



Collegiate Coaches' Perceptions and Use of Sport Psychology Services

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Research with Coaches

- Roughly 24%-53% of NCAA D-I athletic departments use some form of SP consulting (Kornspan & Duve, 2006; Voight & Callaghan, 2001; Wilson, Gilbert, Gilbert, & Sailor, 2009)
- Interested and agree that MS are important to success but...
 - > Collegiate Level: 20% use services and 40% report access (Rice, 1996; Zakrajsek & Zizzi, 2007)
 - > High School & Club Level: 2.2% use services and 10% report access (Zakrajsek & Zizzi, 2008)
- Coaches receptivity to SP consulting is influenced by several factors

Discussion Questions

- Whether, when, and for what purposes are coaches willing to use SP services?
- What are coaches looking for in a SP consultant?
- What are coaches expectations about and preferences regarding the process of SP consulting?

What Coaches Expect or Desire in a SPC

Domains/Categories	Frequency
Domain 1: Who They Are	
a) Presence	Variant
b) Experienced	General
c) Desirable Characteristics	Typical
d) Demographic Uncertainty	Typical

Note: General = applicable to all of the cases;
 Typical = applicable to more than half of the cases;
 Variant = applicable to half of the cases or less

(Zakrajsek, Steinfeldt, Bodey, Martin, & Zizzi, under review)

"athletic experience...would help...[the] professional that would have a collegiate experience athletically would be more prepared to understand that arena, be able to offer sound suggestions."

"you don't want [the SP consultant] too close [to the athletes' age] and you've got to be able to be professional enough to draw that line."

What an Effective SPC Does (approaches to consider)

Domains/Categories	Frequency
Domain 2: What They Do	
a) Communicate	General
b) Possess Relational Skills	General
c) Get "Buy In" on SP	Typical
d) Provide Content: Performance Enhancement	General
e) Provide Content: Emotional Issues	Typical
f) Provide Value	Typical

(Zakrajsek, Steinfeldt, Bodey, Martin, & Zizzi, under review)

"I'd want that person to be direct and honest in their evaluations of the team make up and how that person thinks the team responds to coaching...offers suggestions of ...how maybe a coaching style...can be improved."

"Establishing..., a bond with the players, collectively and individually...if you're looking at interaction with a collective group or individuals' there has to be a trust factor between the player, or players of the team, and the psychologist or it's not going to work ."

"Change behavior...raise self-esteem... enhance the environment when needed. You want that person to have an impact on your group, however subtle."

What Coaches Expect in the Process

Domains/Categories	Frequency
Domain 2: How They Do It	
a) Accessibility	General
b) Logistic Uncertainty	General
c) Logistic Certainty	General
d) Paradoxical Positioning	Typical
e) Paradox of Role	Typical
f) Balance of Control/Be on Same Page	General
g) Challenge with Stigma	Typical

(Zatsepin, Stenlund, Bodey, Martin, & Zizzi, under review)

"I would love to have the opportunity for [my] kids to go ... on their own and to know that there's someone...they could talk to [that is] readily available."

"I would want to know what they were going over, whether its confidence, leadership, what kind of topic it is. I think there are things we need to know and things we don't. The confidence needs to be there between the team and the sport psychologist that what they say is...held confidential. If they think something was traumatic, ... 'I think the team is going to crumble and fall on top itself',...we need to know that."

Discussion Questions

What ways can a SP consultant build a trusting relationship?

What are some strategies that can create opportunities for mental skills training?

Conclusions


- Knowledge of SP services, importance placed on confidentiality, and commitment to SP varied.
- Overall, coaches viewed SP as a valuable resource and tool.
 - > Importance of SPC to build rapport, understand the athletic environment, and breakdown barriers.
 - > Trust, keeping coach informed, understanding coach's philosophy, and working within coach's system are important determinants of willingness to use services.

Implications for Sport Psychology Consultants

- Communication
 - > Gain understanding of coach's philosophy
 - > What are coach's experiences with SP
 - > Be on the same page
 - > Use language appropriate to the sport
 - > Most expect some type of follow-up information
- Practical skills and solutions related to specific sport
- Effectiveness and impact

Association for Applied Sport Psychology

<http://appliedsportpsych.org>



How to Choose a Sport Psychology Consultant

Each sport psychology consultant provides a specific set of skills that define the scope of his or her competencies. Thus, when choosing a consultant, it is important for athletes, coaches, parents, and athletic administrators to consider the following guidelines:

1. Identify the type of sport psychology services you wish to receive.

Are you looking for someone who can develop a performance psychology program and assist athletes during the sport "rehabilitation process"? Are you looking for someone to help athletes who are not meeting their performance or injury demands? The answer to questions like these and others dealing with the type of services you are looking for will help you decide what type of sport psychology consultant to select and for compensation that persons should earn.

Questions?

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