



INTERNATIONAL
ICE HOCKEY
FEDERATION

INTERNATIONAL ICE HOCKEY FEDERATION

COACH DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

FOREWORD

The IIHF is committed to the global promotion and development of ice hockey, and a critical part of that mission is supporting coaches—those who shape how the game is played and guide players throughout their development journeys. While much focus is often placed on player development, it is equally important that Member National Associations (MNAs) have structured and sustainable coach development systems and programs in place.

Coaches are more than just instructors of the technical game—they are mentors who influence players both on and off the ice. As such, the IIHF places a strong emphasis on supporting MNAs in establishing robust coaching frameworks that empower coaches to thrive in their roles.

The IIHF Coach Development Framework is a central tool in this effort. Rather than offering a “one size fits all” model, the framework presents a set of best principles—flexible guidelines that can be adapted to the unique environments, cultures, and requirements of each MNA, including those set by local authorities, governments, and National Olympic Committees. It is designed not only for coaches, but also for administrators, developers, and program directors involved in the broader coaching ecosystem.

The framework also underpins the IIHF’s own educational offerings, such as the IIHF Coach Developer Program, development camps, and seminars. Importantly, it encourages coach certification and re-certification as part of a continuous development cycle. While the IIHF supports MNAs, the MNAs also share a responsibility to support their clubs in nurturing quality coaching from the grassroots up.

This publication is a living document. The IIHF Office, in collaboration with relevant IIHF Committees, will continue to evolve and enhance it, and we welcome feedback from our members to ensure it remains relevant, effective, and impactful.

Together, with committed coaches and a clear development path, we can elevate the quality of coaching and take ice hockey programs around the world to the next level.

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1 INTRODUCTION

The IIHF, founded on 15 May 1908 in Paris, France, is the governing body of international ice hockey. The IIHF features 84 Member National Associations (MNA), each of which is the national governing body of the sport in its nation.

Besides controlling the international rulebook, processing international player transfers, and dictating officiating guidelines, the IIHF runs numerous development programs designed to bring hockey to a broader population. The IIHF also presides over ice hockey in the Olympic Games, and over the IIHF World Championships at all levels, men, women, juniors under-20, juniors under-18 and women under-18. Each season, the IIHF in collaboration with its local organising committees, runs around 35 different World Championships in the five different categories.

The IIHF promotes anti-doping, integrity and fair play throughout their work at international events and camps.

IIHF COACH DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

With these guidelines on coach development, the International Ice Hockey Federation (IIHF) is presenting a framework, which will provide MNAs, coach developers, coaches, administrators, educators and others within the sport and sport education environment with best principles for developing coaching expertise as well as development materials, courses, education and development opportunities.

The IIHF Player Development Guide (PDG) is one such coach development resource that provides coaches and persons interested in becoming a coach with examples, knowledge and ideas for best principles and practice sessions. This is to contribute to their work in developing players with fun and engaging training sessions that are based on the developmental stage of the players.

Additional resources for quality coaching and coach development will be made periodically accessible on www.iihf.com.

The objectives of the IIHF Coach Development Framework (CDF) are to:

- Promote a shared understanding of quality ice hockey coaching
- Provide best principles for Coach Development programs
- Function as a guideline for MNAs when developing their own Coach Development programs
- Function as a guideline for improvement of existing Coach Development programs
- Offer guidance on developing certification and re-certification standards
- Support the integration of the Coach Development programs of each MNA into their respective National Qualification Frameworks
- Support the development in each MNA towards recognizing coaching as a full profession

The IIHF CDF recognizes that each MNA is faced with a unique set of challenges in their coach development ranging from coach recruitment to developing coaches from the grassroots level all the way to high-performance. This means that the players being coached will also range from recreational to high-performance. The MNA-specific challenges might also include popularity of ice hockey in the respective country and culture in general.

The coaching community consists of volunteer, part-time paid and full-time paid coaches. This has made it a challenge to fully recognize coaching as a profession. However, with the continuous support and push of institutions, such as the International Council for Coaching Excellence (ICCE), coaching is more and more turning into a fully recognized vocation or profession.

To tackle this, the IIHF CDF provides guidelines to each MNA to promote ice hockey coaching as a fully regulated profession within their country. The IIHF CDF should support the negotiations with the organizations and institutions for adult education and vocational training, to establish coaching as a fully recognized vocation.

The IIHF CDF aims to provide the MNAs with suggestions on how to develop and create their own coach development programs to cater to the needs of their coaches. It provides the MNAs with best principles to be utilized in the creation of coach development programs.

IIHF COACH DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

1.1 ROLE OF THE IIHF WITHIN COACH DEVELOPMENT

As stated in the IIHF Statutes and Bylaws, the objectives of the IIHF are to govern, develop and promote men's and women's ice hockey, in all forms and at all ages, including the development of coaches and officials, worldwide. As such, the IIHF makes necessary efforts to develop young players, as well as support the development of coaches and game officials. Through these Statutes and Bylaws, and the requirements of the Olympic Charter, the IIHF has the mandate to support its MNAs in their work in developing ice hockey within their nation.

However, the IIHF does not develop ice hockey in a specific MNA but provides, produces and distributes materials, resources and tools for all MNAs to support ice hockey development, player recruitment and coach development within the Membership. In other words, the IIHF goes by the philosophy of teaching the teachers.

1.2 ROLE OF THE MEMBER NATIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Each MNA is responsible for developing their own player development programs, as well as coach and game official programs, including certification and re-certification as well as assessment or accreditations. With the IIHF CDF the IIHF provides its MNAs with a guide to develop their own coaches using best principles.

MNAs furthermore have the responsibility to educate their coaches on the topics of Integrity: Anti-Doping and Fair Play, Competition Manipulation, Abuse and Harassment and Ethics. They can access education materials and support through their NOC and other institutions within their country.

1.3 VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The IIHF CDF has been developed based on the vision and the guiding principles of the IIHF. The IIHF urges all MNAs and clubs to support and incorporate the vision and guiding principles outlined in the IIHF CDF into daily practices, competition, as well as in the decision-making processes of MNAs and clubs.

The IIHF CDF is promoting the following guiding principles:

- Players are provided with a safe and enjoyable development environment
- Long-term player development is prioritized over short-term performance results
- Athlete-centred coaching, with consideration of individual player needs, occurs in every practice and game
- Respect the Game: Fair play, integrity, anti-doping and ethics guide coaching actions of all stakeholders
- Coaches are committed to and demonstrate life-long learning and continuous development

The vision of the IIHF CDF is: Coaches, providing quality coaching and enjoyable experiences, will develop each player to the best of their abilities and thus ensure that players choose to keep playing ice hockey.



2 QUALITY COACHING

Quality coaching requires the following key elements: Coaching philosophy, athlete-centred coaching approach, essential coaching knowledge, core competencies and athlete outcomes.

Coaches function as key examples for players to model their attitudes, behaviours and characters. In this capacity, coaches are promoting in their coaching sessions and with their work with players and teams Respect for the Game, which includes Fair Play, Anti-Doping, and Integrity to advance the spirit of the game of ice hockey. Fair Play is an attitude, which is shown through the behaviour of coaches, team staff and players alike, on and off the field of play.

IIHF COACH DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

2.1 COACHING PHILOSOPHY

Quality coaches develop a personal coaching philosophy. It describes how coaches approach their role as a coach. It is based on the coach's experience and should be firmly anchored in their own values, belief system and cultural background. The coaching philosophy should align to the guiding principles as outlined in this document while also being consistent with the values and beliefs of their club and MNA. A coaching philosophy is used to consistently guide coaching decisions and actions. Quality coaches regularly reflect on their coaching philosophies and make adjustments based on the coaching environment and their current athletes.


2.2 ATHLETE-CENTRED COACHING APPROACH

Quality coaches act in the best interest of their athletes. This is referred to as an athlete-centred coaching approach because it places the needs of individual players at its core. It is a holistic approach to player development, which includes social, mental, physical, tactical and technical development of the player within the sport environment but also outside of it. When a coach applies the athlete-centred coaching approach, the key consideration is on how to best develop the players while meeting the needs of each individual.

It further supports players in their development to become independent individuals who are self-aware and make their own decisions. A coach who applies the athlete-centred coaching approach helps teams and individual athletes achieve their goals, treats players as individuals in and outside of team settings and uses questioning techniques to enable players to solve problems and find their own solutions.

An athlete-centred coaching approach requires the coach to apply principles of lifelong learning to their own development path. Quality coaches take initiative to learn new skills and enhance existing knowledge. This will then help them to keep pace with the evolving developmental needs of individual players.

Today's coaches serve several different roles. In addition to providing players with technical and tactical knowledge of the sport, they also need to help each player develop holistically as a person. Coaches function in roles such as teachers, leaders, listeners, administrators, communicators, supporters, guides and mentors. Coaches play a very central role in general and therefore poor coaching can cause players to leave the sport while quality coaching will keep them in the sport.

A photograph of ice hockey players in red jerseys and white pants, with blue and white accents, on an ice rink. The players are in motion, and the background shows a yellow protective barrier.

*Player retention
is a primary
measure of
quality coaching.*

IIHF COACH DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

2.3 ESSENTIAL COACHING KNOWLEDGE

Quality coaches possess what is called essential coaching knowledge. This consists of interpersonal, intrapersonal and professional knowledge, see Fig. 2.3. Essential coaching knowledge is developed over time, through potential experience as an athlete, coaching, organized coach education, observation of other coaches, networking and knowledge sharing, and using resources such as books, publications, podcasts and videos.

Interpersonal Knowledge: How to coach

Interpersonal knowledge, also called interpersonal skills, is defined as the ability of a coach to make connections with other people. This refers to players, coaching staff, officials, administrators, parents and other ice hockey stakeholders that a coach regularly interacts with. Interpersonal knowledge includes emotional intelligence and thus the ability to understand feelings, motivations and needs of others. It includes effective communication, listening skills, responsibility and building caring relationships founded on mutual trust with all involved in the sporting context.

Intrapersonal Knowledge

Knowing yourself is referred to as intrapersonal knowledge. It is defined as the ability of a coach to self-reflect, apply introspection, be self-aware, use self-talk and to be true to one's own coaching philosophy, values and ethical principles. Intrapersonal knowledge is self-awareness that provides the foundation for continuous improvement as a coach.

Professional Knowledge: What to coach

Professional knowledge is knowledge of the game and how to teach it. Also termed 'what to coach' knowledge, it consists of sport-specific knowledge, general sport knowledge and teaching knowledge. The sport-specific, ice hockey in this case, knowledge includes awareness of technical and tactical skills, rules of the game and its traditions. The general sport knowledge consists of subjects such as nutrition, conditioning, physiology and sport psychology. Teaching knowledge, pedagogy and andragogy, refers to knowledge on how to effectively design and deliver optimal learning environments and experiences.

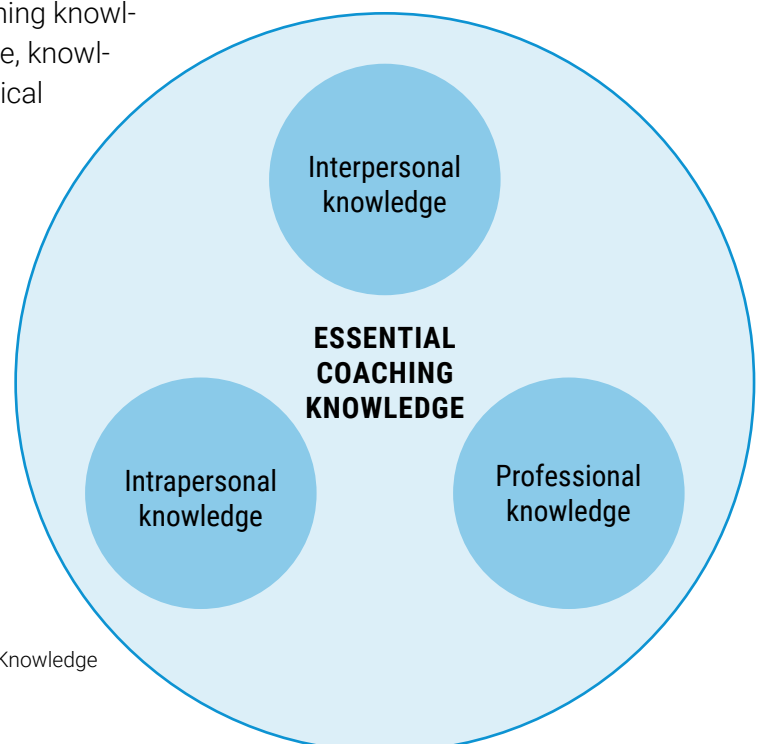


Figure 2.3 Essential Coaching Knowledge

IIHF COACH DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

2.4 CORE COMPETENCIES

Core competencies define the essential coaching knowledge in more detail. Competencies are a combination of capabilities, skills and knowledge needed for quality coaching. The IIHF CDF identifies five core competencies. The core competencies are opened up in more detail in the IIHF Coach Education Framework.

Personal development

- Continuous improvement and reflection
- Growth mindset
- Coaching philosophy
- Wellbeing and self-care

Program leadership

- Team culture
- Responsibilities for team and programme management
- Program stability and growth
- Core values and standards
- Traditions

People skills

- Caring and positive relationships
- Emotional intelligence
- Mutual trust
- Respectful communication
- Support of staff and other coaches

Learning facilitation

- Long Term Athlete Development
- Athlete outcomes (6 C's)
- Optimal learning environments
- Principles of learning
- Practice Design

Sport and Performance IQ

- Technical skills
- Tactical skills
- Rules
- Physical training and conditioning
- Rest and Recovery
- Injury prevention
- Sport psychology
- Nutrition

IIHF COACH DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

2.5 ATHLETE OUTCOMES

Quality coaching results in the consistent achievement of six types of athlete outcomes. Referred to as the 6C's, the six athlete outcomes are connection, creativity, character, care and compassion, confidence and competence. Emphasis on the 6C's is consistent with an athlete-centred coaching approach and will lead to better player retention.

Connection

Developing players who are better teammates and who are able to build quality relationships with people inside and outside of the sport.

Creativity

Creativity is a central aspect in athlete-centred coaching. Coaches create environments where players are in charge of finding their own solutions to challenges and problems they are facing inside and outside of hockey.

Character

Developing players who possess strong values and ethical thinking, show character in difficult situations and respect the game.

Care and compassion

The social development of players is part of holistic athlete-centred coaching where the coach emulates care and compassion and supports players in becoming caring and compassionate.

Confidence

Developing resilient and mentally tough players who are able to cope with difficult situations.

Competence

Developing better ice hockey players.

3 COACHING CONTEXT

Coaching is an ever-evolving professional area. Coaches need to possess an understanding of their players' needs, keep up to date on the development of the game and its rules, have competencies and essential coaching knowledge to work within different environments and integrate their key responsibilities into their daily coaching practice.

The Coaches come from various backgrounds and have a multitude of different reasons to be involved in coaching. This might lead to discrepancies in the time and effort these coaches are able and willing to put into their own development. However, through recognizing their needs and giving them the support that they need, every coach has the possibility to develop and provide effective coaching sessions.

IIHF COACH DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

3.1 PLAYER DEVELOPMENT PATHWAYS

The IIHF Player Development Guide (IIHF PDG), similar to other Long-term Player or Athlete Development guides, informs coaches, players, parents, administrators and others involved within ice hockey on topics about on-ice and off-ice skill development, as well as personal development. With the three phases of the IIHF PDG (Start – Stay – Succeed), coaches with different sets of key coaching skills are needed to be effective at each of the developmental stages of the players.

As is described in the IIHF PDG (see figure 3.1), players can follow different pathways throughout their participation within ice hockey. The starting age of a player might range from four years to late adulthood. Within the stay domain, players might shift back and forth within participation and performance, depending on their capabilities, effort invested and development. Only a marginal number of players will reach the Succeed pathway and will participate in high-level national, international and Olympic competitions or reach the professional level.

After the successful career as a high-performance athlete, they might return into the stay domain to continue playing hockey on a less competitive level or make a change within their career path to another position within sports, such as coaching, managing or other sport-related tasks.

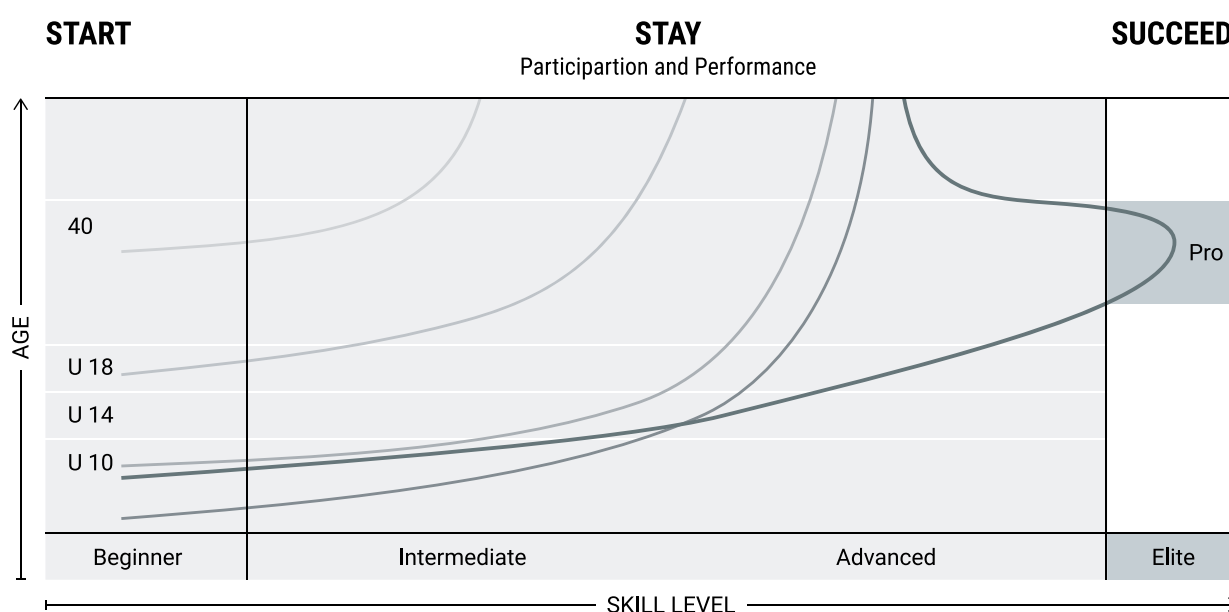


Fig. 3.1 Displays the different possible player pathways within ice hockey

IIHF COACH DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Start

In the Start Phase, players are beginners, independent of their starting age. The task of the coach is to provide a nurturing and supportive environment where the players can enjoy positive experiences while trying out ice hockey for the first time. For young beginners this means developing Fundamental Movement Skills (FMS) and physical literacy. For older beginners this starting phase might also include FMS, but focus will probably advance much faster towards sport-specific skills due to an already existing general movement skill ability.

Stay

The Stay Phase, which can be lifelong, includes intermediate and advanced development and skills levels of players. This phase concentrates on ice hockey specific skill development for participation and performance in competitive environments. This phase includes players who want to play ice hockey just for fun, to have social interaction, participate in sport as part of an active and healthy lifestyle or to have positive experiences, as well as players who have the determination to eventually compete on a high level, wanting to reach the Succeed Phase.

Hence, many different types of coach are needed for this Stay Phase. This includes coaches who support and develop players for lifelong participation in ice hockey, as well as coaches who enable players to reach their full potential and provide them with the competitive environment and development needed to reach the Succeed Phase.

Succeed

Only very few players reach this phase. In this phase players compete on the professional and highest international level and in the Olympics. The requirements for and of coaches in this phase are considerably different when compared to the requirements of coaches in the Start or Stay Phases. In this highest level of player performance, the tasks of a coach are to guide, lead, manage and mentor the players during their quest to achieve expert level and still provide enjoyable and engaging practice environments.

IIHF COACH DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

3.2 COACHING ENVIRONMENTS

Broadly speaking, coaching environments can be divided into two main streams: participation-oriented stream and performance-oriented stream. These two streams can then be further divided into three sub-categories (see figure 3.2).

PARTICIPATION STREAM			PERFORMANCE STREAM		
Children	Adolescent	Adult	Emerging athletes	Performance athletes	High-performance athletes

Fig. 3.2 Depicts the participation and performance streams with the player categories in each of those

The participation-oriented stream can further be sub-divided into beginner and participation, (see figure 3.3), in which start and stay phases belong to the participation-oriented stream, and the stay and succeed phases belong to the performance-oriented stream.

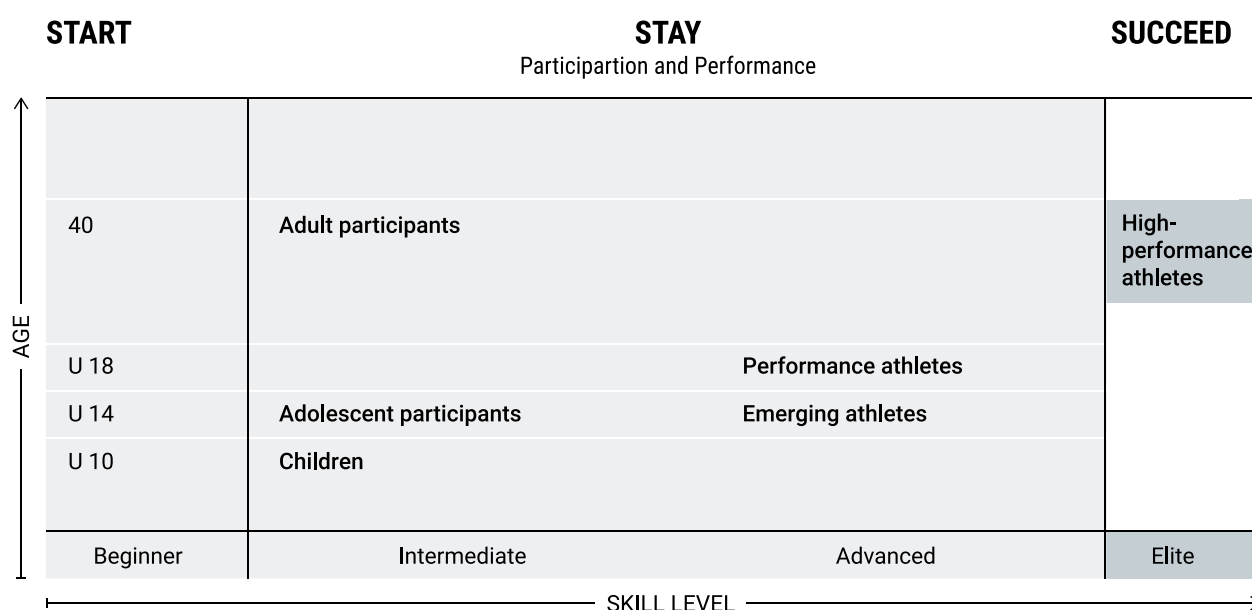


Fig. 3.3 Shows the participation and performance streams in relation to the IIHF Player Development Guide

IIHF COACH DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

3.3 THE COACHING WORKFORCE

The coaching workforce in most MNAs consists of volunteer coaches. However, in certain countries, there can also be a blend of unpaid volunteer coaches, part-time paid coaches and full-time paid coaches. This is termed blended professional area. This unique blend of coaches with different commitments towards coaching and self-development will prove to be a challenge for the development and execution of a Coach Development Program. However, through careful assessment and evaluation of the players of the sport and their needs, the composition of the coaching workforce and their competencies can be well-defined. This will then support the development of a well-designed Coach Development Program which will provide the coaches with the capabilities needed to work successfully with the players.

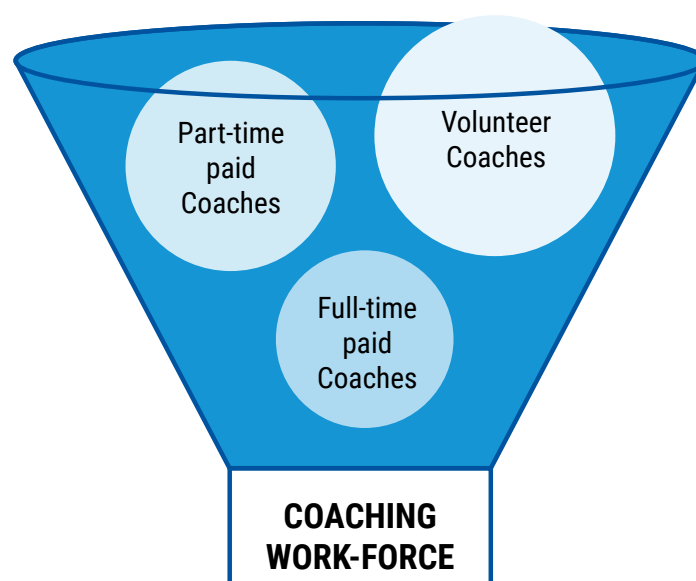


Fig. 3.4 The coaching workforce, a blended professional area

4 WELL-BEING OF COACHES

Although coaches are concerned with the physical and mental well-being of their players, they can and often neglect their own well-being. The coaching profession causes long working hours, travels to away games and competitions, little time for proper meals and own physical activity and recovery, or sufficient time to spend with family and friends.

Furthermore, job security is in many cases lacking for coaches, who are very often employed on short-term contracts. Continuation of those contracts mainly depends on the win-record of the team. Constant stress, sleep deprivation, poor nutrition, and lacking recovery have a negative effect on coaches. Therefore, in order for them to be quality coaches, it is as important for them to take care of their own well-being as it is to be concerned with the well-being of their players. A stressed and burned-out coach will not be able to support their players' development properly.

However, associations and clubs are also bearing responsibility for the well-being of their coaches through clearly defined responsibilities, workload management, support initiatives, season calendar and structure, and other measurements to help their coaches.

IIHF COACH DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

COMMON STRESSORS COACHES EXPERIENCE ARE DISPLAYED IN TABLE 4.1:

Organizational Stressors:	Competitive Stressors:	Personal Stressors:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managerial conflicts • Lack of financial assistance • Role conflict • Administrative duties • Teaching duties • Pressure from organization to produce positive results • Conflicts between staff members • Multiple tasks • Travel • Weekend games • Lack of communication • Expectations from organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing athletes' needs and lives • Professionalism • Selection issues • Recruitment • Unable to control lives of team staff • Negative performance results by athletes • Competition • Athlete injuries • Intrusion of media • Lack of athlete and team discipline • Expectations from athletes, team staff and parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sacrificing personal time • Worrying what others think about them • Overload • Irregular working hours • Not enough time for family or friends • Nonexistent job security • Expectations from family and friends

The definition of stress is the result of an imbalance between stressors and coping strategies as applied by the coach, as depicted in figure 4.1.

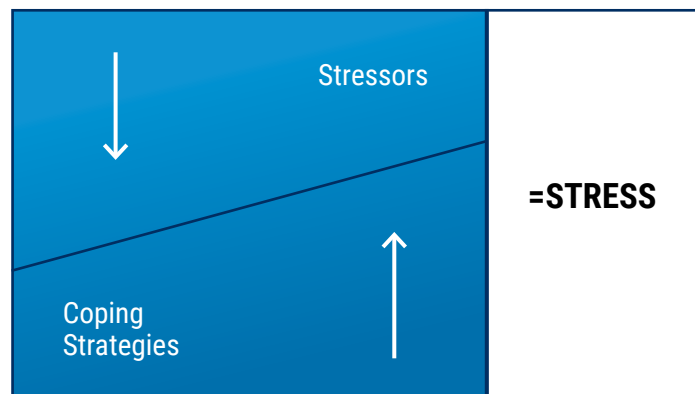


Fig. 4.1 Shows stress as the outcome of an imbalance between coping strategies for stress and the stressors

IIHF COACH DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

When a coach experiences stress, very often a wide variety of symptoms manifest themselves. The symptoms, and the strength and the extend that they are displayed by a coach, vary greatly from coach to coach.

Symptoms of stress are:

- Shorter temper
- Tenseness
- Poor performance
- Constant feeling of being tired
- Inability to focus
- Headaches
- Diminished communication
- Feeling of being exhausted
- Feeling of being empty
- Inability to fall asleep and poor quality of sleep
- Irritation
- Frustration
- Fatigue
- Low energy
- and many others

IIHF COACH DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

To avoid burnout and extensive health issues, which commonly develop together with burnout, coaches need to be aware of the stressors they are subjected to, as well as a series of coping techniques or skills to handle and manage the stress.

POSSIBLE COPING STRATEGIES FOR COACHES ARE DISPLAYED IN TABLE 4.2:

<p>Personal strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set aside personal time to recharge • Include physical activity in daily schedule (e.g., morning walk, stretching, yoga, running, cycling) • Set aside time to reflect on thoughts and emotions • Meditation • Positive self-talk • Build a support network • Improve sleeping rhythm • Mindfulness 	<p>Balance strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicate time to spend with family and friends • Delegate responsibilities • Prioritization <p>Communication strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear guidelines for team and athlete selection protocols • Athlete behavior standards • Athlete conduct • Expectations of coaching staff
<p>Professional strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • Problem solving • Management skills • Conflict management • Leadership 	<p>Use of time during off-season:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop communication plan for non-selection of players • Develop communication plan for removal of athletes from team



Learning about and applying these coping strategies will help coaches to be more motivated, less stressed and to find the inspiration again to coach and develop their players.

5 COACH DEVELOPMENT

The previous chapters focused on the types of knowledge a coach needs to possess to be adequately equipped to engage with and develop their players in the sporting environment and outside of it. Also covered was the importance of being an athlete-centred coach.

The athlete-centred coach takes the needs and abilities of their players as a priority during the development process, as well as taking care of their own well-being to be able to execute their job to the highest professional standard. The following chapter will focus on how coaches learn, acquire knowledge, transform and apply their knowledge in their everyday working environment.

IIHF COACH DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The development path of a coach from novice with no or only little coaching experience to an expert coach takes a long time.

In order for coach development to be effective, it has to meet the needs of the learners, in this case the coaches. Furthermore, it needs to equip the coach with relevant information and knowledge to develop players in their charge and provide the coaches with information for their coaching context. Expert coaches might hold a formal coach education/development certification degree equivalent to the Expert Coach category, but this does not necessarily apply to all. Other Expert coaches might not have attended a formal coach education/development opportunity within their sports federation targeted at this high level but have acquired their expertise through informal (e.g. on-the-job learning, watching videos) and non-formal (e.g. coaching symposium) learning situations.

TABLE 5.1 DEPICTS THE DIFFERENT LEARNING METHODS APPLIED BY COACHES DURING THEIR DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

MEDIATED LEARNING:	UNMEDIATED LEARNING:
<p>Formal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Coach education• Coaching degrees• Coach certification courses <p>Non-Formal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clinics• Symposia• Conferences• Continuous professional development• Mentoring agreement	<p>Informal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Self-reflection• Observing other coaches• Reading coaching related literature• Watching videos• Podcasts• Discussions with other coaches• Everyday experiences

IIHF COACH DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Coaches develop their coaching expertise over a long period through application of a combination of different learning methods.

Examples of preferred learning methods of coaches are:

- Mentoring by an expert coach
- Peer- and self-assessment
- Reflection
- Practical work-experiences
- On-the-job training
- Practical assessment
- Evaluation and feedback

This is not to say that formal coaching degrees and coach education courses are not valuable learning methods, but the delivery method of these formal learning opportunities is often not meeting the needs of the coaches. Coaches very often prefer learning methods where knowledge is connected to practice.

An online survey is an easy and inexpensive way to shed light onto the previous knowledge and experience of the coaching force within an MNA and of the preferred way of learning of the coaches. The MNAs could send out a short online survey to all registered coaches to collect valuable information when planning their Coach Development Program, syllabus and course design. This would help the MNAs during the design process of the Coach Development Program to incorporate a degree of flexibility and choice into the program, to recognize that coaches come to coaching with diverse backgrounds and prior expertise and experience.

6 COACH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The Coach Development Program will be most effective if different instruction and learning methods are combined to cater to the different learning needs of the coaches attending the program. This implies a mix of formal, non-formal and informal learning situations combined with practical application and experiential learning opportunities, creating a competence-based and supportive learning environment.

Furthermore, a variety of different learning and instruction methods will develop creative and critical thinking processes and equip coaches with capabilities that they can apply in every-day coaching sessions.

IIHF COACH DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

6.1 KEY PILLARS OF A COACH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

The key pillars of a holistic Coach Development Program include development of interpersonal knowledge, intrapersonal knowledge and professional knowledge (see Chapter 2.3) as well as the development of understanding of a coach’s own resources. The core competencies as already briefly described in chapter 2.4 define the essential coaching knowledge in more detail and they build the coach competency levels in a coach education program.



Fig. 6.1 Essential knowledge and core competencies of coaches

COACH COMPETENCY LEVELS				
Novice Coach	Intermediate Coach	Competent Coach	Advanced Coach	Expert Coach

FIG. 6.2 Coach Competency levels

The coach competency levels depicted in Fig. 6.2 describe a coach’s coaching competency and not their coaching role or position within a team or the organization structure. The competency levels guide coaches as well as coach developers in identifying specific development areas for each coach, depending on the coach’s individual needs identified through the domain and category the coach is working in.

Essential coaching knowledge is developed through the application and use of external and internal supportive learning resources. Internal learning resources are provided by the IIHF (e.g., the IIHF CEF) and MNAs alongside external resources from institutions such as WADA, NOCs and other institutions and organizations. These include materials and information such as the IIHF Coach Education Framework, the Green Puck Campaign, the IIHF Abuse and Harassment Coach Education or Coach True.

It is crucial to develop a learning environment that is targeted at the adult learner and meets the coach’s needs (see Fig 6.3), as has already been pointed out in chapter 5.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT TARGETED AT THE ADULT LEARNER AND MEETS THE COACHES NEEDS		
Interpersonal Knowledge	Intrapersonal Knowledge	Professional Knowledge

Fig. 6.3 The key pillars of a Coach Development Program

6.2 ALIGNMENT OF THE PLAYER DEVELOPMENT GUIDE AND THE COACH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Before creating the curriculum and the syllabus of the Coach Development Program, each MNA is strongly recommended to develop their Player Development Program or Model first, which can be based on or follow entirely the IIHF Player Development Guide. This step will ensure, through detailed analysis of the player base and their needs, that the Coach Development Program will develop coaches who will have the capabilities to cater to the needs of their players. The reasons for participation in ice hockey are most likely very diverse, from just wanting to have fun, to finding friends, adding physical activity to the daily life to wanting to become a top competitive player.

Furthermore, the players will come from diverse backgrounds and will enter the sport of ice hockey at different developmental stages, some with already well-developed sport skills, others still requiring support in developing fundamental movement skills. Each player will look for their very own pathway within the sport of ice hockey, and the coach will be the person to guide and develop them to the best of their abilities to achieve their personal goals. However, this is only possible if the Player Development Program/Model has been properly developed and the Coach Development Program aligned to it.

Developing a Coach Development Program will only be effective if it is aligned to the Player Development Program within the MNA.



IIHF COACH DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

6.3 COACH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM DELIVERY METHODS

The creation of the curriculum/syllabus and the content-fitting of the Coach Development Program is the responsibility of the MNA, because national laws or requirements on adult education and development might dictate the structure of the final Coach Development Program including assessment and certification.

Through a combination of different learning and instruction methods, the coaches will be put in charge of their own learning, which will increase their motivation for learning and development. This includes the recognition of prior learning (RPL), which consists of knowledge accumulated prior to the start of a formal Coach Development Program by the coach and previous experience that every coach will have before starting their very own development process. This prior knowledge has been accumulated through different ways which most likely include own athletic or sport experience, prior education and work experience, pre-coaching tasks, reading, attending clinics or workshops, having coached another sport previously, and many more.

Possible learning and instruction methods of a Coach Development curriculum:

- Mentoring
- Peer- and self-assessment
- Reflection
- Assessment
- Practical work experience
- On-the-job training
- Evaluation
- Feedback
- Lectures
- Workshops
- Learning Cafés
- Interaction between coaches
- Seminars
- Observational internships
- Coach exchanges

If different learning and instructional methods, based on adult learning principles, are used in the curriculum, the outcome will be learning, transfer of knowledge and change in the coaching behaviour, and coaches who are motivated towards lifelong learning principles. Table 6.3 displays a set of statements that are true for an adult learner.

TABLE 6.3 LISTS COMMON ADULT LEARNING PRINCIPLES

COACHES LEARN BEST WHEN	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• their learning needs are met.• they have an input on content.• their learning preferences are recognized.• they have an input into the course design.• they are treated as individuals.• they can transfer newly learned information to their coaching environment.• they can apply theoretical knowledge in a practical environment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• they can demonstrate their abilities.• they can learn where and when it suits them.• their previously acquired knowledge and capabilities are acknowledged.• they are challenged with new concepts.• they see the relevance of the material to their own work.



To ensure a high level of transfer of knowledge provided in coach development (courses, clinics, etc.) to the daily coaching practice of a coach it is recommended that the CDP includes a high level of on-the-job training, mentoring, evaluation, feedback, blended learning and active coaching practice.

Through a well-designed Coach Development Program quality coaching within each MNA will be achieved which will have positive outcomes for the players, the MNA as well as the coaches.

These positive outcomes will be:

- increased enjoyment in ice hockey participation.
- positive ice hockey and sport experiences for all.
- development of all players.
- development of fundamental and sport-specific skills.
- development of Fair Play, Integrity and an understanding on Anti-Doping.
- development of respect and discipline.
- increased self-esteem, resilience, self-worth.
- increased motivation and enjoyment.
- increased well-being and physical activity.
- increased recruitment numbers.
- development of social cohesion and community.
- increased self-development and personal growth.
- builds confidence, character, connection, competence, creativity and caring and compassion.
- supports sustained participation.

A common way of structuring a Coach Development Program (CDP) is to determine how many levels, awards or certificate levels the CDP should have. The next step is to determine, who the target group for each of the levels is, the coaches attending, their current knowledge and capability levels and what kind of players they work with. The third step is to determine the syllabus/curriculum for the CDP, which are closely linked to the assessments and outcomes of the coaches following the attendance of a course.

More information and guidance concerning the development of a Coach Education Programme can be found in the IIHF CEF. Including guidance on assessment of the coach education programme which is already in place as well as considerations concerning the availability and capabilities of coach developers.

SUPPORTING RESOURCES

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COACHING IS UNDERSTANDING PLAYERS' NEEDS

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