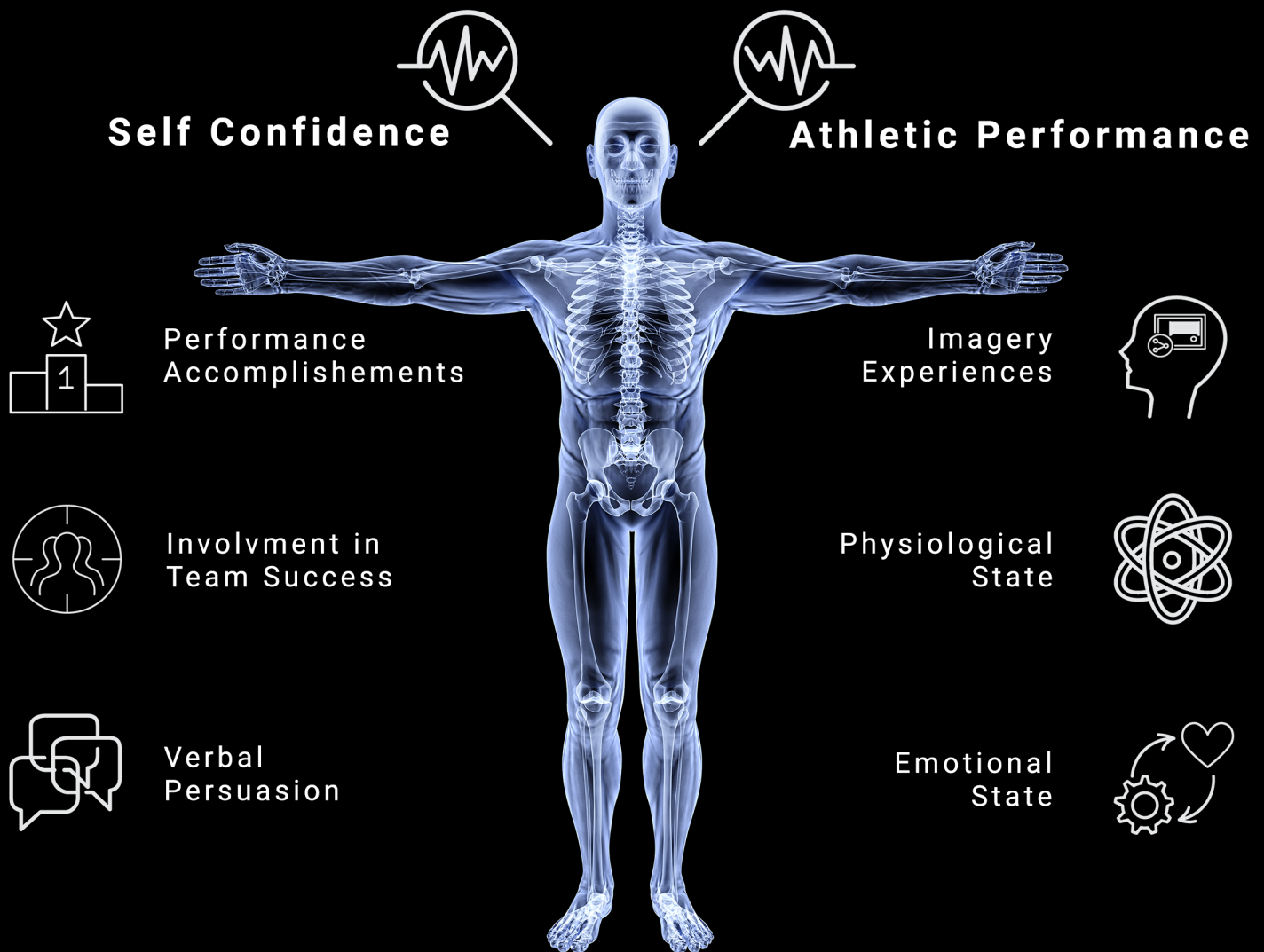




ISSPF
INTERNATIONAL SOCCER SCIENCE
& PERFORMANCE FEDERATION

SOCCER PSYCHOLOGY & MENTAL SKILLS TRAINING



Your Essential Guide to Psychological
Components and Mental Skills Training.



“Arsenal could have happened, as everyone knows, but I would not do a trial.

Who do you think regrets that more, Arsene Wenger or Zlatan?”

Zlatan Ibrahimović

Milan, LA Galaxy, Manchester Utd, PSG, Milan, Barcelona, Inter Milan, Juventus, Ajax, Malmo



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“Success is no accident.
It is hard work,
perseverance, learning,
studying, sacrifice,
and most of all, love of
what you are doing or
learning to do.”

PELE



QUESTION :

Why is psychology & mental skills an essential element in today's game?

Traditionally coaches and teams have dedicated an enormous amount of preparation to their physical conditioning and technical skills, with little or no attention to psychological preparedness. The diversity, unpredictability and intensity that soccer players face in training and competition challenges them on a physically and psychologically level. The human mind is complex with people learning and developing at different speeds. Psychological and mental skills are and will be a huge factor in the ability for players and teams to 'keep their cool' under pressure and maintain focus & concentration during the extreme circumstances of the game.





Focus & Mental Imagery, Critical Factors in Performance.





Messi

Barcelona



Soccer Psychology & Mental Skills Training

What type of technical, physical coach or performance development staff member are you?

Where do you need to improve?

How do you improve?

What are your mental strengths as a soccer coach, performance staff member, practitioner?

What do you do to assist & support your players or athletes from a psychological or mental skills approach?

Do you understand the most untapped area of cognitive behaviour that can be the difference between winning and losing or maximising development?

Do you have mental toughness as an individual?

What does it mean?

How can these elements be developed.... particularly under pressure?

Do you have the ability to let go of mistakes, poor decisions as a coach or individual in a sporting environment?

Can you maintain confidence in the face of adversity, how do you coach, reflect & progress as an individual?

Do you get the best out of your group & motivate them in the right way?

All of these questions, skills & components are needed to be able to compete & progress to the next level irrespective of the job or role you perform!

“

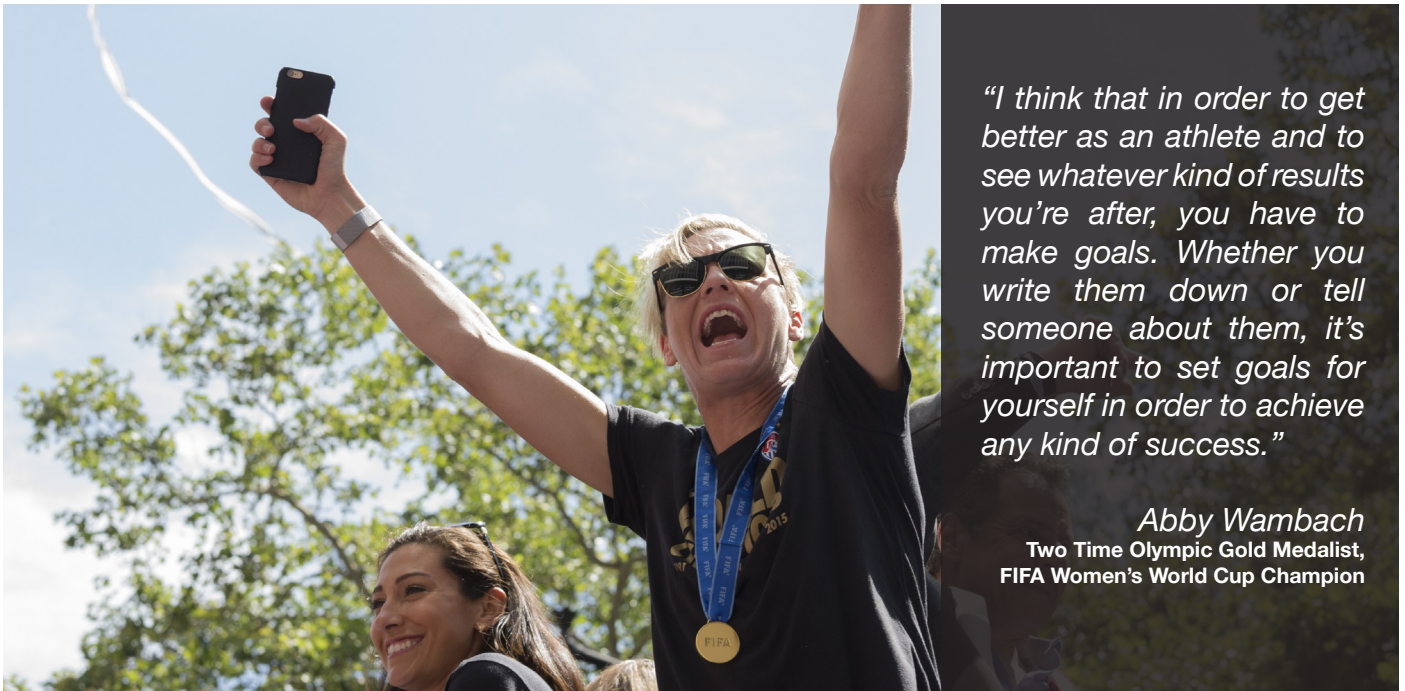
*I wouldn't say
I was the best
manager in the
business.*

*But I was in the
top one!*

Brian Clough

*Hartlepool Utd, Derby County,
Brighton & Hove Albion, Leeds Utd,
Nottingham Forest*

”



"I think that in order to get better as an athlete and to see whatever kind of results you're after, you have to make goals. Whether you write them down or tell someone about them, it's important to set goals for yourself in order to achieve any kind of success."

Abby Wambach
Two Time Olympic Gold Medalist,
FIFA Women's World Cup Champion

WHAT IS SPORT or SOCCER PSYCHOLOGY

- Sport or soccer psychology is the use of psychological knowledge & skills to optimize performance and well-being of athletes
- Maximising the developmental aspects of sports participation & understanding the systemic issues associated with sports settings and organizations

WHAT IS MENTAL SKILLS TRAINING

- Mental skills training is the process involving methods & techniques to improve performance
- Techniques involve such things like:
- Developing self-confidence & creating a positive mind-set through goal setting, positive self-talk, visualization, imagery & self-efficacy

WHY IS THIS DEVELOPING YOUR KNOWLEDGE IN THIS IMPORTANT?

- Understanding the key components of what drives coaches, players, & athletes to succeed is of paramount importance
- Developing strategies in order to prepare individuals for both training & competitive games from a psychological perspective is of great benefit to coaches & practitioners
- Coaches & performance practitioners can make huge advances in this under-applied area of coaching & sport science
- Our range psychology courses are developed specifically to enhance the coaching & performance process
- All practitioners & coaches can only benefit themselves & their players even further by having a more in-depth knowledge of applied psychology & mental skills training development
- May help us to maximise our decision making through a better understanding & appreciation of psychological & mental skill principles



INTRODUCTION TO SPORT PSYCHOLOGY

The psychological components & mental skills training approach involved in athletic performance have been of great interest to coaches, individual & team athletes, sport psychologists and sports scientists for a number of years. Sport psychology and cognitive skill development has been discussed as the last untapped or limited applied area of sporting development & understanding.

Applied research & studies in this performance area have largely included individual psychological factors and their influence on performance encompassing confidence, motivation, attention & psychosomatic skills (Gucciardi et al., 2009).

Furthermore, some recent literature reporting investigations surrounding the use of mental skills training approaches such as goal setting, imagery, relaxation, and self-talk have suggested to be vitally important areas in the field of sport psychology.

In addition, reports in this key area of development have shown that goal setting targets through time limits can increase performance during competition, and that interventions such as imagery and using all the senses to re-create or create an experience in the mind helps athletes to perform better and increase self-confidence.

As a result of these key interventions and significant methods being brought to the forefront in this developmental area, the ISSPF Soccer Psychology & Mental Skills Training Course will take you through a learning and developmental pathway exposing you to these areas of significance, through our expert faculty members to maximise your development and progress in technical, tactical & performance coaching. Being able to self-develop and helping you to enhance your skills & coaching methods, make better decisions under pressure, build the bond with your coaching staff members, players and athletes.

Topics highlighted below will enable you to progress in order to achieve more and be more conscious of interventions, thought processes & models to succeed. ISSPF have hand-picked key individuals from around the world who excel both in practitioning & academic levels to educate and promote best practice in the area of metal skills development & psychology.

Prof. Alena Grushko (Dynamo Moscow)
Sarah Murray (Brighton & Hove Albion FC)
Dr. Paz Ocampo (Colo Colo, Chile)
Dr. David More (Millionaires CF, Colombia)
Ricardo Pires (BENFICA, Portugal)
Dr. Nikki Crawley (Fulham FC, England)
Daniel Dymond (Australia)
Omer Ates (Besiktas, Turkey)
Thomas Pratl (Admira Wacker, Austria)
Dr. Tanja Ecken (Inglostadt, Germany)
Martin Machacek (Slavia Prague Czech Republic)



Sion Rowlands (Leicester City FA, England)
Pedro Assis (Porto Portugal)
Dr. Danny Ransom (Manchester United FC)
Dr. Fabian Otte (Germany)

ENERGY MANAGEMENT

Energy management is something that is well documented by media, players & staff within all avenues of sporting performance. Being able to understand and compose oneself under pressurised, stressful & successful environments is vitally important to develop the global approach to achieve.

Stress & anxiety before or during sporting competition or training content can interfere with development & performance as both a coach & athlete. The coordinated movement required, decision making processes, and actions involved with sport performance especially soccer becomes increasingly difficult when your mind & subsequent body is in a heightened pressured, tense period.

Although we all know how levels of physical arousal can be beneficial and assist us prepare ourselves and players to perform, when the physical symptoms of anxiety are too great, they may seriously interfere with the capability to compete or perform to maximum levels.

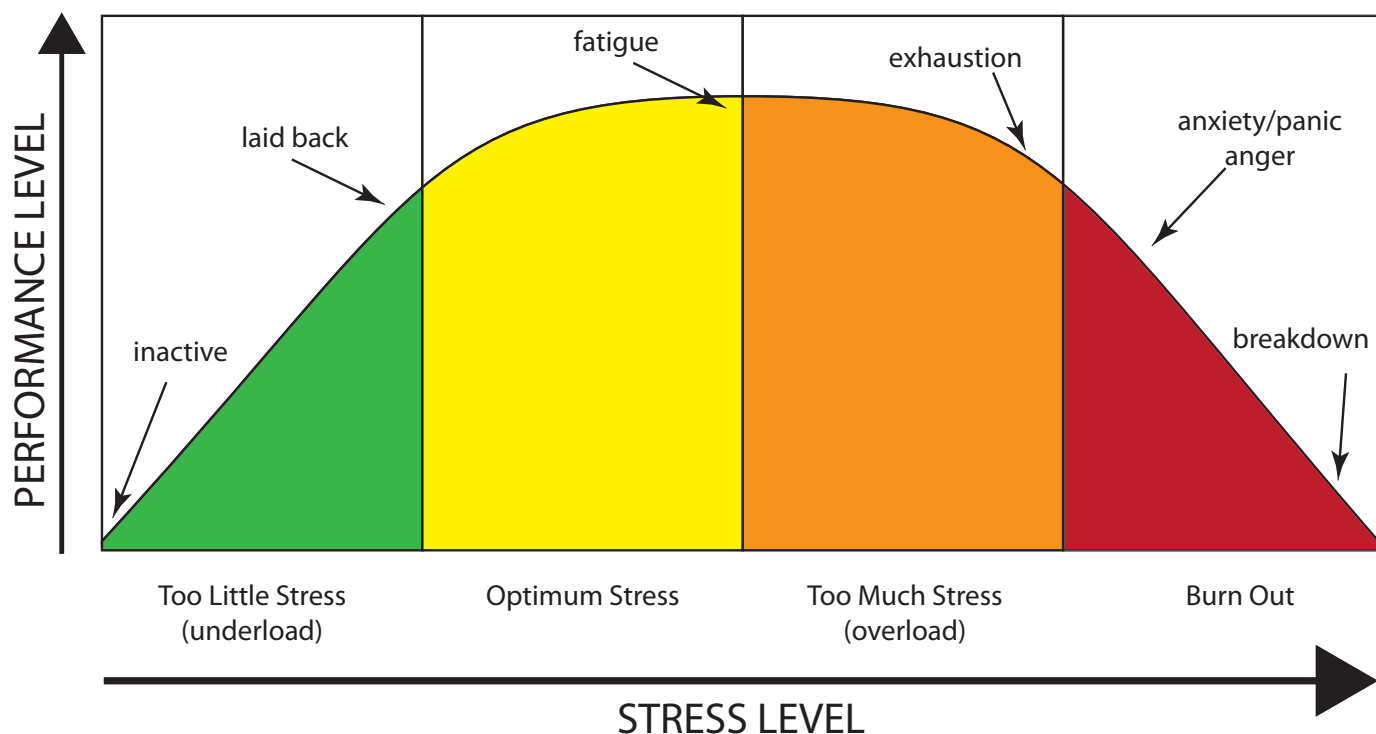
According to reports in this area, certain amounts of worry about how you perform can stimulate a helpful response in certain environments & in competition, however, at the same time, it is suggested that negative thought processed & patterns coupled with expectations of failure can bring about a self-fulfilling prophecy.





Some soccer players or athletes may be more prone to feeling the heightened effects of anxiety on performance, but that will be the same across youth, amateur & professional levels so the need to understand this area of performance can significantly help all coaches, performance staff & medical practitioners working in the athletic development process.

STRESS PERFORMANCE CURVE



Performing Under Pressure

How is it possible that elite soccer players or athletes consistently rise to the challenge or occasion when faced tough, high pressured games or competition?

Research shows that self-confidence plays a role in how you respond to symptoms of anxiety during athletic performance.

Generating confidence in your own ability as a performer (player, coach, physio or manager) will more than likely generate a positive reaction to being “stimulated or aroused” and will lead to the potential capability to thrive with challenge of competition. Reports in this area have found how elite players & coaches are often so focused on their behaviour, that they utilise arousal as excitement rather than anxiety.

Self-confidence is described as being at its highest when you believe in your own ability and feel that you have properly prepared for a competition.



“If you don’t believe you are the best, then you will never achieve all that you are capable of.”

Cristiano Ronaldo

Juventus, Real Madrid,
Manchester Utd, Sporting CP



Performance Anxiety

There are a number of strategies that can be employed to reduce performance anxiety which is suggested as counter-productive to succeeding in sport both as a staff member or player:

- Practice or train well-enough and sufficiently enough to provide confidence in the build up to as well as during competition
- Limit those negative thought provoking patterns which may contribute to anxiety through cognitive restructuring (ISSPF lectures have great detail on all elements)
- Develop your own processes in order to generate & interpret arousal during the training & competition as a positive rather than negative feeling

FOCUS & ATTENTION

During some point in our career we have been told to **FOCUS** – by a coach, player, teacher, ourselves...but what does it really mean – TO FOCUS?

When we hear Focus! Just focus! do we know what we should be doing, or where we should be directing our attention, or what the processes are to maximise the next stage. For certain individuals that we may be responsible for (e.g. players, athletes, coaches, performance staff) this can seem difficult or distracting, and in many situations, detrimental to ours & their physical & mental performance through misdirection or provision of poor information. Even though focus is not an innate trait something we rarely try and develop or train, it is suggested to be an entirely progressive skill that we can all learn through interventions & programming which can massively impact the individuals we are working with and for to maximise performance!

Attention: the act or power of carefully thinking about, listening to, or watching someone or something is the physiological underpinning of focus according to one report, and is suggested to be of limited resource to each person. Although you need to be very intentional about where, how and for what purpose you direct focus, its paramount that you direct it correctly in helping you advance toward your ultimate goal or progression.

How easy generally, is it for you to hold your attention? How long can you maintain your focus before your attention diverts or your mind becomes lazy? Were you able to focus for a number of minutes or for only a number of seconds? When trying to educate and develop your colleagues as a player, coach or performance staff member - it's important to be aware that everything within and around as well, is competing for attention. The decision to stay focused or to refocus is yours to make however difficult it may be! Remember that you & others around you have the ability to guide your attention and maintain your focus on whatever you want– even with distractions, when fatigued, and under pressure. However, to do so skilfully and intentionally will take effort and a lot of practice – ISSPF again is enabling everyone to further develop different interventions and the understanding of key mental skills training in order to maximise their performance for whatever duty is required within their roles.



FOCUS OF ATTENTION



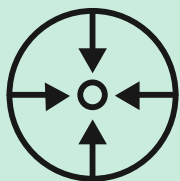
Understanding and utilising focus and attention in sport

WHAT IS FOCUS OF ATTENTION

Focus of attention is the target focus of an individual for any period of time. It is influenced by numerous factors including personal (motivation, emotion, etc), environmental (opposition weather, etc), and stimulus (complexity, duration, etc).



Optimal focus of attention differs for each sport and differing skill levels also.

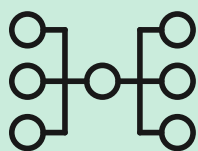
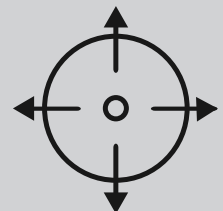


INTERNAL

The players thoughts and feelings are directed inwards, for example how the movement feels, and the specifics of the skill being performed. This is typically utilised by novices who must focus on the correct techniques for skills as it is not automatic.

EXTERNAL

The players thoughts and feelings are directed outward, for example on opponents movements, or hitting targets. This is typically used by experts as they do not have to focus on the skill itself as it is automatic, so focus can be upon the environment and other factors.

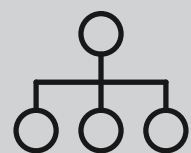


BROAD

The player has a wide focus of attention, allowing them to attend to all the important cues in the environment, however this can also lead to distraction of irrelevant cues. This is important in sports where the environment is rapidly changing... specifically in soccer.

NARROW

The player has closed focus, allowing them to attend to only the most crucial cues, however this can lead to the elimination of relevant cues. This is important in sports where the environment is relatively stable and few cues need to be attended to.





CONCENTRATION

Another key term used within sports by coaches, players and other staff members is concentration. The term concentration is defined as the action or power of focusing one's attention or mental effort and is used simultaneously with the terms attention and focus.

Once an athlete or coach has developed the necessary skills to compete, their capability to control & maximise their attention to concentrate on task demands is essential to consistently executing these skills time and time again, especially under pressure.

At any time period during a competitive or training environment, coaching staff, individual and team players or athletes are faced with a number of distractors (e.g. referee decision, opposition, team-mates, positive or negative play) – which can be split into two types:

- **External distractors** could be visual or auditory, and may include other competitors, spectators, and media.
- **Internal distractors** may include negative self-talk, fatigue, and emotional arousal.

According to research in this area, a shift in thought processing and emotions can lead to changes in physiological changes at the same time (Nideffer & Sagal, 2006). Coaches and athletes often refer to this process as 'choking' or producing a negative or poor performance.

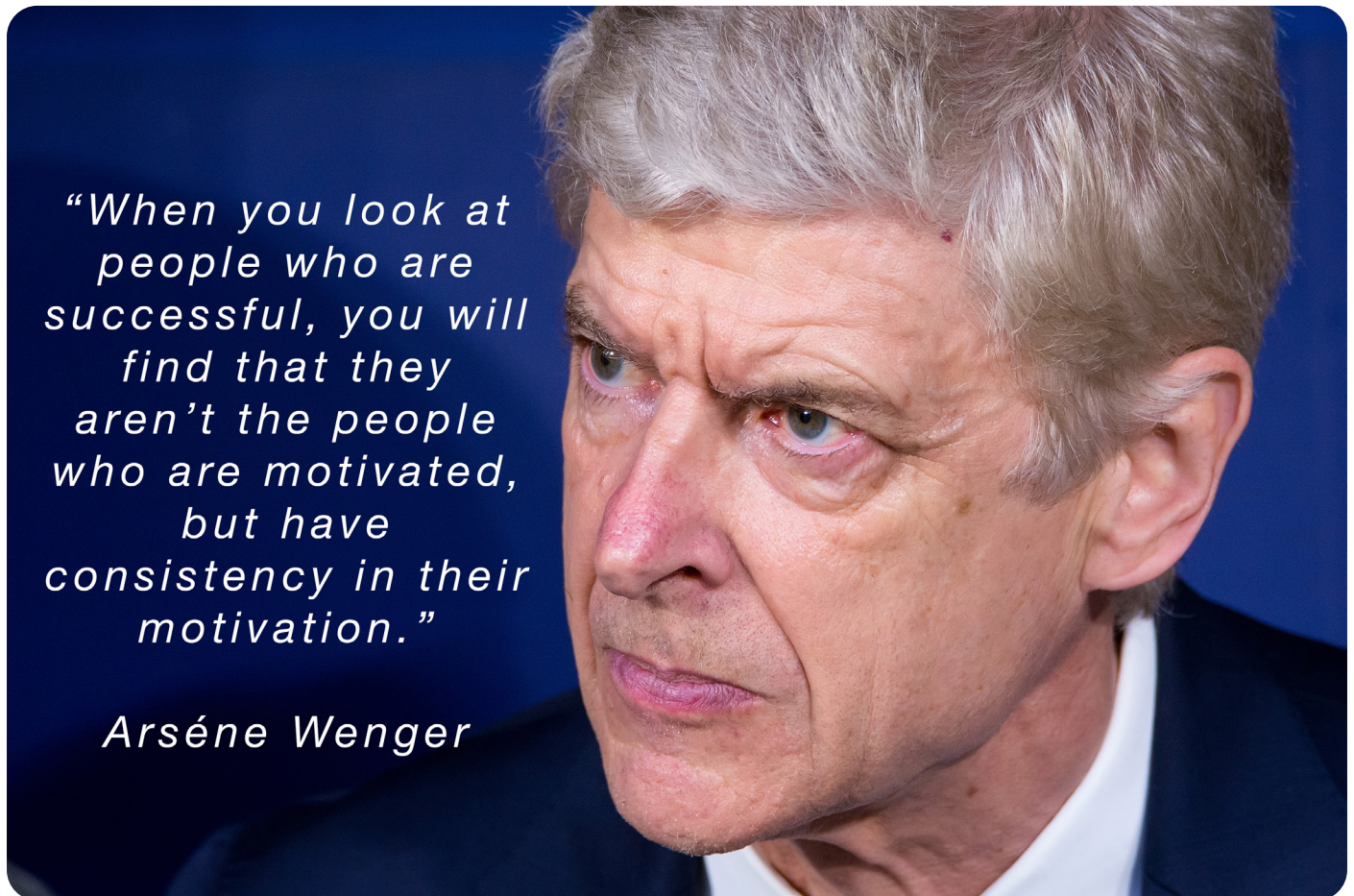
Although choking can be described in many ways, it is most often associated with a rapid deterioration in performance during an important competitive situation. Contextually, a player who is competing in an important period of the season or game may develop increased muscle tension and increased anxiety, which causes an overly narrow focus and inability to identify relevant cues. Effectively helping athletes to manage their thoughts and emotions may allow them to regain

EXTERNAL	INTERNAL
ASSESSING Shifts focus to the external environment that is often changing rapidly throughout a performance. For example, a midfield play maker who is scanning the field of play for defensive gaps left by opponents and movement by team mates to exploit these prior to playing the killer pass.	ANALYSING Shifts focus to reviewing one's own general thoughts and emotions throughout a performance. For example, a goal keeper facing a penalty considering which side to choose to dive to.
ACTING Shifts focus toward outward execution of a given skill. For example, a player taking a free kick, placing the ball in a considered manner and focusing on their address and approach as they begin the run up.	PREPARING Shifts focus to readying oneself for the execution of of a given skill (i.e. mental rehearsal). For example, back to the goal keeper facing a penalty kick, reviewing their self talk as they bounce on the goal line, 'seeing' themselves dive, the height, the distance and stopping the shot.



attentional control.

This is a topic that is widely explored in the ISSPF Soccer Psychology and Mental Skills Training Course where Ricardo Pires from SL Benfica will be specifically highlighting key points regarding player concentration and how to manage it.



MOTIVATION

Motivation is the foundation of all athletic effort and accomplishment. ... To become the best athlete you can be, you must be motivated to do what it takes to maximize your ability and achieve your goals. Motivation, simply defined, is the ability to initiate and persist at a task.

From a coaching perspective – how you maximise your players, athletes or staff's motivation levels? What makes them tick? What is their main motivation to perform and how can you as a leader draw that out of them! Understanding what gets your players prepared to perform is key as a coach, manager or leader of a department and ISSPF have the experts ready to deliver some key interventions and modules to help you progress within team sport environments.

Goal setting has received a lot of research based attention and its use has been supported by elite level practitioners, players and coaches as a way of focussing motivational traits. ISSPF faculty



member Sarah Murray in the ISSPF Soccer Psychology & Mental Skills Training Course covers this key topic and highlights how goal setting affects performance by directing individuals focus & attention, increasing persistence, and motivational strategy.

According to one report, goal setting & focussing on achievable targets are like magnets that attract soccer players & athletes to achieve more over time. Bueno, Weinberg, Fernandez-Castro, and Capdevila (2008) suggested that both motivational and emotional mechanisms were important mediators in improving the efficacy & efficiency of goal setting in endurance related sports.

Whereas researchers (Burton & Raedeke, 2008; Vealey, 2007) found that there is a close relationship between goal setting and imagery during practice and competition.

Interestingly, most individuals are involved within sport for a variety of reasons. Soccer players, staff members, coaches or head coach/manager's participation in sport across all levels of ability and age groups generally fall into line with two major motivational categories: intrinsic and extrinsic.

Intrinsic Motivation

Individuals who are generally intrinsically motivated particularly perform and sustain high levels of motivation through enjoyment and gaining satisfaction, with a large focus and concentration on skill improvement and growth.

Intrinsic Motivation Behaviours

- Better task-relevant focus
- Fewer changes (ups and downs in personality) in motivation
- Less distractions
- Less stress when mistakes are made
- Increased confidence and self-efficacy
- Greater satisfaction

Extrinsic Motivation

Individuals who are extrinsically motivated might express traits such as not wanting to disappoint a people, or are constantly in search of material rewards such as trophies and money as a priority. Extrinsically motivated players, staff or athletes focus on the competitive or performance outcomes themselves with an over-emphasis on extrinsic motivation leading their behaviour to be controlled by extrinsic rewards.

Behaviour controlled by the extrinsic rewards:

Motivation Based on

- *Extrinsic rewards – money, media praise, trophies*
- *Avoiding punishment or guilt (not my fault)*
- *“Should” do something*



10 WAYS TO CREATE A POSITIVE MOTIVATIONAL CLIMATE FOR YOUR PLAYERS



Make your players feel like they are an important component of the team and the role they play.



Encourage leadership among your whole squad of players, not just the Captain.



Develop a positive climate mistakes are viewed as part of the learning process



Foster an environment where players can take risks and express their creativity



Assist your players to achieve three basic needs :
Autonomy / Competence / Relatedness



Recognise individual progress and collective performance.



Challenge your players to build on their existing strengths



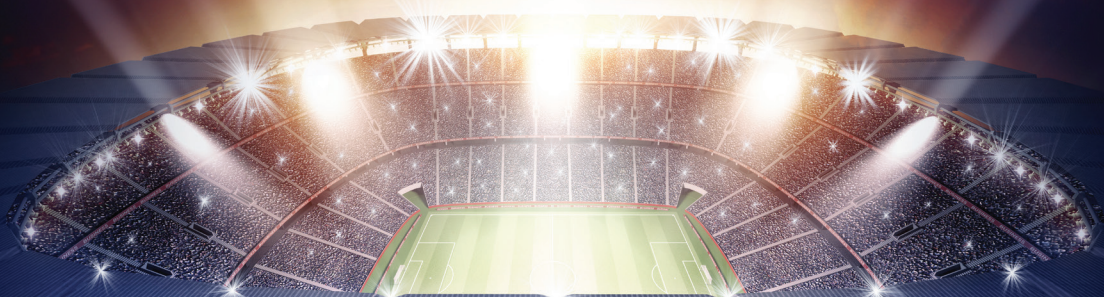
Actively and consistently model the positive behaviours that you want your players to exhibit.



Support your players and actively encourage them in the pursuit of self development



Individually and collectively set goals and challenge your players to achieve these.



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COMMUNICATION



To effectively communicate we must realise that we are all different in the way we perceive the world and use this understanding as a guide to our communication with others.

—

Tony Robbins



Communication has been defined as the act of expressing (or transmitting) ideas, information, knowledge, thoughts, and feelings, as well as understanding what is expressed by others. The process involving communication includes both sending and receiving messages through various communication forms. It has been suggested that 2 main types of communication are known as Verbal: which is the speaking part, and then nonverbal: which involves facial expressions, body position and gestures.

Communication occurs in one-on-one (small group such as units – defenders, midfielders or attackers) or large group meetings or situations (full squad or team analysis), and in written or visual formats (videos, and observational learning).

ISSPF faculty members have described through various modules & lectures within our courses and educational platform, high level communication lines and examples and in addition, how to provide this information within a sporting environment & positively influence performance measures.

It has been suggested through many research articles and reports that teams who promote positive communication and respect among staff, players & management of the club can improve overall motivation and cohesion.

Coaches who learn to communicate effectively with their players or athletes can deliver positive feedback and constructive criticism in ways that can positively influence players' subsequent performance & progressions. Additionally, there has been recent research to suggest that communication amongst medical department, performance and technical staff is one of the biggest issues in maintaining player health and availability.

Coaching and senior management staff must have the ability to communicate effectively to master and develop a successful training and competitive environment, irrespective of the sport they competing within. Even though the literature justifies developing communication with the sporting world, limited time is set-aside to help coaches, staff members & even players themselves to become better communicators.



HOW COACHES CAN IMPROVE THEIR COMMUNICATION SKILLS

SEND CLEAR MESSAGES



DON'T OVERLOAD

ACTIVE LISTENING



ENCOURAGE PLAYERS

BE DIRECT



CONSIDER YOUR MESSAGE

ASK RELEVANT QUESTIONS

Paraphrase to confirm understanding when speaking to your players



BE AWARE OF YOUR BODY LANGUAGE



BE AWARE OF YOUR EMOTIONAL IMPACT



MAKE SURE YOU'RE SENDING POSITIVE MESSAGES



UNDERSTAND THERE ARE DIFFERENCES IN COMMUNICATION



APPLY THE QUESTIONS AND ANSWER TECHNIQUES FOR CLARITY



OFFER SUPPORT & ENCOURAGEMENT WITH SPECIFIC CORRECTIVE ACTIONS



SELF-CONFIDENCE

One of the most important aspects of coaching, playing & managing in addition to performance and medical staff services is ensuring you provide confidence in yourself and generate it from others.

Self-confidence within a sporting situation is suggested as being evident when players or athletes are more readily able to turn sporting potential into superior performance.

Conversely, if athletes, players or coaches feel unsure of themselves or their preparation, the slightest hurdles or negative messages can have a significant limiting effect on their performance.



What is self-confidence?

For some sporting individuals, coaches and management or performance staff the concept of self-confidence is not as important as it is for others as they know what it is, how much is needed and how to deal with situations.

However, self-confidence is so palpable in some players, staff or athletes you can almost reach out and touch it. Their confidence is reflected in everything they say and do, in what they wear and how they look.

Self-confidence is commonly defined as the sureness of feeling that you are equal to the task at hand or you can even move beyond and conquer... Sureness is characterised by absolute belief in your own ability and your ability to positively influence others to achieve.

You may well know someone whose self-belief has this unshakeable quality and whose ego

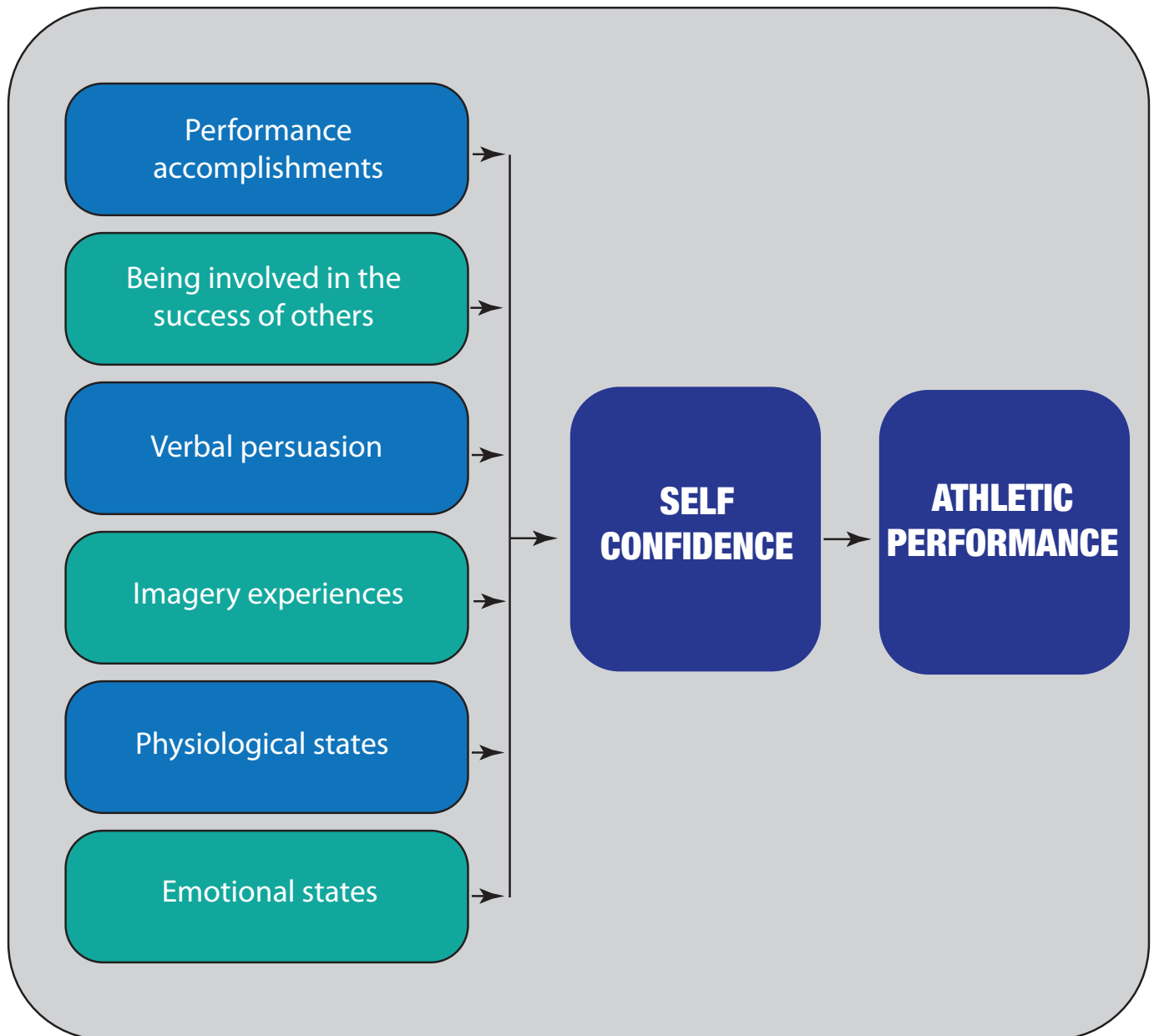
resists even the biggest setbacks.

As shown in the illustration opposite – there are suggested to be six sources of self-confidence:

- Performance Accomplishments
- Being involved with the success of others
- Verbal persuasion
- Imagery experiences
- Physiological states
- Emotional states



MODEL OF SELF CONFIDENCE (Adapted with permission from Feltz, 1984)



According to literature in this area, performance success & accomplishment is known to be the strongest contributor to sport confidence, progression and development.

‘When you perform any skill or task successfully, individuals generate and gain more confidence, and in general will be willing to attempt something slightly more difficult or challenging’

Personal success breeds confidence, while repeated personal failure diminishes it....how as a coach



or individual involved with the development of athletes or players can you provide an environments to succeed and gain confidence from a sport specific context.

“Please don’t call me arrogant because what I say is true. I am European Champion, I’m not one out of the bottle...”

I think I am the Special One”

Jose Mourinho

IMAGERY

A mental skills approach that researchers in the exercise domain have recently started to examine is imagery. ISSPF faculty member and leading Turkish Mental Skills Training coach Omer Ates provides an insight into the use of imagery in a sporting context and describes how imagining the execution of a sporting skill is similar to performing the skill, except that athletes experience the action only in their mind.

Furthermore, research by Omar-Fauzee, et al (2009) claimed that imagery was used as a methodology in which people can feel themselves through their minds & they can imagine themselves through ways that have directly influenced them to learn, develop & improve their skill set.

As the research on exercise imagery is gaining more positivity towards the use of the intervention and mental skills approach, further action & research in this area is needed to better understand how imagery may affect sporting behaviour (Vealey, 2007).





Reports & investigations have showed the effects of mental imagery on the enhancement of sporting performance (Jones & Stuth, 1997), learning of basketball tactical strategies (Guillot et al, 2009), motor performance and skills (Papadelis et al., 2007; Wei & Luo, 2009).

Imagery as an element of sport psychology or mental skills training tool can be useful on the success of sporting individuals and maintain or sustain physical, technical & tactical performance during competition & training.

REFLECTION

Reflection is considered a key factor in expert learning and refers to the extent to which individuals are able to appraise what they have learned and to integrate these experiences into future actions, thereby maximizing performance improvements.

Reflective practice has come to be recognised as a core element of professional expertise and development. Reflective practice refers to one's ability to analyse their own practice, adding problem solving into the learning by doing, or application of critical theory to the examination of professional practice.

Each form of reflective practice will raise a number of issues for sporting personnel particularly in terms of the way they view their practice.



This reflection process is vitally important for self-development & should be performed by all individuals searching for enhanced skills (e.g. players, coaches, performance staff, medical staff, technical analysis).

It has been suggested that reflective practice is an idea used in education studies and pedagogy and is delivered within ISSPF through faculty member and Austrian Thomas Pratl who gives a fantastic module into self-reflective practice and what it looks like in a team sport environment. Reflection has been reported as an 'active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it, and the further conclusions to which it tends' (Dewey, 1910).



Previous research has suggested that before a coach can achieve effective reflection three personal characteristics have to be met.

1. Open-mindedness- this is the desire to want to learn more than you already know
2. Wholeheartedness – this is the enthusiasm to want to learn more about a specific subject
3. Responsibility- this is to take the accountability of your actions, positive or negative

'Reflective practice requires professionals to step back from themselves and the situation to examine all aspects of the teaching/learning act, including essential dispositions. It implies that they use an empirical, analytical review of their teaching and that they employ a moral and ethical framework to guide their analysis and modification of teaching behaviour.'

Boise State University

CHECKLIST ON HOW TO REFLECT



Describe the experience.

Write a sentence that briefly describes the experience or event from the viewpoint of a bystander... third person.

What went well & not so well.

Provide a sentence explaining what went well and not so well. Be honest and critical, limit yourself to one positive & one negative.



Why did this happen?

This is the tough bit... explore what were the causes and consequences of what went well or not. Take time to think about this objectively and honestly.

What have you learned?

Vital! Following the experience / event and understanding why it happened and the consequences of the positive and negative outcomes, how will this personally progress from this experience.





DEVELOPING RESILIENCE IN SOCCER

What are the issues?

Players & coaches have to deal with many obstacles and failures throughout their career across all levels – are they prepared for it?

Do we as a coach or performance coach instil the capability and capacity with our players or staff to train for these or move through them!

i.e. Losing games, pressure of performing 1 or 2 times per week, transfers to different countries, cultures, different playing systems, being played out of position, being injured (short & long term), family issues away from the game, time management issues, mixing studies with training, peer pressure to succeed, parental & coaching pressure!

What is it?

Resilience is suggested to be a concept which is developed over a period of time through situations and circumstances that encourage the need to overcome adversity. Development of specific and relative coping strategies to deal with these obstacles, situations or barriers and become a mentally stronger or more resilient individual is the target.

*Ability to use personal qualities to withstand pressure
(Fletcher & Sarkar, 2016)*

Furthermore, **Resilience** or “**mental toughness**” is described as a key psychological aspect of sport, and something that all successful individuals possess. The ability to **bounce back** from a poor performance or a detrimental mistake is **crucial** to an athlete’s or soccer player’s success. As much as individuals hate to admit it, failure is a part of the game – and people learn more from failure than success!

Another word that is used within the soccer world to discuss this concept is Bouncebackability. This has been defined as the ability to recover from bad circumstances, and bounce back!

According to some leading practitioners in soccer and academics in this topic area - these tips should not only allow you to develop your players further, but also help you in your coaching or performance staff role develop resiliency and challenge yourself further:

1. *Progress yourself outside of the “comfort zone” – focus on moving towards the growth zone – do not be afraid to make mistakes! Just try and have better informed decisions!*
2. *Develop a never give up mentality – always search for the next challenge and accept that failure is part of the learning process – its how you learn and adapt as a coping strategy that’s important.*
3. *Seek, find and search for new tough circumstances as challenges - test yourself*



to rise above them.

4. *Challenge yourself to find a way to move closer to your goals – what is it you need to accomplish?*

LEARN TO BE COMFORTABLE BEING UNCOMFORTABLE!

**I start early, and stay
late, day after day
after day, year after
year.**

**It took me 17 years
and 114 days to
become and overnight
success**

Lionel Messi



Be a serious student of the game, a life long learner with ISSPF.com



ISSPF

INTERNATIONAL SOCCER SCIENCE
& PERFORMANCE FEDERATION

WHO WE ARE:

Global Faculty of Professors, Specialists and Technicians specialising in the development of individual human and collective team potential in the soccer environment.

WHAT WE DO:

Provide cutting edge, insightful lectures & courses through a state of the art online learning platform.

HOW WE CAN HELP YOU:

Keeping up to date in the fast paced, constantly adapting soccer science and performance environment is difficult to do if you work full time at an elite club or if you're looking to catch that break leaving college or university and secure your dream job.

Our extensive world wide network of Professionals & Academics are at your disposal to enhance your knowledge and competency enabling you to become a more valued and trusted advisor in your team set up.

GLOBAL FACULTY SPANNING ALL FIFA CONFEDERATIONS



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Certificate in Soccer Psychology & Mental Skills Training

Course Summary

This Soccer Psychology & Mental Skills Training course has been developed with some of the most respected psychologists and mental skills practitioners and academics working across some of the world's leading soccer clubs.

This course will aid your understanding of where the psychological and mental skills approach discipline can assist with those marginal gains clubs and individuals pursue.

This brings together some of the key elements involved within the game from a technical, tactical, management or performance coaching perspective across all levels of the game, who represent the following clubs and associations.



Course Information

Duration: 3 months

Target Level: Post-Graduate Students or Professional Coaches

Average Workload: 20 hours total (pre-lecture reading + online content + questions)

Delivery Method: Online-based

Language Delivered: English

Frequently Asked Questions

Is my progress logged through the course?

You can view your results and course progress at anytime from your results page.

Can I stop/pause a lecture part way through?

Yes, the course is completely flexible. You can go back to a module at anytime and continue from where you left off.

Can I stop/pause a test part way through?

No. Online test must be completed in one go and immediately after completing the module.

Can I take the modules in any order?

No. The course follows a set structure that must be studied in numerical order. You can only access the next module once you have completed the previous module test.

Do I get feedback from the course?

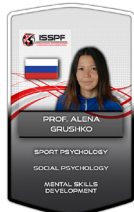
Yes. On completion of all 8 modules there is a set of 8 basic assignments (1 per module). You should complete those 8 assignments and submit them via the learning portal to receive feedback from one of our faculty.

Is there a time limit on the course?

No there is no time limit on the course. You can access the course 24/7, 365 days.

Will I get a certificate to show that I have passed the course?

Yes, you will receive a pass certificate provided you have attained the minimum pass grade of 75%.



Lecture 1 : An Introduction into Sports Psychology & It's role in Soccer

Dr. Alena Grushko

In this lecture you will learn: Sports psychology and its dimensions; Performance enhancement processes in applied sports psychology; Mental training and its dimensions in soccer team; Social skills training in soccer; Perceptual-cognitive training in soccer; and Instrumental methods in sports psychology.



Lecture 2 : Energy management in the game - Anxiety, Stress & Arousal

Ricardo Pires

In this lecture you will learn: The concepts of arousal, anxiety and stress and how they differ from each other; The stress process and its four different stages; The potential sources of stress and anxiety in soccer; The way arousal and anxiety are related to performance in soccer; and Possible ways to apply it to your coaching context.



Lecture 3 : Improving Focus, Attention and Concentration in a Soccer Environment

Omer Ates

You will better understand: Various types of attentional focus; Psychological distractors; Various types of attentional problems faced by sportspersons; Ways of implementing techniques for improving concentration; Implementing specific concentration game types; and The main situations and the definition of concentration.



Lecture 4 : Player motivation and the use of goal setting

Sarah Murray

This lecture will explore stages of player motivation: Goal Setting & the definition of; Goal Setting in soccer environment; Types of goals setting processes; How does goal setting work?; Goal setting and impact on soccer performance from an individual perspective; How we maximise its use; Using SMART goals process to develop players



Lecture 5 : Team Cohesion & key lines of communication within soccer

Ricardo Pires

Within this model you will be exposed to the following objectives: Defining Cohesion; Identifying different dimensions of Cohesion; Understanding the Conceptual Model of Cohesion in Sports Teams; Knowing Cohesion's correlational factors and outcomes; Understanding Cohesion-Performance relationship; Developing Team's Cohesion; and Communicating Effectively within a team environment



Lecture 6 : Developing self confidence in soccer (Training & Match Interventions)

Sion Rowlands

Examine soccer specific self confidence techniques including how to building self confidence; explore what an intervention is; how to deploy an intervention; and investigate interventions in the future.



Lecture 7 : Imagery as a mental skills intervention

Omer Ates

Within this module you discover: What is imagery & how we can maximise its use in soccer; Specific factors affecting the effectiveness of imagery; How imagery can influence performance in team sport; Understanding the key to effective imagery implementation; and Understanding how to create an imagery script.



Lecture 8 : Coach and Player self reflection

Thomas Pratl

Within this lecture you'll gain a better understanding regarding the importance of self-reflection; Knowledge of certain reflective strategies; Taking advantage of practical ideas; Concise references regarding your coaching behavior; and Developing more clarity & understanding of your own coaching approach.



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