of a coach not related to the training of athletes or the taking part in competitions. In order to build a successful program, much more than physical, mental, technical and tactical planning was needed. Enormous amount of coaching-related tasks were expected from the organisation, parents, athletes and community.

> I think you have to have a certain amount of [community involvement]. I did basketball camps. [I also did] a mother-daughter night where I sent out [invitations] to all these moms and girls--some I was recruiting and some I was not. They would come in and we would have guest speakers. [We were] sort of establishing a following around the program. We [also] invited a lot of young girls, parents and coaches to come watch our games and practices. I think you have to go out and establish something in the community to get support, because it is not easy. (C4)

> With regards to our scrimmages, we play the alumni, and [a college nearby]. Locally, we try to promote [our team]... by travelling to high schools to play our games. (C5)

> [Our university] wants us to be involved in sport development and really to be key people in our sport nationally, internationally, locally, regionally; at every level. (C2)

> [Some coaches] do not put energy in areas that are going to benefit them in the long run. When I teach an activity course, I am impacting grassroots [coaches]. One of those students could very well be coaching one of my top athletes someday. I know some people do not really value the opportunities to teach, especially if they are at a lower level, but if we are being part of developing a program, it is our role. Our role is to develop coaching. Our role is to develop athletes and every opportunity to help do so; you want to take full advantage of that [involvement]. (C2)

Community involvement certainly promoted the name and reputation of the program. In the end, it helped coaches get the athletes for which they were looking. A good reputation helped to recruit the best players in the country, which in turn brought more success and a better reputation to the program. Recruiting good athletes was a major part of the coaching job. All our coaches acknowledged that a program could not win unless the best athletes surrounded it. The emphasis on recruiting was vital and its rewards were obvious.

> I was lucky because there was a fairly good string of local high school kids that were coming out of [our] area. My feeling was that if I could get those kids to stay in [our city] and play, then that would be a good start. I was able to do that. I was able to convince those kids that they should come to [our university] for academic reasons. [I told them] we were going to build a program together. I recruited pretty hard... I think that is a major part of my success. (C3)

> Recruiting. Recruiting is a necessary evil. It is an ongoing process and it happens primarily in what many refer to as our off-season. (C1)

> Recruiting. I think I have recruited a really good group of athletes. I can think of two years where we finished second at nationals. Both those years we had every position covered, plus a good back up. I think in every position we had really good players; we had really great depth. (C4)

When coaches were newly appointed to their positions, a transition period had to occur. Returning players did not always enjoy the philosophy of the new coach. Therefore, the coaches needed to start focusing immediately on new recruits.

> I was able, in the first year, to bring in three or four kids that were new to the program and I tried to focus on those kids. The ones that I had recruited to come in had what I was looking for [in the areas of] work ethic and intensity. So I focused on those kids and then tried to have the other kids understand what that was like. (C3)

For many coaches, changing past attitudes and philosophy was hard. In general, their assessment of a good player was different than that of the previous coach.

> I recall my first week or so at [this university]. I did not know anything about the [team]... I was quizzing people on who the returning people were, and I kept hearing, "Oh, you will like her. She is such a nice person." "Oh, she is great. She is so nice." And I remember looking at them and saying, "I do not care if they are nice. Can they play? Can they play under pressure?" And so my impression was that my assessment of a player was going to be fundamentally different than others. And we needed a change not necessarily in philosophy but in identifying the type of athlete that is going to work and be compatible with me. (C2)

For building their program, coaches looked for particular individuals, not always the best players. Some said they looked for the missing piece of the puzzle, which meant an athlete with a specific strength. However, most coaches looked into recruiting good people first and great athletes second; or in other words, they looked to recruit the best athletes from those that were the most coachable.

> When I am recruiting, I will see a kid that is a great rebounder, maybe not a great scorer. Or I might see someone that is a great defender, or I might see someone that is a real leader on the floor, but they do not score a lot. So I am always looking for the pieces of the puzzle that I am missing in a particular program. (C1)

> I think I was very good at recruiting a team, not recruiting 12 individuals. I have always tried to have eight really good players and other kids that complement them [by] either bringing us great rebounding, great defence, great off the court, or great work ethic. One of the best kids I ever had never really played that much in 4 years and she just had an incredible work ethic.... (C4)

Other coaches looked at which athletes would fit their philosophy the best; with whom they would get along. Also, the characteristics of being a fighter and a competitive athlete were highly valued by the coaches.

> That just comes back to recruiting. Knowing who will fit in with you. I do not mind spirited athletes. Sometimes I have taken kids who everyone else said had a bad attitude, and I do not think they did. They are just pretty spirited and competitive. I always knew how to channel it. I have had kids that other people said "I would not touch them," but they have turned out to be good players for me. And I am sure there are some that I said I would not touch that turned out to be good players for [other coaches]. I think you have to know who will fit with you. And I have passed up on kids that I know we would have clashed, and I would not have been the best coach for them, but it is hard. (C4)

> I had it pretty clear in my mind the type of athlete needed to be successful at the championship level in CIS. And I knew that in [our province] we were enough athletes, because of the population base, the development of sport and the resources. It was a matter of that intangible knowing how to win, and having the type of players that can be champions and winners. [Then] really [be able] to foster that. So it is partially recruitment of a champion athlete, and then having the wherewithal to lead them to the championship. (C2)

Apart form recruiting, other administrative tasks were included in the work of the coaches. Far from being their favourite task of the job description, coaches nevertheless came up with great ideas in the area of fundraising. Some participated in holding homecoming events; others found sponsorships or contacted alumni.

> We work our fundraising into our seasonal plan... I plan [the season] according to some football games, where we work.... These days are hard! Then you have to plan your next practice according to that, because it is so demanding! (C5)

> So I think there are a number of elements as far as program development. There is looking back to your past and having that link with your alumni and that is your logical source of support, whether that be financial, whatever. (C2)

> I went out and got a sponsor too... That was huge! I know it is just gear, but first you save a lot of money out of our own budget to get shoes and bags and sweat suits and that, but secondly, it gives the players a certain feeling that somebody out there cares about them; that what we are doing is important. (C4)

Finally, coaching also involved a lot of stress. Some coaches were able to manage stress better than others. The key was to find a solution that would help them cope with stress and keep coaching as long as they could.

> When I started coaching, I demanded 100 times more of myself than what I demanded of my athletes. After a few years, I adjusted as a coach, so that I would not have stomach ulcers and would be able to sleep. (C5)

> One of my personal missions in life is to show that women, in particular, and parents interested in having long-term relationships with a significant other, can have a coaching career. And that it can work. It can be something that they actually enjoy doing and are not trying to get out of. (C2)

> You know what I think? I think coaching is a massive thing. You see it in the NCCP books. You are supposed to be an expert on everything--physical, psychological, technical, tactical, planning, nutrition... It is never-ending. And then if you put someone in a CIS job, they have to recruit, fundraise, get sponsors, [do] marketing and promotion, etc. Sometimes we send a message that you have to be good at everything to be successful in your profession. This is a dangerous message; especially for the young coach embarking on it because it is impossible. I do not think it is healthy either from the individual standpoint, [or] from the team's standpoint. (C2)

In conclusion, coaching definitly encompassed more than merely training athletes. Coaches were expected to be excellent in many if not all areas involved in coaching. For achieving such high demands, coaches needed sharp and excellent organisational skills. Results demonstrated that the organisational skills of the coaches was a determining factor in the successful achievement of their strategy--to foster individual growth in each player, and that it was influenced greatly by the persona of each coach.

Vision

In this study, the coaches' vision emerged as a fundamental element for understanding how they built their programs. The results suggested that vision was central to all three categories: coaches' attributes, individual growth, and organisational skills. Vision was pivotal because it originated within the coaches' minds; it influenced the growth of each individual athlete; and its achievement was directly linked to the organisational skills of coaches. Furthermore, vision provided each team with a unified direction, with motivation, and with a strong desire to strive for excellence. A tabular illustration of tags in this property is presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Occurrence of Tags Within the Vision Property

Property and tags	n	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5
Vision	**120**	**27**	**24**	**22**	**33**	**14**
achieving success	6	2	1	0	1	2
changing attitudes and philosophy	8	1	4	2	1	0
coach plan of action	9	1	3	2	2	1
goal of organization	2	2	0	0	0	0
goal-setting	23	6	5	2	6	4
process goal	7	0	0	5	0	2
selling philosophy	8	2	2	3	1	0
setting standards	36	5	5	7	17	2
team direction	5	3	2	0	0	0
team unity	16	5	2	1	5	3

Organising the Vision

Each one of the successful coaches started with a vision of what she would like her program to look like in the long-term. This vision became evident before or shortly after her appointment as head coach. Several coaches acknowledged the importance of having a vision and knowing where they were going.

> I think that anybody starting a program has a vision. I think you have to have a vision.... Early on, I had a total vision of what I wanted everything to look like... I knew, when I took over at [this university]... what I would be doing. (C4)

> I wanted to bring [our university] back on the map. Not that it was not, but it was not enough for me. I wanted to improve the program. (C5)

> Originally, I wanted to come in and turn the program around. It was an opportunity. (C1)

When coaches felt comfortable with their vision, they aimed at creating an identity for the team, something the players could identify with and say "This is who we are." This way of creating an identity was important at the start because the teams would return to it when difficulties arose. This initial identity was also going to set the tone for all the years to come.

> We spent quite a bit of time talking about what we could accomplish. Then we would talk about it as a group, "What do we want to accomplish, and what are we going to have to do to get there?" (C1)

> It was very important to establish who we were to be. What we wanted to look like on the floor. As a team, how we practiced and how do we looked in practice.... How we dressed, how we treated each other. Everything had to have a standard. And it had to be established now, because it is really hard to get it back. I think that was what was exciting about coming in and having that sort of empty canvas. (C4)

The team identity included rules and standards by which the team would function. However, it was the elaboration of a plan of action that would ultimately bring transformation in the program. A plan of action included the designing and establishment of a mission from which the program would experience changes, step by step.

> I think early on, it was about getting to the media to get our program established. [With media support], the best kids would want to come here, and people would want to come and watch [the games].... We really tried hard to get people out in the community. I called up newspaper reporters and said, "Hey, I got this kid; I got that kid," and then they started to cover us more. The connections with media, the connections with alumni, and trying to publicise our best players was [key]. I got good support staff, developed a year round training program, established the expectations within practice, and [started] to recruit good players. [Finally], we put on a good show [during games]. If it is not good, the people are not going to come no matter how much you pump it up. I made it like it was a special place; it was special to be part of our program. I think that was really important. (C4)

> I really had a goal to do it with class. We were going to have certain standards that everybody had to meet whether they were Olympians or the 13th player. I probably [started as head coach] with more goals around the program than I did around the sport. I wanted to draw fans, because there were no fans at [our university]. We sold out our gym five times in the first three years! We sold out our gym, which is maybe 3000 [seats]. So I had goals around the way we were going to behave on and off the court.... I did not even think about [winning the championship]! I had to establish what I wanted the program to look like [first].... We dressed properly on the road; we treated other teams with respect; we treated each other with respect; and we played with class.... I had a lot of those kinds of goals around the program. (C4)

Thus, the vision of the coaches became the basis from which the plan of action emerged. From that same plan of action, a particular *motus operendi* was created from which a particular direction was set. Setting a direction was key because all the players knew where they were going, what they were aiming for, and why they were training. The direction led the team toward the vision, which was the ultimate goal.

> That was the direction we wanted to take. We wanted to be professional. We wanted to be beyond reproach in terms of our behaviour on the court, off the court, in the classroom, in our commitment to each other, and in our commitment to the team. I think these players were just waiting for that, and [when I offered it to them], they grabbed it. (C1)

> If you know where you want to go all together, I just think it makes things easier. If you leave it open ended, and nobody knows where they are going, then how can you set the direction? (C1)

Coaches wanted their players to be on the same page. The team was headed in a specific direction, and all decisions were made according to that direction. Team unity was essential.

> You have to be on the same page in terms of goals that you set for the individuals and for the team. Everybody has to know where we are going, because if you do not know where you are going, you are never going to get there. (C1)

In addition, players needed to clearly understand the vision so that they could contribute appropriately to reaching it. Coaches educated players about vision and long term goals.

> I think that [players] have to have a vision of their fit in the sport as a whole. Being able to see outside of their own little bubble... and being able to collaborate and work with others. Playing well with others is a good quality. I think what inhibits [players], sometimes, is the inability to see past their noses, so that they do not really know where they fit. (C2)

> [We] set individual goals, and see how they fit into the team goal. When you are young, you cannot see two years down the road. [Players] cannot even see 5 minutes [down the road], and they cannot see what happened this past Friday night! So trying to get them to set long-term goals [is important]. To see how we are going to get there, both individually and as a team. (C4)

Finally, according to two coaches, when the athletic department pushed in the same direction as the coach, it greatly facilitated the development process. The goals of the athletic department made a difference in the kind of program coaches would be able to build. If both the athletic department and the coach were on the same page, wanting to reach the same vision, success was more likely to happen.

> I came to [this university] because they decided to change from having a part-time coach to a full-time [coach]. Their goals matched my goals in terms of wanting to build a program, challenge the elite levels, and eventually win a national championship. (C1)

> The academics here were excellent. The athletic program was really good. I came here with the plan that if I wanted to build a program, this was where I could do it. I had the support of all the other things that I needed: the academics and the athletic department. (C3)

In sum, the results of this study demonstrated how vision influenced the various organisational skills displayed in all aspects of the coaches' task. From planning to recruiting or from preparing the team for competitions to fundraising, every action of the coach was deliberately done with the vision in mind.

Vision Characterised by the Coaches' Attributes

The coaches in this study agreed that the vision they had when they took over the program was characterised by their personal attributes. They were excited because they knew the program would reflect who they were as coaches.

> I thought I had a great opportunity, because the minute I took over the program, I could put my imprint on it, along with the players.... (C4)

All participating coaches recalled taking over a team which was not used to training according to the highest standards. Therefore, one of the first challenges of the coaches was to change the previous philosophy of the program and the overall attitude of the team. This challenge suited the coaches well because their personalities made them passionate winners and motivators.

> That is why I came here. When I came, my first challenge was to change the attitude of the players from that of a second rate program. "We are not winners. We have not been winners." That was the biggest challenge, to change their overall attitude. (C1)

> It was ironic because I had coached at [another university] for four years. I had taken over a pretty good program [there] and was able to maintain that program. We were always ranked in the top ten. When I came here, I think the team was 0 and 20... I thought, "Oh, I can just turn it around. It is easy." But it was more difficult than I thought, because people did not know how to win. (C3)

After a thorough evaluation on the part of the coaches, changes to the programs were implemented. Coaches started to sell, not to impose, their philosophy and vision to the players. Selling the new philosophy became an important part of the coaches' work. Coaches needed their players to buy into their vision. They felt it was their role to

convince and to ensure that their players would want to follow them. Once that was accomplished, success was on its way.

> People bought into our process. They have bought into what we do. By repetition, we were able to really get ourselves in tune as a team. Then we were really ready to play, because we were able to focus so much on our performance. (C3)

> They were completely sold on that, and I think it was also lucky that we had a group that stayed together for three or four years. We achieved well with them because they had been together a long time and knew the system and were playing well. (C4)

One coach pointed out that "buying in" meant that players wanted to follow what she was asking, until they eventually appropriated the vision to themselves and really believed in it. She mentioned primarily the technical and tactical aspect, but "buying in" also meant buying the coach's philosophy in general.

> That is interesting because a lot of the players will say, "What do you mean by buying in?" I do not know if that term is all that commonly used. But they have to believe what I am having them do from a technical standpoint, and I guess all [of the other] areas, is going to work. Even if they might not believe it, they have to give it a chance. Then if it does not work, I will fix it.... I have remembered where we have been hurt in pressure situations. Going down to the locker room, standing outside, I heard the older players say: "You have to try. We have to do what she is asking us to do, and when that does not work she will fix it. But you cannot just do your own thing." That is not only understanding how to buy in, but it is really buying in. When those older players are saying the same things that I am saying, you know that they bought in. And you know that they believe that. (C3)

Coaches' attributes, then, were influential in creating a vision and ensuring that the vision and philosophy were sold to the players. By establishing personal standards of respect, trust, and balance, coaches were able to convince their players to follow them and to buy into their system. The vision was created, carried, and achieved successfully largely because of the coaches' persona.

Vision for Individual Growth

The principal focus of the vision among the expert coaches was the individual growth of players. Every coach's strategy was to develop players into great athletes as well as great people. Therefore, if the vision was to build a successful program, it did not necessarily mean winning a championship. Rather, building players into champions was the thrust of the coaches' strategy. Individual meetings and setting personal and team goals were essentials for determining the role of each player within the vision. The goal of the coach was to ensure that the players knew they were important and worth the investment. Coaches educated their players and explained to them how to live their dream on a daily basis.

> How do you do it? I think you have to deal with your kids individually, on their individual goals.... [For] the group, you need to help direct them in terms of "What do we want to accomplish? What do we want to be known for?" And then your dream goal, "Where are we going to go as a team?" Then [comes short term goals], "Where are we going to be in a month's time?" For us, that became relatively consistent in terms of what the [dream] was going to be, and that was winning a national championship. [However], I think it is very easy, if you say, "We want to be the national champions," [but]... what does that mean? What does that mean for us everyday? If that is our goal, then what are the things we need to do to get there? How are we going to get there and what might prevent us from getting there? "Is that behaviour acceptable? Is that going to lead us to that goal, or deter us from achieving it?"... You need to have everybody come to grips with what it is we want to accomplish as a team. And then within that, your own individual goals have to be set. (C1)

Focusing on short-term goals was a common method used by the expert coaches to foster development. Each coach emphasised that her team's smaller steps would lead them to the dream goal. Again, the vision became the purpose behind the players' training, and, in some ways, the athletes' very reason for being on that team.

> At the start, the goals must be clear; not only team goals, but also primarily individual goals. They have to be clear, precise, and accepted by the player, along with their role. [Then] you have to try to motivate the player and help them to reach these goals. It is not always easy. (C5)

> I think to get that internal motivation, they have to know where they are going and why. [I] help them with their goal setting. (C4)

According to one coach, it was essential to teach the athletes how to compete against pressure. An empowerment process occurred when the athletes started to enjoy pressure. They became intrinsically motivated and tended to take their future into their own hands. Training sessions became more serious, and athletes realised that outcomes depended on them.

> If I was to add to [the explanation of my strategy] and make it more tangible, it would be around helping athletes understand how to deal with pressure. To the point where... this is John Wooden's expression, "A championship athlete is one that can play at the best of their ability, under the most difficult circumstances." That is my goal--to help them see that... they are not going to know if they are champion athletes, unless it is difficult. Anybody can play well when there is nothing on the line. (C2)

> [Now] our team looks at a schedule and says, "Ok, when is there the most pressure?" And that is what we are excited about, as opposed to, "Oh, I hope we are going to be good enough. (C2)

Results showed that the expert coaches primarily focused on the process rather than on outcomes. The process of achieving success was reinforced daily by an emphasis on personal improvement and on reaching short-term goals throughout the year. It was another way to educate players about how to be champions.

> We did not focus on outcome. We focused on process and getting better every single time we played. (C3)

> I think the key element [is that] you have to have athletes that are committed to process. I think that is one of the most important things. If kids are coming in, and they are concerned about whether we win games or concerned about how many points they score, those are the things that you are never going to build a good program [with]. I think that you have to have intensity, and you have to have work ethic. That is: just focus on process. This is what needs to get done. When we do those things, the outcome will follow, rather than focusing on the outcome. I think that is a really important thing. (C3)

> What is hard as a coach is to really make the players understand that they need to concentrate on their performances, not the outcome. It is always the biggest challenge coaches have. (C5)

While focussing on process, the coaches also put a meticulous emphasis on doing things right; they demanded excellence. Nothing but perfect execution of their offences and defences could help the team reach their vision. This pursuit of excellence was demanded on and off the court. It was demanded at the technical, tactical, physical, mental and emotional levels. Coaches promoted the value of each player performing to the best of her ability.

> I think you [do it right] every day in the expectation and in the delivery of your practices. If you are doing a drill, you are doing it right. If I think that they can perform a certain skill to a certain level, if I believe that is the focus, the intensity needs to be at a certain level. It was very clear that is where it was going to be. (C1)

> They were not allowed to do anything incorrectly. If they were not running the [play] exactly the way I wanted it, we stopped and talked about it. Most of them knew when they did it wrong. We did not accept anything less than perfect process, and we were able to really get people doing things right. (C3)

> I am not someone who screams and shouts. It is not my personality. However, I am demanding, and I transmit to [my players] that if they are doing something, they have to do it right. (C5)

> [My strategy] is really hard to articulate because it is something you cannot really put your finger on. [But] it is attending to details. It is sending the message that every time you touch the ball, it matters. [It is] trying to get away from this human nature that [says] you can "turn it on and off" whenever they want. [It is], rather, you always [have to] turn it on. (C2)

One coach mentioned that during a certain wining season, she started to demand perfection early; right from the start of the season, as opposed to later during the year.

> Probably the biggest change that I made was that I demanded perfection sooner.... That year it was interesting because from try-outs, if I talked about a drill, and they did not do it right, the whistle blew and I said, "This is what you are doing wrong. Do it right. Fix it. Right now!" And I thought I was just like an ogre. I thought I was driving them crazy.... It was funny because I had this feeling that I was almost annoying, since I was so demanding of them. I paid much more attention to the little details and made sure that we did things right. (C3)

Setting high standards was a common characteristic among all the expert coaches. A standard of excellence, nothing less, was their target. This concept grew out of their vision and plan of action: to educate and foster the growth of their players. A commitment to excellence was an integral factor in their eventual success.

> Our practice habits are going to be impeccable, and if we go for a drink, we run there, and we run back. You know, not really militaristic, but just a standard of conduct on the floor, off the floor, in the athletic department. I told my players that we want to be the classiest on campus. We want to be the top academic team. We wanted to be the best we could be. We were not always, but we tried to achieve that and have a life standard. It is not just about basketball; for me, there is so much more. (C4)

> I always go into a team room and make sure there is not anything left [on the floor], because that is the standard... When I first got the job, I said to the [support staff], "If any of my athletes ever say one derogatory remark, if they ever are demanding when they should not be, then you are to tell me."... I just think these standards transfer to the floor. I think in thirteen years I have had three kids get technical fouls... You do not talk to the officials.... We had a rule that if you knocked an opponent down, then you had to help her up.... That is part of our standards. When players come off the floor, the players stand up and everybody slaps hands. It does not matter how upset you are.... You do not walk off the floor.... All of a sudden kids were saying "I am really tired. We are weight training three times a week. We are doing three individual workouts."... So I was really willing early on to just say, "These are the standards; if you cannot meet them, move on. We can get someone else who can." I was not threatening them, but this is it. (C4)

Reinforcing and keeping these standards of excellence were sometimes hard for the coaches. One coach mentioned that this was one of the more difficult parts of coaching, especially when the best players were not living up to expectations. However, she believed that by requiring all players to stick to the standards, she was able to really empower the team to develop a deep respect for the standards she had set.

> I think that [the sport] is just one big part of it, but there is much more. One of my freshmen came into practice really tired.... I said to her, "Oh you do not look very good today." And she said, "I only got 2 hours of sleep because I did not get this paper done." We were playing the next day, so I said to her that I was not going to start her. She asked why.... So I said "You know, you had a horrendous practice. You have not made a commitment to get your work done, to be prepared, to come into practice the day before a game and be focused."... No one had ever said, "Because you stayed up late and did not plan, that affected everybody." I think they learned lessons from those things. Sometimes you sacrifice a little on the win-loss column maybe, but I do not think you do. And I think that players respect you. (C4)

The expert coaches also stressed the importance of being consistent in enforcing their values, rules and standards.

> I have a no drinking rule on the road. It was the birthday of one of the girls, and she said, "Well I am just going to have one drink." She was a second year player, so she knew the rule.... She had a drink and two little rookies followed her. They ordered a drink at dinner because I was not there. Then, of course, I got back... I brought in the players separately and talked about it. We were playing in the final at that tournament the next day. Well, I benched a national team player. [She] was 6'3- 6'4, and two rookies, one of whom had two national team tryouts. Two starters! I called all the other players in after I had told them what I was doing and they said, "Good because this is our standard."... I have never had to do that since, because the word got out. (C4)

One coach noticed that after many years of coaching, some coaches tended to become less consistent and perhaps less demanding of their players. According to her, that was a major reason why some coaches experienced less success the longer they coached.

> I think coaches are better as they get older, but I think they lose their will to keep on the little things. I think that is what happens to coaches. They let the little things slide. My husband always laughs and says, "Your greatest quality as a coach is that you are a relentless nag." And I think I am. If I think they are acting incorrectly, then I correct it. I correct everything all the time and [am] relentless about the standard of conduct in there, or in the cafeteria... and how to treat [support staff]. Because it says something about who you are and what your standards of excellence are. (C4)

Relationships Among The Three Higher Order Categories

The results of the current research demonstrated that coaching success did not necessarily come from a linear pattern or set of behaviours. Rather, it involved the personal ability of each coach to establish and maintain harmonic relationships between the three higher order categories and their vision (Figure 1).

The range of attributes of the expert coaches played a fundamental role in the individual growth of the athletes. In one situation, a coach might have been autocratic and demanding, yet in another, she was democratic and supportive. Each athlete trusted her coach to discern when it was time to be tough or caring. The athletes were willing to be pushed out of their comfort zone because they felt safe. Individual growth resulted.

The attributes of the coaches were also evident in their organisational skills. Coaches who were more efficient in the planning of their training sessions were more successful. Their persona had an impact on how practices were run, how games were coached, and seasons were designed. On the management level, the inner makeup of the coach influenced many decisions such as how they dealt with job pressures or even which potential recruits would be attending the program the following year.

Finally, an important relationship existed between "individual growth" and "organisational skills". The goals, standards, and values of the sports program were constantly reinforced by the organisational skills of the coaches, resulting in order to help the individual progress of each athlete. It was through the coaches' planning, goal-setting, and managing that personal goals were achieved by each player. The high quality of the organisational skills of the coaches helped foster the development and growth of each individual.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This chapter evaluates and interprets the results of the current study. Explanations regarding the meaning of the results, as well as their implications when compared with existing literature in the field are given. Similarities and differences with the work of other authors are also discussed in order to clarify or confirm the results of the present research.

The objective of the present research was to identify key elements that expert Canadian female coaches of team sports incorporated in the development of their successful programs. In particular, this research aimed at discovering if there were common variables that enabled these coaches to achieve success. According to our results, it could be concluded that four common variables were found, namely three higher order categories influenced by one common factor. These variables were the coaches' attributes, organisational skills, individual growth, and vision. Furthermore, results demonstrated that these four variables were interrelated, and that the outcome of their balanced relationships and interactions were a strong indicator of success. To discuss and clarify these results, the three higher order categories and the vision, as well as the relationships among them will be laid out and compared with existing literature. This will be followed by a discussion regarding how these four variables lead to a transformational leadership style. A summary, conclusions, and recommendations for future research will bring this chapter to a close.

Coaches Attributes

One of the main derivatives from the analysis of this research was the category "coaches' attributes". This category encompassed coaches' traits, behaviours, personalities, characteristics, and knowledge. More specifically, the coaches' attributes category was divided into two main sections: coaches' characteristics (personalities, traits, and behaviours) and coaches' commitment to learning (thirst for gaining knowledge). The results pointed toward an existing synergy among the multiple attributes expert coaches possessed, which enabled them to display favourable behaviours at different times. It seemed that our successful coaches knew when to be autocratic or democratic, caring or strict, assisting or demanding. These findings will be discussed in light of literature on coaches' characteristics (Bloom & Salmela, 2000; Csikszentmihalyi, Rathunde, & Whalen, 1993; Côté, Salmela, Trudel, Baria, & Russell, 1995; Ericsson, Krampe, & Tesch-Römer, 1993; Woodman, 1993), as well as with the Multidimensional Model of Leadership (Chelladurai, 1978; 1990).

Many of the current results are in agreement with the findings of Côté, Salmela, Trudel, et al. (1995) and Bloom and Salmela (2000). According to the authors of the coaching model (CM, Appendix A) (Côté, Salmela, Trudel, et al., 1995), "coaches' personal characteristics" influenced the coaching process of expert gymnastics coaches. This component included variables relevant to coaches' philosophies, perceptions, beliefs, knowledge and personal lives that influenced the training of athletes, participation in competitions, and the organisation of the season. Using the CM as a framework, Bloom and Salmela analysed in depth the "coaches' personal characteristics" component with expert team sport coaches. In their study, the authors found that specific characteristics seemed to set apart expert coaches from other coaches. Some of the characteristics

pertained to their personal approaches to coaching such as communicating effectively, empathising with players, working harder than other coaches, having fun during training, and being a good teacher (Bloom & Salmela, 2000). These expert coaches were also found to acquire knowledge by attending clinics, seminars, and symposia, as well as by seeking mentors, reading coaching books and learning from fellow coaches (Bloom & Salmela, 2000).

In the present study, a persistent quest for personal growth, learning and development was also found. The coaches' attributes category that emerged from the analysis confirmed what has already been found in previous research. However, the results also showed that expert coaches possessed a broader range of characteristics and coaching styles than what was previously found. Results suggested that what made the difference in expert coaches extended beyond possessing a list of specific attributes. In fact, it was the relationships that formed a synergy between the multiple attributes, which seemed to be essential to success. The differences acknowledged between the present study and that of Bloom and Salmela (2000) or of Côté, Salmela, Trudel, et al. (1995), could be explained by the differing goals of these studies. In the present study, the in-depth examination of coaches' leadership styles could explain the more elaborate spectrum of characteristics found.

Results gathered on coaches' attributes in the current study implied that two coaches using the same methods, means, and players could end up with different outcomes. This affirmation paralleled the work of Woodman (1993), who concluded that whatever knowledge coaches have with regards to coaching (tactical, technical, scientific or other), does not, in itself, make a coach more successful. Rather, the application of that knowledge through "individual flair" is what set excellent coaches apart (Woodman,

1993). In the current study, "individual flair" corresponded to a coach's ability to choose the appropriate behaviour to display from the wide range of attributes she possesses. Therefore, the balance and healthy relationships between these characteristics could be what differentiated successful from less successful coaches. In light of the present work and available studies, further investigation would be required to understand the relationships among personal attributes of coaches and how their variety affects performances or coaching styles. In fact, results from leadership and coaching research have pointed to coaches' attributes as possible indicators for successful endeavours (e.g., Bloom & Salmela, 2000; Côté, Salmela, Trudel, et al., 1995; Chelladurai, 1978; 1990; Csikszentmihalyi et al., 1993; Hendry, 1974; Ogilvie & Tutko, 1966), but no research has explicitly examined relationships between these attributes.

Up to this point, the focus has been on similarities between the current study and previous research on personal characteristics (Bloom & Salmela, 2000; Csikszentmihalyi et al., 1993; Côté, Salmela, Trudel, et al., 1995; Ericsson et al., 1993; Woodman, 1993). However, the current results also provided unique insights into the Multidimensional Model of Leadership (Appendix B) (Chelladurai, 1978; 1990). Chelladurai's model suggested that when coaches' behaviours corresponded to those preferred by athletes and required by the environment, athlete's satisfaction and performance were increased. Since the results of this research laid out the wide spectrum of attributes coaches owned (from tough to caring, or from autocratic to democratic), it seemed likely that when equipped with a wide range of attributes, coaches were more prone to display preferred and required behaviours in a specific situation. The results provided evidence of the significance of possessing a broad spectrum of attributes in order to be able to display different behaviours when needed.

Results of the current study also confirmed the work of Csikszentmihalyi et al. (1993) and Ericsson et al. (1993) that expressed how coaches and teachers' influence was a central determinant for the rising success of expert performers. Specifically, Csikszentmihalyi and colleagues found that successful teachers enjoyed teaching, created optimal learning conditions, and understood the needs of their students. In the same way, results implied that the very persona of the coaches was a determining factor in the success of the team. It could be suggested, then, that individual growth, organisational skills, and vision were effective in relationship to the coaches' attributes (Figure 1). The attributes of the coaches not only established a specific leadership style, but they also set the tone and became the program's foundation.

Individual Growth

Individual growth referred to the overall philosophy of personal development coaches promoted as part of their successful program. In the present study, it was found that expert coaches desired to develop each of their athletes' abilities and to build them into successful individuals. The coaches invested in building self-confidence, increasing responsibilities, enhancing maturity, and creating a sense of ownership during training. In the same way, coaches developed mutually respectful relationships with their support staff and viewed them as valuable sources of help, encouragement, and insight both on and off the court. The individual growth category was divided into two sections: life skills (using sport as a platform to teach applicable skills) and empowerment (investing in the personal development of athletes and support staff). This category offered many tangible concepts that will be discussed in light of existing literature on coaching (Bloom, 1996). In addition, examples from the experiences of successful coach John Wooden, partisan of this philosophy, will be given.

The results of the individual growth category related to Bloom's (1996) writings concerning the development of athletes. As part of a bigger work investigating the viewpoints of twenty-two expert Canadian coaches of team sports, it was mentioned that while winning remained important for these coaches, the personal development of players was just as meaningful, in most cases. For example, coaches were concerned about their athletes' academic and personal success. Expert coaches based their relationships on mutual respect and effective communication. In addition, they emphasised the creation of an educational and fun environment conducive to learning. Bloom found that one way to create such an environment was to let athletes voice their opinions. Delegation of responsibilities to athletes also helped build this positive environment because athletes felt valued and encouraged to learn.

The results of the current study essentially offered a perfect match with the findings of Bloom (1996). Similar to what was found as part of Bloom's research, the analysis demonstrated that the participating coaches wished to foster the personal development of their athletes beyond the sport and that they worked at developing strong personal relationships with their players. Two of the main methods used by the expert coaches to achieve individual growth were empowerment and the teaching of life skills. Results suggested that a significant empowerment process took place in the athletes' lives throughout their university sport career. Through building self-confidence, teaching team cohesion and role acceptance, coaches developed the whole player. Also, coaches valued their players' input in decision making, their leadership, responsibility and individual improvement. Results also demonstrated that relationships with players were characterised by respect, trust and communication.

Although the current results were part of Bloom's (1996) findings, an additional contribution to the previous work of Bloom might be the emphasis of teaching life skills. Teaching life skills was an area much stressed by all of our expert university coaches. For example, it was found that coaches invested in teaching athletes to control their emotions, to attend classes and succeed, and to focus on the task at hand rather than on uncontrollable things. One explanation for this emphasis might be that Bloom's research gathered expert coaches from professional, national, and university teams in Canada, while this study focused solely on Canadian university teams. Developing life skills in players may not have been as important for coaches at the professional and national levels compared to coaches at the university level dealing with student-athletes and younger adults. It would then be justified to further investigate in the area of coach-athlete relationships at professional and national levels with regards to teaching life skills.

The relational aspect of coaching has attracted many successful coaches. John Wooden is one who embraced the philosophy of investing in his players' individual growth and in establishing strong relationships with them. In his book, They Call Me Coach, Wooden (1988) expressed, "I often told my players that, next to my own flesh and blood, they were the closest to me. They were my children. I got wrapped up in them, their lives and their problems" (p.62). From this viewpoint, Wooden's definition of success, sitting at the top of his "Pyramid of Success," provides a unique insight into the expert coaches' philosophy on building a successful program. Wooden expressed, "Success is peace of mind which is a direct result of self-satisfaction in knowing you did your best to become the best that you are capable of becoming" (p. 89). Actually, one of the expert coaches clearly expressed that wining a national championship was not the be-all and end-all of coaching success. In fact, the analysis of the current study suggested

that, at the university level, the key to building a successful program was not necessarily an emphasis on winning. Rather, it was a genuine investment in the personal development of players in the areas of behaviours, attitudes, and setting high standards. Seemingly, winning then emerged from such a philosophy resulting in a successful program. The following section will discuss how the philosophy of individual growth could not succeed without thorough organisational skills.

Organisational Skills

The definition of organisational skills used for this research was taken from the literature. It explained organisation as a process through which coaches structured and put into place optimum training sessions and competitions throughout the season (Bloom, 2002; Côté & Salmela, 1996). Organisational skills were therefore defined as specific abilities that allowed coaches to coordinate the various demands of their work, such as planning the season and dealing with administrative concerns (e.g., Bloom, 2002; Côté, Salmela, Trudel, et al., 1995; Desjardins, 1996). Results of the current study demonstrated that coaches' responsibilities extended beyond planning practices and preparing the team for competition. It also included multiple managerial tasks such as recruiting, being involved in the community, participating in fund-raising projects, and dealing with different job pressures. For this reason, two main sections characterised the organisational skills category: planning and management/administration. In addition, all relational aspects of coaching were taken out of organisation and put into the individual growth category. Findings will be compared to results of previous empirical work referring to the organisational component of the coaches' work (Bloom, 1997; 2002; Côté, 1998; Côté & Salmela, 1996; Côté, Salmela, Trudel, et al., 1995; Gilbert & Trudel, 2000).

The previous literature maintained that the organisational skills of coaches would be a determining factor in the success of a program because it had a direct impact on the development of the athlete (Bloom, 1997; Côté, 1998; Côté & Salmela, 1996; Côté, Salmela, Trudel, et al., 1995). Bloom (2002) stated that, should a coach be organised, a solid foundation would render training sessions more effective, hence enhancing success in competitions. In addition, Desjardins (1996) found that good organisational skills were essential in motivating athletes to reach their potential. The findings of the current study are confirmed by what has already been found in the coaching literature concerning key outcomes of coaches' organisational skills on success. In particular, the coaches felt their team experienced more success when they were most prepared physically, tactically and mentally. The expert coaches, therefore, spent valuable amounts of time planning practices and games, rest and recovery periods and ensuring the adequate preparation of both their team and themselves. A contribution to previous literature was that managerial tasks such as recruiting, community involvement, and fundraising were found central, as opposed to peripheral (Côté, Salmela, Trudel, et al., 1995) in building a successful program. It was therefore demonstrated that without being thoroughly equipped with organisational skills, the chances for coaches to build a successful program were lessened.

While previous research alluded to skills and tasks likely to be found under the organisational component of coaching (e.g., Bloom, 1997; Côté, Salmela, Trudel, et al., 1995; Desjardins, 1996; Gilbert & Trudel, 2000), none of these research studies examined this category in depth. This was where the present research explicitly differed in its complexity. Côté, Salmela, Trudel, et al.'s research was designed to categorise the knowledge of expert gymnastic coaches. Desjardins' findings were part of a broader research work reporting coaches' viewpoint on what it took to succeed and remain at the

top of the coaching world. However, in the present study, the interview guide was comprised of six main questions, three of which made direct allusions to organisational skills, and two others that offered indirect possibilities of discussing this matter.

One unique contribution of the current study when compared to the CM or Desjardins' (1996) results was that, until this point in coaching research, the relational aspect of coaching was never separated from the organisational aspects. As part of the organisational component of coaching, Côté, Salmela, Trudel, et al. (1995) included working with assistant coaches, dealing with parents, and helping athletes with personal concerns. Desjardins also implied that working with assistant coaches and even promoting team cohesion were part of the organisational work of coaches. The results of the present study, however, clearly distinguished the relational aspect of the work of the coach from the organisational one (Figure 1). The analysis suggested that these relational aspects between coaches and support staff, parents, and players, as well as among the players themselves, be moved out of organisation into the individual growth category which includes relational aspects. Even though both the relational and organisational aspects are comprised in the behavioural dimension of coaching, the results of the current study suggested that they should be separated because the relational aspect of coaching did not concur with the definition of organisation in the literature.

Vision

In the current study, vision emerged as an essential element in understanding how coaches built their programs. According to the results, vision originated in the coaches' mind upon, or shortly after their appointment as head coaches. Early on, coaches worked at changing past philosophies, setting higher standards and goals, and leading the team in

a new direction. Coaches also emphasised the importance of athletes buying into their vision in order for the team to achieve success.

Essentially, the results of this study were consistent with the work of Côté, Salmela, Trudel, et al. (1995) and Desjardins (1996). Côté and colleagues mentioned that expert gymnastics coaches assessed the potential of their athletes and then created a mental model of what their athletes could become. Similarly, Desjardins stated that in order to be successful, coaches should start the season with a vision of what their team could achieve that year. In addition, Desjardins found that expert coaches consistently articulated their vision throughout the year, in hopes of selling it to the team. Desjardins added that from the vision would emerge a mission statement (philosophy) and a season plan (practices, games and other related tasks). Similarly, Côté and colleagues explained that from the mental model, coaches would decide what actions needed to be taken for the organisation, training and competition of the team.

Where the results of the current study offered a distinction from the work of Côté, Salmela, Trudel, et al. (1995) and Desjardins (1996) was in the relationship vision had with the three higher order categories ("coaches attributes", "individual growth" and "organisational skills".) Specifically, results of the analysis showed that vision was influenced by the coaches' attributes, that it influenced the individual growth of players, and that it was achieved because of the organisational skills of coaches. The relationships of these three higher order categories with the vision will be compared to the literature on coaching (Côté, Salmela, Trudel. et al., 1995; Desjardins, 1996), as well as with anecdotal evidence in support of these findings (Barnett & Gregorian, 1996; Jackson & Delehanty, 1995).

First, Côté and colleagues (Côté, Salmela, Trudel, et al., 1995) indicated that the coach's mental model of the athletes' potential was influenced, in part, by his or her personal characteristics. Likewise, our results demonstrated the direct influence of the coaches' attributes on the vision. The degree of influence, however, appeared to be much stronger in this study. Coaches' attributes became determining in how the vision would be created, presented, organised and sold to the players. The current results pointed to the fact that a coach had to have players buy into her first, then into her vision. For example, players bought into the coach's vision because they believed in her, trusted her, and respected her thirst for gaining knowledge. Côté and colleagues did not discuss such inferences. Also, while Desjardins' (1996) findings promoted the role of the coach in selling the vision to the team, he did not specifically link it with coach's attributes, or with buying into the coach as a person. A possible explanation for these differences could be the more in-depth interview guide of the current study. Although the focus of Côté and colleagues and of Desjardins was not solely on understanding the vision, some results pertaining to vision nevertheless emerged from their investigations. In the current study, much emphasis was placed on organisational skills, specifically the vision, as a possible indicator of success when building a team sport program. Researchers in sport psychology should continue conducting empirical studies examining the variables influencing the successful achievement of a vision. Such studies could enlighten and inform coaches about the most effective means of establishing and selling a vision.

Secondly, the effect of vision on the individual growth category offered much new information in the area of coaching psychology. In fact, an individual player's development was determined to be part of the coaches overall philosophy for their program. Anecdotal evidence of the influences of vision on player's development can be

found in the coaching philosophy of Gary Barnett, former head coach of the Northwestern University football program. With a personal desire to turn the losing tradition around, to empower his players and to teach them life skills, Coach Barnett was inspired by a vision from which he established a philosophy that led his team to the Rose Bowl. His philosophy included values, behaviours and attitudes to be developed in each player that would foster their individual growth. Barnett and Gregorian (1996) wrote:

> Our mission is based on the values of family, successful attitudes, and team chemistry. We believe in honesty, integrity, strength of character, care, and confidence. We embrace commitment to excellence, loyalty, selflessness, trust, and humility. We teach overcoming adversity, establishing priorities, goal setting, and the value of diversity. (p.19)

To date, no empirical studies in sport have investigated the relationship and the effect vision may have concerning the individual growth of a player. Therefore, much research is needed in this area to help coaches and sport psychologists alike in understanding how vision could have tremendous benefits on a player's personal development.

Finally, the relationship between vision and organisational skills had previously been acknowledged in the literature. As part of Desjardins' (1996) work, organisation by definition included the vision. In the CM, however, the mental model of the athletes' potential served as the premise from which organisational tasks were undertaken but was separated from the organisational component (Côté, Salmela, Trudel, et al., 1995). In the present research, the findings related to vision were found to be consistent with both of these authors. Organising the vision included having a picture of the team's potential and proceeding to display the organisational skills necessary in achieving it. From planning the entire season to recruiting the right type of players, dividing the goals into short- and

mid-terms goals, and getting involved in the community, every aspect of organisation was performed with the vision in mind. Furthermore, coaches all had the national championship in mind but focused thoroughly on process goals, rather than exclusively on long term goals. This, once again, confirmed Desjardins' previous findings which noted that expert coaches communicated goals in smaller segments to their athletes throughout the season.

Anecdotal evidence from the career of coach Phil Jackson represents the extent to which coaches use vision in their planning and managing. When winning numerous NBA titles with the Chicago Bulls, Coach Jackson expressed that his philosophy primarily pertained to a vision of teamwork in order to be able to reach his vision of success: NBA titles. Jackson's entire organisational plan which included conducting practices, analysing video with players, and planning road trips was related to his vision of teamwork for success. In fact, even Jackson's set offence was based on this teamwork vision. As Jackson and Delehanty (1995) recalled, "The player with the ball would have an opportunity to pass the ball to any of his teammates" (p.88). Jackson certainly gave insight into the conceptualisation and centrality of the vision and the importance of possessing thorough organisational skills to achieve it.

Relationship Among The Three Higher Order Categories

This section will focus on the relationships between "coaches' attributes", "individual growth", and "organisational skills". Although these categories were not entirely new to the coaching literature, the current study provided further insight into the contribution of each of them toward understanding success in this field. It was demonstrated that none of these factors, in and of themselves, was beneficial in enhancing coaching enough to result in a successful program. Rather, it was the relationship,

forming a synergy between these factors and the vision that ultimately nurtured success. These inferences will be compared with existing literature on coaching (e.g., Bloom, 2002; Côté, 1998; Côté, Salmela, Trudel, et al., 1995; Desjardins, 1996; Halpin, 1966; Hendry, 1974; Stogdill, 1974).

Côté (1998) stated that "the coaches' organisational work and their personal relationships with their athletes are two areas representative of successful coaching that need further research" (p.8). In the current study, both of these behavioural aspects were inductively deemed essential for building a successful program, and were named organisational skills and individual growth. In fact, it was found that the individual growth of the players was actually facilitated in part by the high quality of the coaches' organisational skills. The results concurred with Côté's statement that these two categories were indeed essential to successful coaching.

A second inference of the results was the relationship between the coaches' behaviours (organisational skills and individual growth) and their attributes. Results showed the crucial importance of the relational aspect of the coaches' task. Coaches invested in their players because they believed in the importance of each player's personal development and cared for them as people. The wide range of the expert coaches' attributes played a fundamental role in the player's individual growth. The coaches had the ability to know when to be caring or tough, demanding or assisting, and autocratic or democratic. The results pointed to the fact that athletes were willing to be pushed out of their comfort zone when they trusted in their coaches' judgement. To date, no research has analysed the relationship and outcome of coaches' attributes on the individual growth of player. Such studies would be useful for a deeper understanding of

this relationship and would offer significant implications for sport education as well as coaches' training.

The personal attributes of the coaches also influenced their organisational skills. The coaches' persona had an impact on how practices were run, how games were prepared, and how seasons were designed. Côté, Salmela, Trudel, et al. (1995) alluded to the influences of the coaches' personal characteristics on the organisational component of the CM. Similarly, Bloom (2002) stated that more organised coaches were more successful. More research is warranted in this area, in order to understand how a wide range of attributes could affect coaches' organisational skills in a positive manner.

Finally, the results of the present investigation suggested that the expert coaches possessed characteristics (coaches' attributes) that made them both highly task-oriented (organisational skills) and people-oriented leaders (individual growth). This confirmed previous findings which suggested that successful leaders scored high on both "initiating structure" and "consideration" (e.g., Halpin, 1966; Stogdill, 1974). In interpreting the results, it became apparent that because of internal motives or personalities traits, the expert coaches were visionary, organisers, planners, and goal-setters. They knew where they were going. Also, their persona propelled coaches in thinking beyond their own self-interest and success. Thus it was demonstrated that successful coaching was not the result of a linear pattern or set of behaviours, nor of possessing certain personal characteristics, nor of displaying one or more of the four factors depicted in the results. Rather it involved the coaches' personal ability coaches to establish harmonic relationships between the three higher order categories and their vision. Positive behaviours including strong organisational skills and the desire to foster individual growth emerged from the coaches' attributes. These, in turn, led to the fulfillment of the

vision and rendered the team capable of achieving success. In short, synergy between the fours factors brought a healthy balance to the program, and the outcome was the holistic development of players which brought success to the team.

Transformational Leadership

Results of the current study demonstrated that four variables influenced the building of a successful program (coaches' attributes, individual growth, organisational skills, and vision). The harmonic presence of the four variables in the leadership style of the expert coaches explained why each was able to resurrect a losing program and was able to maintain a championship level program year after year. Interestingly, these four variables and their interrelationships were in agreement with the four characteristics of transformational leadership (idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration) (Bass, 1999), as well as with other research and writings dealing with this leadership style (e.g., Armstrong, 2001; Avolio & Bass, 1991; Bass, 1985; 1990; Bass & Avolio, 1990; 1994; Burns, 1978; Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Gardner, 1989; Graham, 1987; Kouzes & Posner, 1987; Maxwell, 1999; Sashkin & Burke, 1990; Seltzer & Bass, 1990). The current study is the first of its kind to propose similarities between successful team sport coaches and leaders in other fields such as business, industry, military, health care, and education, using transformational leadership as a basis. This section will empirically compare a conceptual model of successful coaching (Figure 1) to the transformational leadership style identified in these other fields.

Results of the current study are in total agreement with the works of Bass and Avolio concerning transformational leadership (e.g., Avolio & Bass, 1991; Bass, 1985; 1990; 1999; Bass & Avolio, 1990; 1994). The authors described the transformational

leadership style using four distinct categories. These were: inspirational motivation, idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, and individualised consideration (Bass, 1999). Bass (1999) defined "inspirational motivation" as the ability leaders had to envision the future and gain commitment from the followers towards a specific vision. In the current study, both the vision and the organisational skills category corresponded to the inspirational motivation element of transformational leadership. It was suggested that the participating coaches were visionaries, motivators, goal-setters and organised leaders. Further, the results also demonstrated that these coaches were more likely to achieve success, to gain commitment from their followers, and to have them buy into their vision. Given, then, that one of the characteristics of transformational leader is being an inspirational motivator, the results of the current study supported the adherence of our expert coaches to such a leadership style.

The results further paralleled those of Bass and colleagues (e.g., Bass, 1985; 1990; 1999; Bass & Avolio, 1990; 1994) in terms of the characteristic "idealized influence". Bass discovered that leaders acted as role models and cultivated admiration and respect in their subordinates. In the current study, the coaches' attributes category included those qualities needed in a role model to offer an idealised influence on their followers. The coaches were able to lead by example because of their personalities and their capacity to determine high-performance goals. The coaches gained respect and trust from their athletes through solid personal relationships. Furthermore, the coaches consistently acknowledged that their relationships with their athletes were a key to the team's success. These relationships were characterised by trust, respect, and communication.

Along the same line, the individual growth category of the current study offered a perfect match to "intellectual stimulation" of transformational leadership. Intellectual

stimulation was defined as the ability the leader had to challenge the followers, as well as to incorporation of their opinion in the decision making process (Bass, 1999). For example, previous research found that leaders left room for creativity, empowered their followers, and fostered their autonomy in order to render them able to function without the leader (Bass, 1990; Bass & Avolio, 1994). As part of the individual growth category of the current study, coaches were found to empower their players, to involve them in the decision-making process, and to promote players' leadership and responsibility both on and off the floor.

Finally, the results of this study supported the fourth segment of transformational leadership called "individualized consideration," which expresses the leader's awareness of the followers' needs. In the current study, the "individual growth" category concurred with individualised consideration by promoting the importance of giving particular attention to every team member. Our successful coaches were respectful of their players' personal differences and aimed at empowering each athlete as an individual. This parallel further demonstrated the relationship between our expert coaches and transformational leaders.

While the research of Bass (1985; 1990; 1998; 1999) and Bass and colleagues (Avolio & Bass, 1991; Bass & Avolio, 1990; 1994) expressed that transformational leaders displayed certain characteristics and behaviours, their work did not explicitly examine the relationship between these variables. For this reason, the results of the current study offered important information for better understanding the transformational leadership style. It was found that the relationships between the four variables were essential to effective transformational leadership in sport. Moreover, the results suggested a conceptual model with which it was possible to schematically visualise these

relationships (Figure 1). As portrayed in this conceptual model, the four variables fostered the holistic development of the athletes. They corresponded to the characteristics of transformational leaders, who had the ability to elicit extraordinary outcomes from their followers and to invest in their maturation process (e.g., Armstrong, 2001; Bass, 1985; 1990; 1999; Burns, 1978; Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Gardner, 1989; Graham, 1987; Kouzes & Posner, 1987; Sashkin & Burke, 1990; Seltzer & Bass, 1990).

One contribution of the current study to the literature is its qualitative investigation compared to the solely quantitative studies that used the MLQ to test transformational leadership in people of different fields (e.g., Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Kouzes & Posner, 1987; Sashkin & Burke, 1990). In addition, this research may be useful in bridging the gap between success in the coaching field and the principles of transformational leadership. In 1999, Bass expressed that while "applied research in transformational leadership has been abundant, basic research and theories have been in short supply" (p.22). Bass (1985) also stated "there has been relatively little basic testing of the many models of linkages proposed to explain how transformational leadership works" (p.22). This study is at least a beginning point in linking and applying the transformational leadership style to the field of coaching. Lastly, this study responds to Shamir's (1991) evaluation concerning the conceptual weaknesses in transformational leadership theories. Figure 1 is a conceptual model that visually explains the transformational leadership style when applied to coaching.

For further investigation, a quantitative evaluation of successful expert coaches with the MLQ could be compared to these results to verify if the leadership styles of the coaches were in fact transformational. In addition, the validity of this model (Figure 1) could be confirmed with a qualitative assessment of players that have been coached by

transformational leaders. This type of research would give the players' perspectives on what makes their coach successful. Lastly, comparing these results with male coaches, coaches from other countries, or coaches at other levels such as youth, recreational or professional sport could also be insightful.

Summary

Achieving success is a goal for many leaders, such as military officers, politicians, chief executive officers, and those involved in the sporting domain. In fact, few coaches have been able to bring their programs to the top level and then maintain that level of excellence. Research in leadership and coaching psychology has identified methods and behaviours through which coaches and athletes can increase their performance outcome. In particular, the Coaching Model (Côté, Salmela, Trudel, et al., 1995) first conceptualised the knowledge of how expert coaches think and function. Despite the recent advances in coaching psychology, no research has explicitly examined and conceptualised how and why the best coaches build and maintain their programs for extended periods of time.

The purpose of this study was to investigate expert coaches and to identify key variables that they used in the development of their successful programs. More precisely, the study aimed at finding common elements that may have enabled these coaches to achieve success. Five expert Canadian female coaches of team sports participated in the study. They were identified, according to pre-determined criteria, as being one of the best coaches in the sports of basketball or volleyball. Open-ended interviews were conducted for a period of one to two hours and a qualitative analysis was performed.

In the present study, three higher order categories and one essential property emerged, which were labelled as: "Coaches' Attributes," "Organisational Skills,"

"Individual Growth," and "Vision." The coaches' attributes category referred to their inner make-up, including their personal characteristics and their commitment to learning. The organisational skills category encompassed both the planning and managerial tasks of the coach. The individual growth category corresponded to a personal desire to foster the personal growth and development of each of their athletes. Finally, the vision was central to the three higher order categories by serving as the starting point for each category. Results demonstrated that the four variables were interrelated and that they corresponded to a transformational leadership style.

Conclusions

Based on the findings and considering the limitations of the present study, the following conclusions seem warranted:

1. The personal attributes or inner make-up of coaches has a direct influence on their overall program development and success.

2. The organisational skills of coaches are a determining factor for the team's success, by optimizing their planning and organisational tasks.

3. A key to success is focusing on the individual growth of each player, rather than just on outcomes and performances.

4. It is necessary to have a clear vision when beginning a program. This vision then becomes the central element to the program development and success.

5. Coaches that have balance between the aforementioned elements are more likely to succeed than coaches who are strong in one or several of these areas and weak in others.

6. Coaches that display a transformational leadership style are more likely to build a successful program.

Recommendations for Future Research

The following suggestions are given for future research:

1. Examine the conceptual model in more depth through:

    (a) in depth investigations of each of the four variables.

    (b) investigation of the relationships between the four variables to determine the extent with which they affect the overall leadership style of the coach and the success of a team.

2. Specific focus on the transformational leadership style:

    (a) administering the MLQ to successful expert coaches in order to determine if the leadership styles of these coaches can be classified as transformational,

    (b) qualitatively assessing players' perspectives on the leadership styles of their coaches.

3. Replicate the study with:

    (a) male coaches,

    (b) coaches of other countries,

    (c) coaches at different levels,

    (d) coaches of individual sports.

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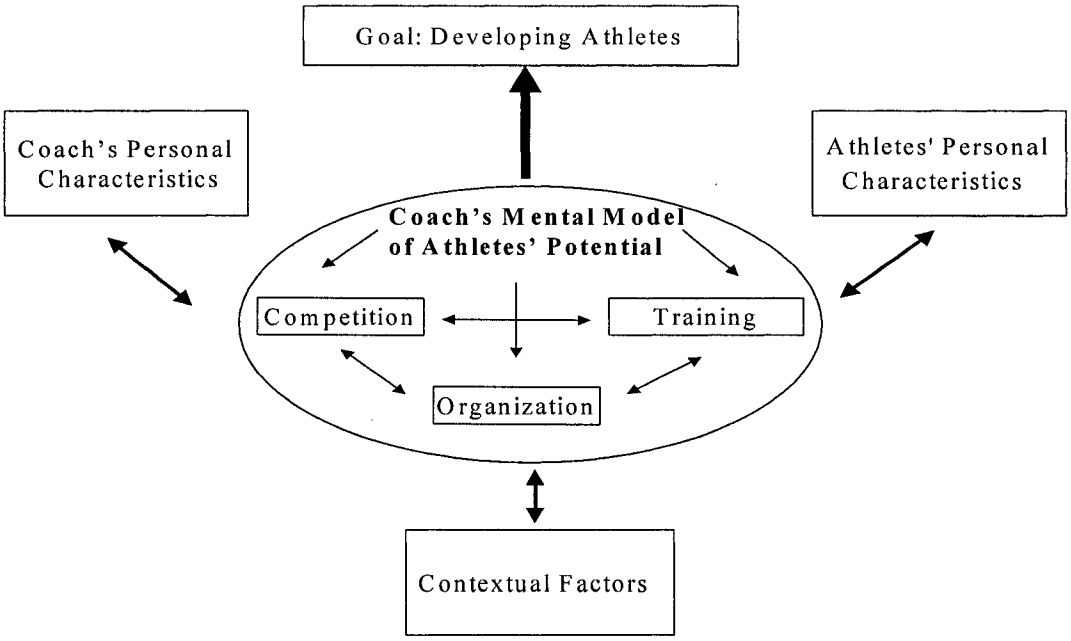
APPENDIX A

The Coaching Model



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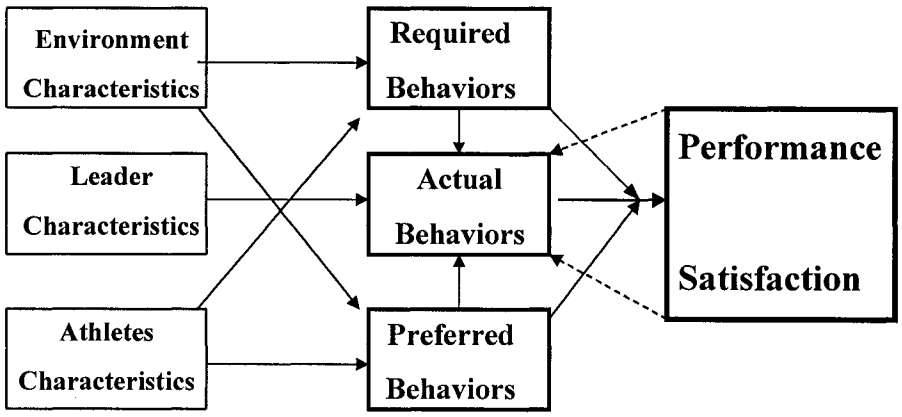
APPENDIX B

The Multidimensional Model of Leadership



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APPENDIX C

Coaches Demographic Information

	Expert coach				
Criteria	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5
Total years of coaching experience	21	11	19	18	17
Years of experience at university level	17	11	10	13	17
Championship titles					
National	3	6	1	0	0
Conference (provincial)	5	5	0	10	8
Players developed at international level	4	2	1	6	10

APPENDIX D

Interview Guide

1. How did you get involved in coaching?

2. What was your plan when you first started to coach at this university?

3. What are the key elements in building your program?

4. How do you structure your season?
   Do you change anything from year to year?

5. I would like you to think back to the year your team achieved its best record. What were some of the key coaching elements that you attributed to your team's success?

6. How would you describe your style of leadership?

7. If you were to start your coaching career over, is there anything that you would do differently?

8. Would you like to add anything else related to our interview?

APPENDIX E

McGill University
Faculty of Education
RESEARCH SUBJECT CONSENT FORM

Organizational Skills of Expert Female Coaches of Team Sports

When a research project is designed to understand human beings by a member of McGill University, the Ethics Committee of the university requires the written consent of the participants. This does not imply that the project involves risks; the intention is simply to assure the respect and confidentiality of the individuals concerned.

The purpose of this study is to explore the organizational skills of expert female coaches of team sports. In particular how do coaches plan the season, form the team, and develop their program. We would like to invite you to participate in this study. If you choose to participate, you will be asked to provide information that you feel was important in building your program. The data collection session will last approximately one hour and will be audio recorded. A second interview may be necessary if more data is needed. Following the interview, you will receive a typed transcript for validation of the content and for editing any part of the interview. You will also receive a copy of the results and conclusions before they are printed. All information collected will remain confidential.

Your participation in this study is voluntary and not mandatory. You are free to withdraw from participating at any time, for any reason without penalty.

I (please print),_____, have both read the above statements and have had the directions verbally explained to me. I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary and that I may withdraw from participating at any time. I understand that the information collected will remain confidential.

I agree to participate in this research project based on the terms outlined in this consent form.

_____ _____

Signature Date

Please feel free to contact us at any time.

APPENDIX F

General Demographic Questionnaire

Name: _____ Age: _____

Current coaching position: _____

Sport presently coaching: _____

Numbers of years at that your current position: _____

University Degree (s): _____

AS A COACH AT THAT CURRENT POSITION,

Have you ever won a conference championship? _____
If yes, how many? _____
Have you ever won a national championship? _____
If yes, how many? _____

Other highlights of coaching career (provincial team, players sent to national team, etc.):

_____
_____
_____

Other position(s) held as a head coach:

# of Years:	Position:	Team & Sport:	Highlights:
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Total of years of head coaching experience in your major sport: _____

Total of years of head coaching experiences all sports included: _____

Level of N.C.C.P. completed: _____

To what address (mailing or email address) should the transcript of the interview be sent for your review?

APPENDIX G

Table G_1

Occurrence of Tags by Coaches

First order tags	n	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5
Achieving success	6	2	1	0	1	2
Build confidence	18	9	3	2	2	2
Changing attitudes and philosophy	8	1	4	2	1	0
Coach balance	5	0	0	1	0	4
Coach caring	8	1	2	0	3	2
Coach composure	5	2	0	0	0	3
Coach leading by example	7	3	0	0	1	3
Coach openness	3	1	0	0	0	2
Coach perceived as intimidating	3	2	1	0	0	0
Coach plan of action	9	1	3	2	2	1
Coach preparation	5	3	0	1	0	1
Coach self-evaluation	5	0	0	0	0	5
Communication	7	0	0	0	0	7
Community involvement	7	0	3	0	3	1
Creating enjoyable practices	10	3	1	3	1	2
Dealing with emotions	7	0	7	0	0	0
Early coaching experiences	18	3	3	2	7	3
Fundraising	7	0	1	0	3	3
Genuine interest in athletes	6	4	0	0	1	1
Goal of organization	2	2	0	0	0	0
Goal-setting	23	6	5	2	6	4
Importance of academics	8	1	0	0	1	6

(Table continues)

First order tags	n	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5
Job pressures	14	1	10	0	0	3
Language barrier	3	0	0	0	3	0
Learning from books	6	0	0	2	0	4
Learning from mistakes	5	0	2	0	1	2
Learning from other coaches	15	3	4	4	1	3
Learning skills for work force	8	0	1	0	1	6
Mutual respect	14	3	3	0	3	5
Passion for coaching and teaching	8	2	3	1	1	1
Player improvement	5	0	0	1	3	1
Player input in decisions	22	6	3	5	8	0
Player leadership	8	1	4	0	1	2
Player responsibility	16	1	3	1	3	8
Process goal	7	0	0	5	0	2
Recruiting	27	5	4	7	10	1
Rest and recovery	9	0	1	3	2	3
Role acceptance	10	1	0	4	1	4
Seasonal plan	21	4	2	6	3	6
Selling philosophy	8	2	2	3	1	0
Setting standards	36	5	5	7	17	2
Simulation	3	0	1	2	0	0
Task-oriented focus	3	0	1	1	0	1
Team direction	5	3	2	0	0	0

(Table continues)

First order tags	n	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5
Team preparation	5	2	0	3	0	0
Team unity	16	5	2	1	5	3
Trust	5	2	1	0	2	0
Value support staff	17	3	7	3	1	3
Totals	**473**	**93**	**95**	**74**	**99**	**112**

Table G_2

Occurrence of Tags by Coach by Property

Property and tags	n	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5
Vision	**120**	**27**	**24**	**22**	**33**	**14**
Achieving success	6	2	1	0	1	2
Changing attitudes and philosophy	8	1	4	2	1	0
Coach plan of action	9	1	3	2	2	1
Goal of organization	2	2	0	0	0	0
Goal-setting	23	6	5	2	6	4
Process goal	7	0	0	5	0	2
Selling philosophy	8	2	2	3	1	0
Setting standards	36	5	5	7	17	2
Team direction	5	3	2	0	0	0
Team unity	16	5	2	1	5	3
Empowerment	**96**	**21**	**20**	**16**	**19**	**20**
Build confidence	18	9	3	2	2	2
Player improvement	5	0	0	1	3	1
Player input in decision	22	6	3	5	8	0
Player leadership	8	1	4	0	1	2
Player responsibility	16	1	3	1	3	8
Role acceptance	10	1	0	4	1	4
Value support staff	17	3	7	3	1	3

(Tables continues)

Property and tags	n	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5
Management and administration	**58**	**6**	**18**	**7**	**19**	**8**
Community involvement	7	0	3	0	3	1
Fundraising	7	0	1	0	3	3
Job pressures	14	1	10	0	0	3
Language barrier	3	0	0	0	3	0
Recruiting	27	5	4	7	10	1
Planning	**53**	**12**	**5**	**18**	**6**	**12**
Coach preparation	5	3	0	1	0	1
Creating enjoyable practices	10	3	1	3	1	2
Rest and recovery	9	0	1	3	1	2
Seasonal plan	21	4	2	6	3	6
Simulation	3	0	1	2	0	0
Team preparation	5	2	0	3	0	0

(Tables continues)

Property and tags	n	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5
Life skills development	**52**	**6**	**13**	**1**	**7**	**25**
Communication	7	0	0	0	0	7
Dealing with emotions	7	0	7	0	0	0
Importance of academics	8	1	0	0	1	6
Learning skills for work force	8	0	1	0	1	6
Mutual respect	14	3	3	0	3	5
Task-oriented focus	3	0	1	1	0	1
Trust	5	2	1	0	2	0
Coach commitment to learning	**49**	**6**	**9**	**8**	**9**	**17**
Coach self-evaluation	5	0	0	0	0	5
Early coaching experiences	18	3	3	2	7	3
Learning from books	6	0	0	2	0	4
Learning from mistakes	5	0	2	0	1	2
Learning from other coaches	15	3	4	4	1	3

(Tables continues)

Property and tags	n	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5
Coaches characteritics	**45**	**15**	**6**	**2**	**6**	**16**
Coach balance	5	0	0	1	0	4
Coach caring	8	1	2	0	3	2
Coach composure	5	2	0	0	0	3
Coach leading by example	7	3	0	0	1	3
Coach openness	3	1	0	0	0	2
Coach perceived as intimidating	3	2	1	0	0	0
Genuine interest in athletes	6	4	0	0	1	1
Passion for coaching and teaching	8	2	3	1	1	1