



## **Barani Academy Coaches Competence Guidelines**

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## Abstract

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<p>A coaching culture is a common and important term nowadays. Although, the idea can be explained in a very subjective way. Various sports clubs and organizations try to define the concepts and strategies, but their qualitative and specific implementation is often an issue for consideration. That lead the youth organization Barani to provide the opportunity to create the guidelines of coaching competencies - Barani Academy Coaches competence guidelines - as a helping tool for coaches.</p> <p>The main goal of this work was to create a procedure of competencies for coaches when preparing their annual plans, and not only from the point of view of the creation of the training unit itself, which is the common culture in the Slovak sports environment. The goal was to use this manual to connect the age categories across the academy and to increase the importance of the qualitative factors of the coaches' work and the coaching culture in the Barani organization. On the other hand, the project became a valuable tool for the youth program director to monitor the process throughout the Barani Academy age levels.</p> <p>One of the project goals was to answer why and how to fulfil the specific competencies. The pillar of the work was the concept of the primary functions of a coach pyramid created by ESCF in 2017, which presented the basis for the Barani primary functions of the coaching pyramid. The other aim was to produce the content of the individual and specific pyramid components created by ESCF in 2017. The project was shaped with the cooperation of all the coaches and the director of the youth organization, which achieved the authenticity of the final product.</p> <p>The end product is very understandable, and recommendations for coaches are explained clearly to follow the points of the processes to create a comprehensive picture of coaching work inside the academy. This document represents the idea of building a coaching philosophy for any coach, organization, and coaching culture in Slovakia.</p>
<b>Key words</b> Coaching, guidelines, development, coaching methods

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## 1 Introduction

Coaches play central role in promoting sport participation and enhancing the performance of athletes and teams. The role of the coach is to develop athletes as humans, teams as a cohesive units and communities as shared interests. Coaching is in its most dynamic era in history. Coaches work with increasingly diverse populations and face heightening demands from their athletes. The professional area has placed a new emphasis on positive interaction and overall development of athletes rather than simply the win–loss record. There is greater accessibility to information and visibility to a larger community in the digital age. All these factors make coaching both more exciting and demanding than ever before (International Sport Coaching Framework, 2023).

The European sport coaching Framework has described six primary functions of a coach as an effective guide for athlete development and improvement in daily work of coaches. These primary functions have been derived from consultation, and a significant review of the extensive current literature and newly developed primary research (International Sport Coaching Framework, 2023).

In this context, coaches have a responsibility to develop and enhance their own capabilities on an ongoing basis to fully meet the requirements of the athletes they serve. The organizations that employ them owe it to coaches to ensure they have acceptable educational footing, philosophical orientation and resources to fulfil the obligations expected of them (International Sport Coaching Framework, 2023).

All these facts have developed interest inside the Barani organization to help coaches fulfil their daily competencies. The Barani is a youth hockey club which was established in 2020 by former NHL player Michael Handzus. The main aim of the organization is to develop human first mindset within the club. The Barani has currently more than 400 members, from 5 to 20 years old. The club employs currently 23 coaches. An important part is to create a vision of the organization, which is connected throughout all academy levels. The primary function of the coaching framework of Barani Academy deals with creating guidelines of competencies for all coaches during the long-term processes. Nowadays, due to the high amount of information about coaching, there is a necessity for reconnection between the coaches of each age category. This product aimed to specify the fulfilment of all parts of the coaches' competencies.

One of the objectives of this product-based thesis is a guideline for coaches to run the athlete development process in all areas created by the International Council of Coaching Excellence as ISCF's Primary Function of the Coach. However, version v1.2 of ISCF's Primary Functions of the Coach is a clear and helpful document; there was a need to specify how all aspects of the coaches' competencies are fulfilled inside the organization to achieve the vision of the organization. The

final product is designed as an educational manual, which helps coaches to define their coaching philosophy. The guidelines cover practical examples and explanations to answer why and how coaches accomplish certain parts of their competencies to achieve the goals of a bigger picture of the organization.

The final product should be used as a guideline for the coaching development of any organization. It can lead to raising the quality of perception of the coaches' competencies and perceptions of the importance of coaching in general.

It is however, also descriptive on the basis that there is no predefined gold standard of competences to be gained or curriculum to be followed. The competences that are included are, as described, exemplar. There is (and must always be) a level of autonomy in the way in which coaches will execute their competencies (ICCE Home, 2023).

## **2 Primary functions of the coach**

### **2.1 Value of coaching**

The element of an athlete's sport experience is directly reliant on the quality of the coaching received. The appropriate kind of coaching can help athletes achieve their full potential and inspire a lifelong love of sport and physical activity. The improper type of coaching can have just the reversed effect: burnout, dropout, injury, loss of enthusiasm etc. The right kind of coaching must therefore be standard. (QCF, Human Kinetics, p.5)

Coaches face many variations and pressures that can influence their practice and impact. By having a clear concentration, they are able to accordingly direct their attention and energy towards meeting the needs of their athletes, optimize their well-being, and develop their performance in their specific sports contexts. (ESCF, p.22)

### **2.2 Essentials of coaching**

Sport coaching has progressed significantly, as has the knowledge about athlete development. The recent scientific findings and highly effective coaching strategies are regularly shared through many of academic sources and coaching newsletters. In addition, social media and digital sports programming present a continual barrier of coaching guidance, although some are more reasonable than others. (QCF, Human Kinetics, p.10-12)

Coaches require knowledge in many areas because coaching is complex and coaches assume multiple roles. There are three types of coaching knowledge:

#### **2.2.1 Professional Knowledge**

Professional knowledge presents to two main functions of coaching: producing quality training sessions and mentoring athletes to ideal performance in competitions. Coaches should have knowledge of the sport culture, rules and history; be aware of the skills, tactics, training and safety regulations of the sport; perceive athletes' development and learning needs; and be able to apply their knowledge (Thornton, 2011).

#### **2.2.2 Interpersonal knowledge**

Interpersonal knowledge supply coaches with an awareness of how to coach each athlete and to work with others in the sport environment. Coaches should provide the ability to connect to and work effectively with athletes and other participants in the sport setting, including officials,

administrators, parents and program stakeholders. They should also monitor and control their emotions and accomplish leadership skills (Thornton, 2011).

### 2.2.3 Intrapersonal knowledge

Intrapersonal knowledge is about understanding oneself. This is crucial for helping a coach identify personal core values, developed coaching skills and support a coaching career. The key competencies related with intrapersonal knowledge are self-awareness, reflection, and continuous improvement. (QCF, Human Kinetics, p.10-12)

### 2.3 Primary functions of the coach – pyramid

The primary functions of the coach describe how coaches achieve their aims in general terms. Substantial variation may exist depending on the nature of specific coaching roles and circumstances. Experienced coaches are more engaged in all of the functions than are early-stage coaches. However, coaches should be familiar of and strive to fulfil these primary functions regardless of experience. (ESCF, p.14)

The European Sport Coaching Framework identify six primary functions for managing athlete development, practically defining the daily work of the coach. These primary functions have been acquired from consultation, and a considerable review of the comprehensive existing literature (Lara-Bercial et al., 2017).

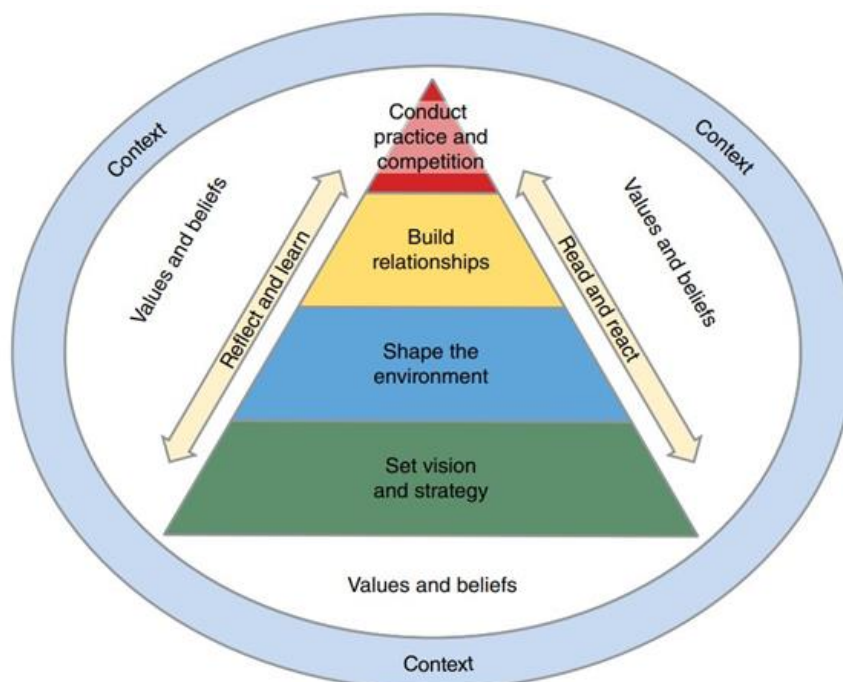


FIGURE 1 The primary functions of the coach

Source: Lara-Bercial et al. (2017)



The coaching profession in its various forms is realized through a number of functions, for the fulfillment of which it is necessary that the coaches have the appropriate competences.

The European Sports Coaching Framework specified six primary functions of a coach that define coach's daily work. These primary functions were created on the basis of consultations and a detailed analysis of existing literature as well as from currently developing empirical research, as presented in fig. 1 (Lara-Bercial et al., 2017):

1. Define vision and strategy. The coach, in partnership with athletes and teams, creates a vision and strategy based on the needs and stage of development of the athletes and the organizational and social context of the plan. The coach develops a concrete plan that outlines the steps needed to bring that strategy to life and realize that vision.
2. Shape the environment. The coach works with a group of athletes and takes responsibility for individual and institutional goals. To this end, the coach tries to optimize the environment, other employees, equipment, resources and work processes, including through the management of other coaches and support staff.
3. Build relationships. The coach builds positive and effective relationships with the athletes and with other persons connected with the plan. The trainer is responsible for mutually respectful and effective working relationships with responsible persons (e.g. managers or management).
4. Lead practice, prepare and manage competitions. The trainer organizes adequate and stimulating practice using effective forms and methods supporting learning and improvement. The coach prepares for targeted and suitable competitions and also supervises and manages the athletes in these competitions. The coach creates additional and relevant internal and external opportunities for competition that are appropriate to support individual and team development.
5. Identify the situation and react to it. The trainer observes and appropriately reacts to events, including all internal and external influences. Effective decision-making is essential to the performance of this function and is a skill that should be developed in all coaches at every stage of their development.
6. Reflect and learn. The coach evaluates training sessions and competitions as a whole and is constantly looking for improvement. In addition, personal assessment and reflection support the process of continuous learning and professional development. An important element of this process is the coach's efforts to support the education and development of other coaches.

The mentioned primary functions of the coach determine each other and are aimed at the permanent improvement of the coaching work (see figure 1).

In connection with the specificity of coaching roles and external and internal conditions, there may be certain differences between coaches in the fulfillment of individual functions. Experienced trainers, unlike beginners, usually deal with all functions. The starting point of this comprehensive set of coaching functions is a clear and strong set of values, beliefs, firm visions and strategies that are based on the goals of the athletes, the team and the organizational and institutional context (Lara-Bercial et al., 2017).

### 3 Values and believes

Maio (2017) mentions her point of view concerning values. According to this author, the life principle represents an area related to the principles that underlie the attitudes, ways of thinking, expressions and habits of a person or institutions (families, communities). These principles are held to be true by people and have intrinsic value to them. They refer to the human needs of preference for certain thinking and behavior, opinion, opinion and expectation, and to the need for balance between values and actions. Every person creates a system of values during his life, which directs his activities, behavior and actions. However, the value system is not immutable, it develops under the influence of a number of circumstances. On the basis of values, a person forms his attitudes and beliefs, and these also influence his actions. A person's effort is for his value system to be in line with his attitudes, beliefs and actions, so that he adheres to what is important to him.

Concerning beliefs, Primmer (2018) states that a belief represents a subjective attitude that something is factual. The term "belief" refers to attitudes about the world which can be either true or false. To believe something is to consider it to be true; for example, to believe that grass is green is comparable to accepting the truth of the proposition "grass is green". However, holding a belief does not require active introspection. For instance, few carefully consider whether or not the sun will rise tomorrow, simply assuming that it will. Moreover, beliefs need not be occurrent (e.g. a person actively thinking "grass is green"), but can instead be dispositional (e.g. a person who if asked about the color of grass would assert "grass is green")

West (2015) believes that sport (in any field) is a truly unique tool for the all-round development of an individual. It helps strengthen and develop the physical fitness and dexterity of youth, as well as increase their mental resilience. Its role as a significant socialization mechanism, which contributes to increasing social competences or shaping attitudes and value systems, is also essential. Sport also offers the possibility of self-realization, or helps in training self-control, strengthening the will or resistance.

A study by Crossan and Bednář (2018) examined coaching values among Czech basketball coaches. The study showed that Czech coaches rely primarily on the inherent values of sport, such as hard work and building respect. Czech coaches emphasize achieving success and their desire is to develop a sports culture. The study suggests that emphasizing moral values could help Czech coaches achieve their performance goals and further develop the sport. Unfortunately, the problem is the commercialization of sports and also the fact that the successful implementation of moral values in order to create the required positive emotions, social capital and prosocial behavior in the team is connected to the character of the coach himself.

For coaches, sport should be perceived as a means to develop life experiences and become the best at something. In her study, Copeland (2021) states that sports culture should be based on loyalty, on teamwork, on the importance of not winning but participating (winning is not the end result we strive for). Among other priority values, the author of the study lists persistence, reliability and cooperation.

Whether it is football, hockey, basketball or sports in general, Lyle (2002) claims that athletes should be supported in their further all-round and healthy development at an early age through physical activities. At the same time, Tenenbaum & Eklund (2007) think that it is extremely important that good foundations are created for children for a lifelong love of sports. Considering that in the whole world, we are witnessing a decreasing participation of the population in physical activities in today's so-called "sedentary society", one of the key goals of coaches is to contribute to the support of a healthy lifestyle, especially for children and youth.

## 4 Set vision and the strategy

### 4.1 Goal setting

From a psychological point of view, a goal is defined as an object, a purpose towards which motivation is directed, a motivated activity; targets may include approach or avoidance objects. Achieving a goal reduces tension, not achieving it leads to frustration. We can divide goals into short-term and long-term goals. The insertion of an increasingly long time gap between stimulus and reaction is connected with the intellectual development of humanity, the ability to choose long-term goals is also paramount in the development of an individual. Goals are sometimes divided into an object of desire - less specific goals, and an object of desire - more specific goals, an object of striving - a clear goal, accompanied by considerable effort. Sub-goals, tasks (objective, task) - they specify the progress towards the general goals, they are formulated in such a way that they can be evaluated objectively, and clear indicators of their achievement are set (Taylor, 2005).

Goals motivate athletes by helping them focus on specific tasks, increasing effort, and persistence in the face of adversity and failure. Setting and achieving goals also boosts an athlete's confidence and motivation, but all these benefits of the method depend on the correct goal formulation process (Taylor, 2005).

Goal setting is the process by which long-term and short-term goals are established. Effective goal setting involves setting realistic goals and identifying incremental, small steps to achieve them. Setting goals is related to self-efficacy of the athlete. An athlete who has high self-efficacy in a certain area sets a certain goal for himself, usually creates and organizes the conditions for achieving it. Goal setting can affect anxiety levels, self-confidence and goal motivation (Burton, 2008).

Burton (2008) mentions 6 basic principles of effective goal setting:

- objectives should be specific, they should indicate exactly what is to be done,
- they should be measurable, quantifiable,
- shift oriented and indicate the procedure to be followed,
- realistic, achievable despite various limitations,
- time-bound, the goals should be achievable within a reasonable period of time horizon, goals should be set by the athletes themselves or based on collaboration with the athlete.

#### 4.1.1 SMART goals

One of the basic and most used methods for setting goals is the SMART analysis method. Individual letters represent a given characteristic. They are derived from the initial letter of the English word that forms the name of the method. Sometimes we can come across a slightly different

meaning, especially within the diversity of usage in fields or according to the needs and focus of projects (Kellams, 2020).

According to the SMART method, each goal should be (O'Neill, 2009):

- S – specific
- M – measurable
- A – achievable/acceptable
- R - realistic - realistic,
- T – timely/trackable

The extension of the method to SMARTER is also emerging, where E can have meaning in the context of motivation, ecology or ethics (excitable, engaging or enjoyable), the letter R is then understood as reevaluate, rewarded or recordable (Kellams, 2020).

## 4.2 Goal types

Within the sport and exercise psychology literature, goals have been perceived as focused on outcome, performance or process. Outcome goals typically focus on a competitive result of an event, such as winning a competition, receiving a medal, or scoring more goals than an opponent. Thus, achieving these goals depends not only on one's own efforts but also on the ability and performance of one's opponent. A football player could play the very best football game, but if he loses the match, it would be perceived as a letdown to achieve one's outcome goal of winning the match (Weinberg & Gould, 2014).

Performance goals are oriented toward achieving standards or performance goals regardless of other competitors. This offers more flexibility and control for the competitor. Running a kilometer in 5 minutes is an example of a performance goal (Weinberg & Gould, 2014).

Process goals are oriented toward specific actions that a person must engage in during performance in order to be at their best. For example, a hockey player's goal may be to hold a personal best within one shift. Research by Kingston and Hardy (1997) has shown that process goals are particularly effective in positively influencing golfers' self-esteem, cognitive anxiety, and self-esteem (Weinberg & Gould 2014).

Athletes should set outcome, performance and process goals as all three play a significant role in driving behavior change. A study by Filby, Maynard, and Graydon (1999) concluded that a combination of goal strategies yields significantly better performance than relying solely on one type of goal (Weinberg & Gould, 2014).

## **5 Shape the environment**

Being motivated means being determined to do something. A person who does not perceive impulse or inspiration to act can be characterized as unmotivated, while an individual who is fired up and activated is considered motivated. However, even a brief reflection suggests that motivation is not a unified phenomenon. Each person has a different amount and a different type of motivation. Therefore, people differ not only in the level of motivation (i.e. how motivated they are), but also in the orientation of this motivation (Ryan and Deci, 2000).

### **5.1 Motivation of the athlete**

Motivation for sports activities represents an important area of a person's personality. Sport requires effort and will for a relatively long time, therefore a strong motivation for activity, "psychic power" focused on a certain sport is desirable. Simply put, if we're talking about motivation, we are looking for an answer to the question of why a person does something, and what and how he does it. It is very important that the coach knows how to motivate his athletes (Baghurst & Parish, 2017). Martens (2006) explains that people are motivated by the goal of fulfilling their needs, which means that once a coach understands the wants and needs of athletes and is able to fulfill those desires, then he has found the key to their motivation. If a coach wants to motivate his clients sufficiently, he must really know them well. He should know why they play sports and what they expect from him. The two most important needs of a young athlete are to experience fun, which satisfies the need for stimulation and excitement, and to be useful, which satisfies the need to feel capable and successful. Based on these factors, the coach should positively motivate, create a pleasant atmosphere and strengthen the self-confidence of his athletes.

### **5.2 Extrinsic and intrinsic motivation**

There are two basic types of motivation – extrinsic and intrinsic. Extrinsic rewards are, for example, medals, financial rewards and praise that the athlete receives from other people. On the contrary, joy, fun and a feeling of usefulness or success are examples of an athlete being internally satisfying. Extrinsic rewards such as recognition from others, achievements and medals can be powerful motivational factors, but not for long. Over time, it loses its importance, and internal rewards in particular come to the fore. These are extremely important from the point of view of motivation and the coach should fully accept them. Intrinsic rewards are the best long-term motivation, and a coach should create such conditions or climate in training and in competition that will give his clients the opportunity to achieve inner satisfaction (Rollnick, 2020).

### **5.3 Improving motivation**

A frequent problem is that athletes measure their value by winning or losing in a competition, influenced by coaches, parents, teammates or the media. The best thing a coach can do to positively motivate an athlete is to change this measure of success. Winning is important in sports, but it must always come second. Primarily, the coach should always strive for the athlete's physical and mental health. This goes hand in hand with the above-mentioned cooperative coaching style, proper communication, behavior and pedagogical approach, which are integral parts of athlete motivation. Athletes must see and perceive success as being conditioned by the achievement of their own goals and not by surpassing the performance of others. This principle is very difficult to follow in practice. However, when the coach passes it on to his athletes, he helps them understand and implement it, and thanks to it, they become excellent athletes and successful people (Martens, 2006).

### **5.4 Self-determination theory of motivation**

Self-determination theory (hereafter SDT) represents a broad framework for the study of human motivation and personality. The theory was founded by Edward L. Deci and Richard M. Ryan and was simultaneously investigated by students from many countries. Within SDT, we distinguish between different types of motivation, depending on the different reasons or goals that lead us to act. The basic difference is between internal (hereafter intrinsic) motivation, which refers to doing something that is inherently interesting or pleasant, and external (hereafter extrinsic) motivation, which refers to something whose execution leads to a separable result. More than three decades of research have shown that the quality of experience and performance can vary greatly depending on intrinsic or extrinsic motivation. Furthermore, SDT theses focus on how social and cultural factors positively or negatively influence – in addition to subjective well-being and performance – the sense of will and initiative of individuals. Conditions supporting experiences of autonomy, competence, and the need for interrelationships reinforce free and high-quality forms of motivation and engagement in activities, including increased performance, persistence, and creativity. Moreover, according to SDT, the degree of satisfaction of these three psychological needs in a social context will have a significant effect on the overall feeling of health (Ryan and Deci, 2018).

### **5.5 Autonomy supportive coaching**

When a coach acts in an autonomy supportive way, the coach reflects the athletes' perspective, provides suitable and important feedback, and offers opportunities for choice, while number at the same time eliminates the use of pressures and demands to control the athletes. The process of



creating an autonomy-supportive climate involves extensive skills, mainly considering the authoritarian role that coaches have often been expected to play in the past. Even within the rigid structure of many organized sports, coaches can take steps to create an autonomy-supportive climate for their athletes. Specifically, researchers suggest a number of key practices that would help a coach become autonomy supportive (Mageau and Vallerand, 2003):

- Provide choice—athletes making decisions about some aspects of a training session.
- Provide a rationale for tasks, limits, and rules— explaining the reasons behind key coaching decisions.
- Inquire about and acknowledge athletes' feelings—getting to know athletes as people first and athletes second; acknowledging that some training drills may be repetitive or tedious.
- Promote athlete responsibility—allowing athletes to create and deliver a training drill.
- Provide non-controlling competence feedback— having constructive feedback that is solution focused rather than problem focused.
- Avoid guilt inducing criticisms and controlling statements—providing critiques that focus on the behavior, not the athletes' character.

Coaches' behaviors influence athletes' motivation through their direct impact on athletes' three basic psychological needs. To achieve an optimal psychological functioning, athletes need to feel connected to our social environment, competent in what we undertake and autonomous in their actions. The perception of autonomy is meant as the perception that one's action is in accordance with one's values as opposed to being controlled by external forces or internal pressures (Deci & Ryan 1985).

Being autonomous does not equate with being independent, since it is possible for someone to depend on a provider and still be autonomous in one's actions. For example, athletes who value their coach's competence and experience highly can choose to let the coach make the strategic decisions and still feel self-determined in the process. Social factors such as coaches' behaviors affect athletes' motivation through their impact on perceptions of autonomy, competence and relatedness (Memmi, 1984; Deci & Ryan 1985).

Results of many studies support the direct effect of perceived autonomy, competence and relatedness on intrinsic motivation. Furthermore, experimental studies have shown that perceived competence and autonomy mediate the impact of social agents on motivation (Geneviève & Vallerand, 2003).

Positive performance feedback increased intrinsic motivation from pre- to post-test and that perceived competence mediated this effect. The reverse effect was found for negative feedback. These

results were replicated in another laboratory study involving a physical activity (Geneviève & Vallerand, 2003). More recently, Reeve and Deci (1996) showed that not only perceptions of competence but also those of autonomy mediate the impact of the interpersonal context of competition on intrinsic motivation.

Blanchard and Vallerand (1996) observed the mediating effect of perceived need satisfaction on the relationship between coaches' behaviors and athletes' motivation. Using self-reports, these researchers examined if basketball players' perceptions of relatedness, competence and autonomy mediated the impact of their coach's interpersonal style and their team cohesion on their motivation towards basketball. Path analyses showed that the impact of both the coach's style and team cohesion on athletes' motivation was mediated by perceptions of the three fundamental needs. Specifically, the more athletes perceived their coach to be autonomy supportive and their team cohesive, the more they felt competent, autonomous and connected with their team-mates and, in turn, the more they played basketball out of intrinsic and self-determined extrinsic motivation. Taken together, these results suggest that social agents' autonomy-supportive behaviors have a positive impact on perceived autonomy, competence and relatedness (Geneviève & Vallerand, 2003).

## 6 Build relationships

### 6.1 Coach-athlete relationship

There are many professions whose main purpose is to help people. Teaching and coaching can be included among these helping professions. Like other professions, teaching and coaching also have its expertise. A person must acquire a lot of knowledge and skills at the beginning of the coaching or teaching career. Unlike other professions, however, the human relationship between the helping professional and his client plays a key role here. Just as a patient must trust his doctor, a young athlete wants to respect his coach and feel safe in his presence. This idea is contained in the widespread opinion that in these professions the main tool of the worker is his personality - the client needs to trust, feel safe and accepted. Other professions also take place in constant contact with people, but only decent behavior of the worker, i.e. behavior in accordance with convention, is sufficient. A personal relationship is not expected here, as is the case, for example, in the coaching profession (McKenzie, 2018).

McKenzie (2018) describes the theory of C.R. Rogers, who sees the essence of the success of the helping profession in the meeting of two equal partners, where the client is understood, appreciated and respected as a person capable of positive changes and growth. According to Rogers, every person has an innate capacity for actualization, which is a motivating force, and for evaluation, which has a regulatory function. The basic condition for success is the nature of the mutual relationship between the helper and his client. Basic characteristics of a relationship include:

- respect for the client, warmth, acceptance and positive appreciation,
- genuineness (authenticity), i.e. to be yourself without "putting on a mask",
- empathy, listening, understanding and experiencing the client's world.

The main importance in the relationship between coach and athlete is listening and striving for understanding, which is really necessary during adolescence. The means by which the coach fulfills the above criteria are both verbal and non-verbal in nature (McKenzie, 2018). The research conducted by Cotterill (2017) pointed out the importance of a good relationship between the trainer and the client. The trainer must show interest in his clients, he must be attentive and friendly. He should also be a certain personality, a role model, a good person and an authority. Last but not least, a positive relationship is essential not only towards one's wards, but also towards the whole sport and the coaching profession as such.

Nicholls (2022) summarizes the essential points of the ideal relationship between a coach and an athlete. To improve the relationship with his clients, the coach should:

- show your understanding and respect for their personal opinions,
- show respect and empathy for the wards,
- be a good example,
- have a sense of humor and be able to use it,
- support the self-confidence of his wards, their confidence in their own abilities,
- provide positive help instead of criticism,
- look for the causes of inappropriate behavior of those in charge (boredom, long-lasting activity, inability to complete the assigned task, low self-confidence, problems in the emotional area, etc.).

The coach-athlete relationship is largely shaped by the coach's behavior. This behavior can be defined as a set of all interrelated acts of the coach, by which the function of the coach is realized and at the same time the interaction between him and the environment takes place. It mainly includes objectively observable activities, which are, for example, communication (speech, communication), one-time or long-term actions (actions, activities) and expression (mimic, pantomimic). A good trainer is characterized by excellent communication skills and the ability to motivate and lead his mentee well (Taylor & Wilson, 2005).

## **6.2 The 3+1Cs Model of Two-Person Relationships**

Within the 3+1Cs model, the relationship between two people is viewed as a social situation within which their feelings, thoughts, and behaviors are interdependent. This definition of relationship implies that the relationship developed between a coach and a coaches is transient and reciprocal at affective, cognitive, and behavioral levels. Subsequently, how one feels influences how the other thinks, and how one behaves influences how the other feels and thinks and so on. Based on the definition of two-person relationships, relationship members' feelings, thoughts, and behaviors have been operationalized through the constructs of Closeness, Commitment, and Complementarity, respectively, collectively known as the 3Cs (Jowett, 2007).

Closeness describes the level and degree of affective connectedness that develops among the members of the relationship. It includes qualities such as trust, respect, appreciation, and liking among others. Commitment reflects both members' intention to remain in a close relationship that lasts over time. It refers to the long-term orientation toward the bond or connection. Complementa-

rity reflects members' reciprocal and corresponding cooperation. On one hand, corresponding cooperation is reflected in interactions that are similar in type and intensity such as being mutually friendly, responsive, and relaxed. On the other hand, reciprocal cooperation is reflected in interactions that are different in type but similar in intensity such as when a coach provides feedback or leads the proceedings and a coachee accepts or is open to the feedback given (Jowett, 2007).

Co-orientation is the "+1Cs" of the model and reflects the interdependence of members' closeness, commitment, and complementarity (3Cs) or the conceptual consensus as this pertains to how members view their relationship in terms of the 3Cs (Jowett, 2007). In sport, Jowett and her colleagues combined Closeness, Commitment, Complementarity, and Co-orientation into a single model in an effort to examine whether these constructs reflect coaches and athletes' reality of the relationship and whether the constructs associate with important variables such as performance and satisfaction, empathic accuracy, team cohesion, collective efficacy, motivation, passion, interpersonal conflict, and social support (Jowett, 2007).

### **6.3 Communication between coach and athlete**

The key part in the education of athletes is undoubtedly the interaction between the coach and the athlete. As part of this interaction, the participants communicate with each other. The essence of communication is the sharing of information, ideas, opinions, attitudes, etc. Communication can take place using spoken speech, written and printed word, visual material, gestures (including sign language). It takes the form of both direct interpersonal contact and communication mediated by, for example, technical equipment (Jowett, 2007).

The basic means of communication between people is speech, mainly in its spoken form. For each message, the recipient is most interested in (Sinha, 2012):

- "what" the communicator says and what is the effect of the message for the recipient (content of speech),
- "how" he says it - the means of expression used (the formal side of the speech), e.g. he speaks unliterally, the tone of speech is instructive with an ironic undertone, etc. (Taylor & Wilson, 2005).

Verbal communication is essential for the vast majority of coaching activities (motivation, instruction, praise, discipline, etc.). A specific feature of the coach's verbal expression is the frequent use

of sports slang and expressions in incomplete sentences, e.g. "Now!" or "Step on it!" (the reason is to simplify and shorten the verbal message). Verbal communication is usually combined with non-verbal (non-verbal) communication (Taylor & Wilson, 2005). Sinha (2012) states the importance of non-verbal communication. Although it is not possible to express everything using non-verbal communication, it is irreplaceable in mutual interaction and makes up to 70% of all communication between a coach and an athlete.

#### **6.4 Transformational and shared leadership**

*Transformational Leadership* represents a style of leader behavior by which the leader supports the athletes to exceed their original performance expectation by endorsing changes to their values, norms, and personal interests (Aryee et al., 2012). Transformational Leadership consists of four separate but interrelated behavioral aspects: idealized influence (leaders' behaviors that instill pride and respect in athletes through being associated with the leader), inspirational motivation (leaders' behaviors that inspire athletes' motivation by elevating individual and team level vision and spirit), intellectual stimulation (leaders' behaviors that inspire nontraditional thinking and new ways of looking at how to complete tasks and solve problems) and individual consideration (leaders' treating athletes as individuals, rather than simply team members, and identifying the different needs, abilities, and aspirations of those individuals (Braun et al., 2013).

Transformational leadership has a positive impact on team effectiveness for several reasons. First, transformational leaders share personal morality and organizational ethics with the athletes and, accordingly, the athletes' inherent motivation becomes stronger and their team commitment increases. Intrinsic motivation emphasizes the long-term vision that unites team members by endorsing innovative problem solving and better team performance. Team members with intrinsic motivation consider themselves as a single body and share with each other their understanding of work tasks. Furthermore, transformational leadership helps team members to think outside the box, enabling them to visualize a much bigger picture and ensuring their commitment toward the effective accomplishment of this vision. Also, transformational leaders act as a role model among team members by sharing creative ideas and knowledge to facilitate working cooperatively and efficiently (Tu, 2013; To et al., 2015).

*Shared Leadership* represents a process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how it can be done effectively, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives (Yukl, 2022). When leadership is shared, specific features are present among team members, such as a mutual-gain ideal, cooperative leadership

process, participative decision style, and excellent quality leader–member relationship (Wang, 2014).

Shared leadership has a positive impact on team effectiveness by promoting teamwork and shared mentality among members. Shared Leadership enhances effective group decision making among team members through their sharing of different knowledge related to their performance. Shared leadership also helps the development of a close relationship between athletes and sport club, which forms a good practicing environment. Thus, leaders using shared leadership style can share their vision with athletes and motivate them to participate in setting and implementing the work plan. In this way, sharing leadership increases athletes' motivation for better teamwork and output. To sum up, team members work enthusiastically toward achieving team goals when the leadership style is synchronized with their desires. Shared leadership is the best leadership style as it empowers athletes in their tasks and encourages them to do their best to achieve the team goals, as they are able to train with autonomy and in a collaborative way (Hoch, 2013)

## **7 Effective practice environment**

One of the primary causes of athletes' devaluing practice is their experience with poorly designed practice sessions. Well-intentioned but ill-designed practices not only hurt player development but also erode team culture and confidence in the coach (Gilbert, 2017).

A quality practice nurtures athlete motivation and maximizes athlete skill development. Coaches must keep this in mind when selecting each activity to include in a practice session. Learning how to design quality practices is the surest way to increase coaching effectiveness and athlete success. Quality practice design includes four features: Set challenging and specific practice goal, keep athletes physically and mentally active throughout the practice, give athletes choices and ask them for input on practice design and create competitive gamelike practice activities (Gilbert, 2017).

### **7.1 Setting challenging and effective practice goals**

Practice goals that challenge athletes but are realistically attainable create practice environments of high engagement and maximize learning by inspiring athletes to reach forward to achieve the goals. Creating reach or stretch practice goals has the added benefit of keeping athletes focused on practice by creating the right conditions for optimal, or flow, experience. Athletes are competitive by nature and respond enthusiastically to practice activities that are just beyond their current abilities yet possible to accomplish with full focus, concentration, and appropriate support from the coach (Gilbert, 2017).

When setting mastery practice goals, coaches can benefit from using the CARS goal-setting acronym: challenging, attainable, realistic, and specific. By regularly reviewing athlete progress, coaches will be able to determine what is challenging, attainable, and realistic for their particular athletes. In terms of being specific, coaches should write practice goals that clearly specify the behaviors and conditions that must be met if the performance is to be considered successful (Gilbert, 2017).

When coaches set mastery goals for their athletes, they are teaching them to focus more on improving their ability as opposed to proving their ability. This subtle but critical difference will have a long-lasting and profound effect on how athletes approach practice and performance setbacks (Gilbert, 2017).



The challenge practice goals and an associated rationale should always be communicated before the practice. Athlete motivation, from youth to Olympic levels, increases when coaches explain why practice activities are important and specifically how they will improve specific aspects of their performance. For example, a soccer coach might tell her or his athletes that the reason they are going to play a 3v3 small-sided possession game is because it will help them improve their spacing and passing during matches (Gilbert, 2017).

Although the value of setting challenging practice goals is clear, one cautionary note should not be overlooked. High expectations without the appropriate support and guidance from the coach can severely demoralize an athlete. For example, if coaches set challenging practice goals and fail to help the athletes when they struggle or punish them with extra running or other penalties if they don't achieve the goals, then coaches are sending a mixed message. The high expectations communicate that the coach believes in the athlete, but the lack of guidance and fear of being punished erode trust and harm the coach-athlete relationship (Gilbert, 2017).

## **7.2 Mentally and physically active athletes**

Well-organized and efficient practices should be designed to maximize skill development in a safe and controlled setting where the risk of injury should be low. Coaches should aim for short, high-intensity practice sessions. The best coaches invest their time by planning every minute of their practice sessions. Each practice has a logical sequence and flow based on the coach's observations of player performance and skill development needs. Coach of the 20th Century John Wooden created eight principles of practice plan design that he used as a guide when planning practices:

- Fundamentals before creativity.
- Use variety.
- Teach new material at the start of practice.
- Quick transitions between activities.
- Increase complexity from practice to practice.
- Conditioning for learning.
- End on a positive note.
- Avoid altering a plan during the lesson (Gilbert, 2017).

### **7.3 Give athletes say on practice design**

Balancing coach-designed structure with athlete choice has been found to be the most effective way to develop athletes' talent. This balanced approach is referred to as an autonomy-supportive approach to coaching. Athlete motivation and coach-athlete relationships are enhanced when coaches create sport environments that help athletes meet three basic needs: (a) the need for choice and autonomy, (b) the need to learn and feel competent, and (c) the need to feel connected to others. Athletes consistently report that playing for coaches who allow and encourage them to share in decision making and give them choices during practices is more enjoyable and fuels athlete initiative and motivation to improve (Gilbert, 2017).

An autonomy-supportive approach to practice design has been shown to be effective with adolescent and youth sport athletes as well. For example, in a unique study comparing the behaviors of successful and unsuccessful high school soccer coaches, researchers found that winning coaches offered athletes more choices and accepted athlete input more often during practices. When they give athletes choice and some freedom to experiment with novel ways of performing skills, coaches are adding functional variability to their practice design. Emerging research shows the value of allowing athletes to experiment with unique and multiple ways to perform a skill. For example, instead of requiring athletes to perform a skill with the same movement pattern repeatedly, coaches should consider allowing athletes to introduce their own variations into the movement pattern. Athletes should be given opportunities to perform skills in a way that feels right to them. Then the coach and the athlete can jointly determine the most efficient way to perform the skill, or the athlete can be allowed to keep multiple options open for performing the skill (Gilbert, 2017).

### **7.4 Competitive gamelike practice activities**

Quality practices give athletes opportunities to test and perform skills in competitive gamelike conditions. Being able to execute a skill without pressure or opposition may look great in a practice drill, but it is not indicative of the athlete's ability to perform the skill when it is needed most - in the heat of competition. Coaches and performance psychologists have long recognized that it is one thing to perform well in a batting cage, but it is another thing altogether to perform well in the ninth inning of a critical game, with game-day intensity and top opponents and noisy crowds and scouts watching (Gilbert, 2017).

Creating gamelike practice activities is perhaps even more important when coaching young athletes who are much more interested in playing than in mastering perfect technique. As former Olympic coach and sport scientist Alan Launder stresses, coaches should never forget that good

technique, while important to ultimate performance, is only a means to an end, not an end in itself (Gilbert, 2017).

The alternative approach that is increasingly advocated is to create practice activities that simulate competitive game conditions, also referred to as playing form. With this approach techniques and tactics are taught primarily through small-sided games that closely replicate competition demands, providing athletes with a more authentic and challenging learning experience. Rules, areas of play, and game focus are typically modified to maximize athlete engagement and skill practice. For example, in small-sided games in sports such as soccer, lacrosse, and ice hockey, a gamelike practice activity might be won not by the number of goals scored, but instead by the team that records the largest number of passes, or shots, in a five-minute match (Gilbert, 2017).

One of the key principles of using a gamelike approach to practice design is ensuring that each athlete is active as much as possible, a concept referred to as maximum individual participation (MIP). Observation studies show that athletes often spend much of their time in practices standing around, either listening to lengthy instructions or waiting in line (Gilbert, 2017).

Coaches can use three strategies to design gamelike practice activities: shaping play, focusing play, and enhancing play. When coaches change the rules of the game, alter the number of players who participate, or modify the size of the playing area, they are shaping the way the activity is played. For example, requiring everyone to touch the ball before a shot can be taken in a lacrosse game is a way to shape how athletes play the game. Quality coaches not only shape the play but also provide athletes with direction on how to focus their attention while playing the game. For example, in a 3v3 soccer game a coach can focus the play by reminding athletes to run to open space to create passing lanes for their teammates when they have possession of the ball (Gilbert, 2017).

A gamelike approach is most effective when coaches also enhance the play by creating a reward system to increase athlete motivation and focus. For example, after players have had some time to practice a shooting game, the coach can set aside time in practice for a shooting tournament in which athletes get to pick team names and compete for a practice reward (such as selecting a game to use in a future practice) (Gilbert, 2017).

## 7.5 Competition coaching

Coaching is a frequently used name for communication between a coach and athletes during a competition. Baghurst & Parish (2017) describes the primary tasks of a coach at a competition:

- organization of the involvement of the athletes - athletes must know the order in which they will compete and the time when they should prepare,
- evaluation of the course of the competition and encouragement – the coach should monitor the entire performance of the athlete and not focus only on the final result, he must control the activity and behavior of the athletes, encourage them and always react appropriately to mistakes,
- exchange of athletes in the lineup - it is always necessary to observe the principle that all nominees enter the competition for at least part of the time (especially for young children),
- breaks - if there are breaks in the given sport, then they are mainly used for regeneration and small tactical meetings. The length of breaks varies, but the coach should always divide it into three imaginary parts – rest, evaluation of previous performance and motivation for the next part of the race.

Evaluation is one of the very important activities of a coach. According to Nicholls (2022), this forms the basis of the decision-making process and the selection of the next measure. Immediately after the competition, the coach should focus primarily on a brief summary of the performance of his athletes. According to Baghurst & Parish (2017), a more detailed assessment should be carried out by the coach during training, as the assessment immediately after performance tends to be emotionally distorted and insufficiently objective. In the evaluation with time, it is essential to highlight the positive moments from the race and draw attention to the mistakes made. The coach should always evaluate tactfully, calmly and completely without emotion. Further procedures for training and racing should emerge from his assessment

## **8 Reflect and learn - evaluation.**

The first consideration in creating an effective evaluation plan is to identify the right things to evaluate. At minimum all program evaluation systems should include tools for measuring athlete development. As highly respected and Super Bowl champion football coach Tony Dungy once remarked: "The true measure of a coach, or anyone in a leadership role for that matter, is how they help those around them grow" (Gilbert, 2017).

Useful, high-quality evaluation requires time and effort, so setting aside some time in the preseason to decide what will be evaluated at the end of the season is a wise investment that will pay valuable dividends (Gilbert, 2017).

The second consideration when designing an effective program evaluation system is to ensure that evaluation information is collected from all key program stakeholders. At minimum, coach self-evaluations should always be supplemented with feedback from members of the coaching staff and athletes. This method is the only way to ensure a balanced and comprehensive approach to making evaluation decisions. Program feedback from athletes who make up leadership councils and senior or departing athletes in particular can provide helpful insights on how to improve a program (Gilbert, 2017).

The third consideration when designing a quality program evaluation relates to implementation. Program evaluation is limited only by the amount of time and resources a coach is willing to invest. Good evaluation requires valid tools and meaningful data. An endless amount of evaluation information can be collected, all of which will have to be analyzed and processed. A quality program evaluation must be practical, so coaches should collect only what is most relevant and can be efficiently gathered and summarized. The goal of end-of-season program evaluation is to collect enough information in a short time to make an informed decision about how to allocate off-season energy to improve coaching ability and enhance the program (Gilbert, 2017).

The fourth and final consideration for designing quality program evaluation is determining how the evaluation results will be used. Evaluations are used for two common purposes. The first purpose should be to help coaches improve. This kind of analysis is referred to as formative evaluation; results are used to shed light on strengths and gaps while providing guidance for how the coach can work toward closing the gaps. The second, and often sole, purpose of evaluation is to judge the quality of the coach or program. This sort of assessment is referred to as summative evaluation; results are used to determine whether a coach (or member of the staff) should be retained. An effective program evaluation system will be both formative and summative. The results should be

used to help coaches improve while also providing evidence of coach and program growth. A formal method for reporting evaluation results should be used, such as writing an evaluation narrative or preparing a report that includes end-of-season statistics along with summary observations from those who provided evaluation feedback (e.g., coaches, athletes, administrators, and so on) (Gilbert, 2017).

Meaningful program evaluation will provide answers to the following questions:

1. How well did we model our purpose and core values?
2. How well did we build a culture of trust and cohesion?
3. How well did we develop athletes through quality training sessions?
4. How well did we prepare athletes to perform at their peak in competition? (Gilbert, 2017).

## **9 The aim of the project**

The main aim of this product-based thesis is to develop the quality coaching program of the organization by creating guidelines for the coach competencies. The other objective is to develop a coaching culture for coaches of HSMH Barani Academy (U16 to U20 levels) and help them to fulfil their competencies throughout the ice hockey season. By implementing this, coaches should be able to apply specific parts of the product to accomplish the perspectives and quality coaching work in each age level of the academy during the ice hockey season. The lack of interconnection between the coaches' competencies of certain age levels inside the organization delays the general goal of the organization. Specifying and connecting the primary functions of the coach can raise the quality level of coaching and demonstrate an athlete-centred coaching concept at a daily level. From another perspective, the process of this thesis has a highly educational character because the end product is the result of scientific resources. By fulfilling this coaches guideline product, the Barani organization can achieve uniqueness in its country and be an example of coaches program development since there is no similar product in Slovakia.

### **9.1 Commissioning organization**

The commissioner of the thesis is HSMH Barani Banska Bystrica. The idea arose from the Barani coaches whose coach age levels are U16, U18 and U20, board members and the director of the youth program organization. HSMH Barani tries to create a holistic view for all organizations, and this part of the club is uncovered. It is a missing part in the puzzle of the final picture of how the ice hockey organization in Slovakia should look like. Leaders of the organization offered this project as part of the job description to the author. It is according to his coaching experience as a youth development coach at all age levels and the education acquired during his studies at Sports Coaching and Management, Haaga-Helia University of applied sciences. The product for HSMH Barani of this thesis will be attached to the contract for all coaches at the HSMH Barani Academy level as a crucial part of the coaches' competencies.

### **9.2 Stages and schedule**

The process of creating the product started in May 2022, right after the evaluation of the previous season with all coaches, board members and the director of the youth program. The youth program director offered an extra description of duties for the upcoming season to create a holistic plan of the coach's competencies for the Academy level (U16-U20). The product should be placed

in every coach's locker room in a visible place, and visualization should be readable, understandable and easy to follow. The product should require Slovak and English versions and will be part of the official contracts of the HSMH Barani organization.

In the first stage, we analyzed the current situation of the coaches' work inside the club on May 2022. The second part of the project started on August 2022. All coaches presented their upcoming season plans at the organization meeting, where we identified many differences and professional knowledge gaps between the coaches. In August 2022, we introduced the Barani Academy Coaches competence guidelines to all coaches. The next project stage was created in cooperation with coaches of all levels to develop a feeling of ownership of the final product. Online references, books and articles have been the most crucial source of this thesis.

The theoretical part as a part of the theoretical base of the product includes six different areas aimed at responding to the aims of the project; values and beliefs, vision and the strategy to shape the environment building relationships conducting practice and competition to reflect and learn. All coaches of the Barani organization were part of the developing process of the final product. The author of this thesis led all meetings. Moreover, coaches were actively involved in creating the theoretical part of the product. The youth program director gave the author the autonomy to design the structure and contents of the product. The final product is established on the theoretical part with an addition of a visualization of the end product, which will be part of the coach's daily work competencies for the 2023/24 season.

The implementation part of the project will be at the beginning of the ice hockey season 2023/2024, which will start on August 2023. The author of the thesis will introduce Barani Academy Coaches Competence Guidelines to the coaches and the youth program director. The controlling phase is scheduled after the upcoming 2023/2024 season as a part of the evaluation process of the season with all coaches.





### 9.3 Further development

After the implementation of the project in the upcoming season 2023/24, we will proceed to the evaluation of the given product and we will try to adjust possible shortcomings. Trainers should find out their strengths and weaknesses, and based on these results, the product can be even more individualized. But at the same time, I think that the key parts will be confirmed, which should not have been missing in the competences of the trainers. It is quite likely that the Barani organization will have a unique tool that can inspire the surrounding clubs not only in Slovakia but also in the surrounding countries and be an example of how to really fulfill the coaching culture within the club. A follow-up to this product could be a simpler form of coach competence guidelines for lower categories, where coaches may not have as much time, but it would make their processes easier and connect individual categories in the education system of athletes and people even more..

## 10 Discussion

As mentioned before in the introduction, the objective of this outcome was to create coach guidelines for the Barani Academy organization to enhance the coaching culture inside the club, which would meet the fulfilment of the organization's views. The cornerstone of this work has been the model of Primary functions of the coaching pyramid created by ICCE (International Council of Coaching Excellence in 2017). The emphasis of this project was to build up and specify each part of the Primary functions of the coaching pyramid with theoretical justifications in connection with the experiences and knowledge of the coaches of Barani Academy.

During the monitoring phase, we realized that Barani Academy coaches are experienced and well-educated. However, it is crucial to update their knowledge in some areas. Yet, there was a missing connection in everyday work throughout every age category. We considered it a striking problem. The Barani organization has a clear vision and goal, so the coaches' competencies must be specified. The intent of creating the product was fulfilled by the year-long work of all the academy coaches coordinated by the author of this thesis. The usability of this product is actual and evident since there is no similar material within the Slovak Ice Hockey Federation framework, despite the frequent interest of coaches. Therefore, the connection of the coaching program is a principal element of the development of young people and athletes, which is also part of the club's vision. The monitoring phase also revealed many gaps in the coaches' knowledge, especially its updating.

The implementation phase is based on the participation of coaches who became, for the most part, also its creators. It means that during the work meetings, coaches created their competencies via participation and studied new details based on the abovementioned pyramid. We must say that the coaches had shortcomings in naming and setting values, as well as the topic of creating an environment was unknown to them, but they were even more interested in it.

The theoretical part of the work deals with sources selected by Barani Academy coaches and reviewed by the author of this thesis based on the knowledge acquired during the studies.

Even though the final product will be used in the following season, some coaches have already introduced some elements during the ongoing season. We consider it as positive feedback and a necessity for the club. The final product will be in a high-quality visual form; it will become a part of every coach's changing room and be adapted to a simple monitoring process. During the procedure, we encountered several problems. The biggest challenge was finding a balance between the theoretical and practical parts.

In the course of the process, we produced a large number of the coaches' competencies, but the evaluation of the importance of introducing the given topic was a big problem. Particularly in the

main points, such as goal setting and creating an environment, we had to give coaches a lot of autonomy, which was also our goal, but this was positively surprising. The final version will be open and changeable. When we finished the whole pyramid, the amount of work started to be intimidating for the coaches. We would see the future of product development in the generalization of all points of the Barani Academy pyramid and the straightening and total improvement of particular competencies of the coach. Further development possibilities of the product could certainly be within the scope of the coach's autonomy to fulfil the competencies to avoid any negative and authoritative approach in the organization. Especially part of the timeline of the product visualization can be discouraging for coaches and indicate excessive time pressure, but with the addition of autonomy, it can certainly achieve the desired effect.

The youth program director called this product a kind of bible of our academy, and it was created with that goal. It is an autonomous multi-religious bible of Barani Academy coaches. We have learned a lot during the process, mainly in setting the objective, but especially when creating an environment that increases internal motivation. It was a highly educational mix of theory and practical ideas of coaches and their implementation in daily routines. We have discovered that creating something without the feeling of possession would be inefficient, and we would never think of such things as the coaches who invested in it. We sometimes felt at some marketplace where coaching ideas are sold, and coaches are shouting at each other about whose idea is better. We think that this is the result of this product and the most relevant competence of a coach, constantly going to such coaching markets or creating them. That can move the coaching culture of the Barani organization towards its goal as for other sports.

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# BARANI ACADEMY COACH COMPETENCE GUIDELINE

TEAM U18  
 TEAM COACH [Team coach's name]

HOCKEY TEAM Barani  
 SEASON 2023/2024

		2023														
PHASE	DETAILS	Q1														
		August					September				October					
Working week	Enter the first working week here --->	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	
1	? <b>Values and believes</b> Establishing coach`s personal values Set and share every-one own values - "the value day" Leadership group votes	A		A	A	A										
		B			B	B										
		E					B								B	
2	<b>Vision and strategy</b> Establish the vision of the organization Set the team vision, goals and strategy	A	A													
		B					B									
3	<b>Shape environment</b> Autonomy principles Competence principles Relatedness principles	A1-A4		A2		A3		A2			A2			A2		
		B1-B10					B4	B5			B4			B4		
		C1-C8	C4		C1	C1		C2						C2		
4	<b>Build relationships</b> Coach-athlete interaction sheet Scheduled individual meetings Player evaluation Trust in coach - reflection sheet	A														
		B					B									
		C														
		D														
5	<b>Conduct practise and games</b> Quality practice design factors Annual plan and Mesocycle presentation	A	Daily actions													
		B	B					B						B		



**1. VALUES AND BELIEFS**

**A**

**ESTABLISHING COACHES' VALUES AND BELIEFS**

Before the season, every coach could choose five questions and write down the coaching philosophy, values and beliefs. Coaches will present their vision of themselves in front of the team at the beginning of the season when the first team day/value day is scheduled to support the relationship between the coaches and players.

1. Why do I coach?
2. What are my values and beliefs?
3. What types of experiences do I want my athletes to have?
4. What is the definition of athletic success?
5. What is the purpose of sport?
6. What are my responsibilities to my athletes?
7. How should I discipline my athletes?
8. What are my ethical standards?

**B**

**The Value Day**

1. Each player will get a paper and pen. Players will get their own time individually to think about values and beliefs, which could represent their personality or help them live by their principles to be the best example of themselves. Each player should come up with 3 to 5 personal values. Players could get time to create their values from 30 to 60 mins.
2. After the first round of setting personal values, athletes will make groups of 4 to 6 people. They will share and brainstorm picked values and beliefs. The group will get 30 to 60 mins.
3. In this part, athletes keep the same groups and choose three values representing their group the most. After a while (15 to 30 mins.), each group will represent their top 3 to the rest of the team/groups. They will explain their whys and write down the principles of measurement of each value which become a daily part of team life.
4. The final step is to find the top 2-3 team values by selecting from all the top 3s from each group. At the end of this process, the team will agree on the 3 team values. All team members will sign them, and the values will be placed on the wall inside the locker room.

1

All meetings should be run in a positive atmosphere with an open environment to discuss and explore the topic of values. Players are responsible for food and drinks and creating an enjoyable day for everybody. The team or coach prepares team-building activities between each part of the value set. These activities will aim at the chosen values. Coaches prepare the activities in advance. "The Value Day" has a primary educational character. It aims to teach players about the importance of values and principles of living to achieve life and team goals. At the end of the day (or a couple of days after), the team votes for the leadership group - the values police. Leaders will become proprietors of value monitoring. They will be responsible for communication with coaches or just within the team.

**2. SET THE VISION AND STRATEGY**

**A**

**ESTABLISHING THE VISION OF THE ORGANIZATION**

The organization leaders, the head of coaching and all coaches will set up the vision and the goal. Methods of all coaches' work will follow afterwards. The process of the meeting should be a cornerstone of all acts that coaches do to achieve the organization's goal. All members should analyze these questions: Why are we here? What is our goal and sense of being a sports organization?

**B**

**ESTABLISHING THE TEAM VISION AND STRATEGY**

Each team should create a process of goals set in cooperation with the coaches. To establish a team goal is necessary to explore what could be possible to achieve in the current season as a team. The team should suggest the season's long-term and short-term goals supported by the principles and strategy for achieving specific goals.

2



As a recommendation, each athlete could use three-step goal setting, in writing, to three prompts, which will be presented and shared with all team members:

1. List three goals for the upcoming season.
2. List potential barriers or challenges you foresee that will keep the team from achieving these goals.
3. List three things you will need to contribute to the team to increase the likelihood that the team will reach their goals.

Once the team agrees and sets the long-term and short-term seasonal goals, it is necessary to set rules and principles (strategies for achieving) on how the team could achieve the goals. Once the team goal-setting process finishes, it will be placed on the wall inside the locker room in a visible place with easy access and easy to reflect on during the season. (Example below)

	TARGET OUTCOMES	STRATEGIES FOR ACHIEVING
LONG TERM GOAL 1		
SHORT TERM GOAL 1		
LONG TERM GOAL 2		
SHORT TERM GOAL 2		
LONG TERM GOAL 3		
SHORT TERM GOAL 3		

3

**3. SHAPE THE ENVIRONMENT**

To support the feeling of autonomy, competence and relatedness within the team and for each player, the coaches are responsible for following these points (created by the coaches and leaders of the organization):

**A**

**Autonomy**

1. **Players own their practice time** – players will know the exact time in the week when they can practice on their individual goals, always in their weekly schedule (minimum standardized time is at 1 hour 30 mins on ice, 1 hour 30 mins off-ice practice) player can use coach guidance only if the player asks for it. Other than that, coaches cannot interact with the autonomy of players' practice time. Weekly (2 times a week – 1 on/ice; 1 off/ice)
2. **Players create a practice plan** – every week, players will get a chance to plan one regular practice. Leadership groups can lead the process. Players will make groups of 4 or 5 people. Every group will create one drill. The leadership group could set up the main points of the drill for each group. The head coach can inspire players about the main topic of the practice in communication with all teams, which will aim to discuss between the team and coaches what the team is currently missing and needs to work on. Once per mesocycle/monthly
3. **Players vote for the leaders** – players will vote for a leadership group during Value Day. If the team is willing to make a vote again, it can be done on every Team Day, 2 times in a season, beginning and re-evaluation at the half season
4. **Powerplay is free** – powerplay players can create their plays, if there is a need, the coach is always able to help. All-season

**B**

**Competence**

1. **Player's preparation for practice** – The practice plan is ready and placed in a visible place before every training to enhance the focus and learning process of all players. As soon as players enter the locker room, they will get familiar with the plan for the day. Every day
2. **Clear key points** – the key points of the current mesocycle and for upcoming practice are in the exact place every time in the visible place inside the main locker room. The main topics of the team's annual plan will surround the players. Every day, primarily when mesocycle or points of practice are changed
3. **The question before practice** – before every practice coach will ask any player what he will focus on during the training, what he will focus on the most and why. 2-3 times a week

4

4. **Mesocycle video** – before every mesocycle, the coach will start the mesocycle with a video presentation of how the main goals of the mesocycle relate to the real game and what the product of upcoming work during the mesocycle is. **Always before the new mesocycle starts.**
5. **Coaches presentation of annual plan and playbook** – at the beginning of the season, the coach is responsible for presenting all season plans with the playbook presentation of the game vision. Get players familiar with the goal of the organization. **Once, at the beginning of the season**
6. **Evaluation of practice/game** – the coach will give a chance to evaluate practice by verbal feedback from players and compare it with his estimation. The coach can choose 1 to 2 practices to assess. The players can also pick the practice to evaluate. **1 to 2 times a week**
7. **Players video evaluate their game** – once a month, the group of players ~~prepare~~ part of the game and prepare the presentation in front of the team (players can choose groups or line by line). **Monthly**
8. **Individual video meeting** – the coach is responsible for giving feedback from past games through video feedback, one time a week as a team video and 1 video feedback for all defenders and 1 video feedback for all forwards. Players can come whenever to go to see the clips of their game. **Weekly**
9. **Skills practice video** – skills practice relates to the game plan and annual plan. However, if there is any change or new topic for skills practice coach will search and share the video with the players via social media group or open it on the TV in the locker room right before the practice. **Monthly/always when the skills mesocycle is changed**
10. **Individual warm-up and mobility plans** – when, before the ice practice, an individual warm-up will be on the schedule, players will have examples in the locker. They can choose which they would like to follow, the same as the principle of the mobility practice. Players will have printed-out options of mobility practices which they can follow. The coach can delegate warm-up and mobility groups, set for a ~~group~~ and then changed. 3-4 players will lead all warm-ups and mobility exercises. **From the beginning of the season**

**C**  
Relatedness

1. **HELLWEEK** – coaches cooperating with players will organize and participate in HELLWEEK – the first team activity in the season. Team building lasts minimally of 3 days. The coaches are responsible for preparing a HELLWEEK program in advance. The HELLWEEK

- aim is to build team cohesion and create enough challenging environments to see the team's personalities.
2. **The Team Day** – 1 time every month, the team organizes the team day where coaches and all players will reflect the team values and the value police will lead the meeting with all of them. After the reflection, coaches will review the team goal and strategy established in the previous session. The team day should represent the fun aspect of team sport. It will be only about players and their wishes. Players could use their time by playing play-station tournaments, sports competitions, ~~parts~~ or any activity they agreed on. Coaches job will be to motivate them to create some team building activities. On each team day, the leadership group or coach will choose a group of 4-5 players, which will take care of snacks. The best would be to challenge them to prepare something by themselves. However, it depends on whether the team will support any snacks. **Once a month/six weeks**
  3. **Player of the game/week** – the MVP of the game will be voted after every game. The previous MVP will forward the MVP trophy with a speech about the player. After every week, The MVP of the week will be voted as a combination of representation of values, hard ~~work~~ and attitude. **After every game**
  4. **Earning finances project** – At the beginning of the season, the coach will offer the team the possibility to create their project to raise extra finances for the team. It could be used for any needs that the team will consider as a need. **All-season (process reflection, every month)**
  5. **Community help** – the team will pick up the two communities' helps during the season. **Twice in the season**
  6. **Winning song** – the leadership group will lead the meeting about the "winning song" of the team. The song will be played in the locker after every won game. Once a season
  7. **Rituals/team habits/team gestures** – leadership group with the team will open the question of what non-verbal, verbal gestures or any rituals could be characteristic of the team. **All-season**
  8. **Organizing tournament** – the team will prepare a summer league tournament in any sport against the teams around the country. Coaches can help to contact clubs or organizations. However, the management of the process is all up to team members. **Once a season**

**4. BUILT RELATIONSHIPS**

**A**

Coach athlete interaction sheet  
Coach athlete interaction sheet

The coaching staff provides interactions with players regularly by following the interaction sheet. Coaches will follow the sheet with all players' names. They will mark any interaction with a player there. The coaching staff can choose from all weekdays when they would like to follow the interaction sheet. Interaction means talking with the athlete about his day or life, just quick chitchat on how the athlete's life is and what he has experienced during the day. Coaches should divide players into days in which they will talk to which athlete. At the end of the week, every athlete should experience a small interaction with any of the coaches. After a while, coaches can change the players. The interactions sheet should work as a helping tool for monitoring which coach and athlete talk together. The coach will place the interaction sheet in every coach's locker room from the beginning of the season. **Weekly**

**B**

Scheduled individual meetings

At the beginning of the season, the coaches will provide players with the annual plan to schedule official individual meetings with players (the goals-setting sheet will be part of this meeting). However, individual meetings should focus on the player's current conditions (life, school, family, etc.). Yet, players can come or ask for the meeting anytime during the season. **3-4 times in a season**

ON ICE		Short-term goal 1	Short-term goal 2
Strengths	Tactical development		
	Technical development		
		Short-term goal 1	Short-term goal 2
Need to be developed	Tactical development		
	Technical development		

OFF ICE		Short-term goal 1	Short-term goal 2
strengths			
		Short-term goal 1	Short-term goal 2
Needs to be developed			

**C**  
**Player evaluation**

Coaches will provide players with player evaluation on the first goal-setting meeting. Coaches will explain what the evaluating factors of the evaluation sheet are. The athletes will be provided with the results as a formal reflection of coaches. It is a standard document. The coaches can communicate it with the athlete's parents. The player evaluation will be done twice in the season (half of the season and at the end of the season). **2 times in the season**



**Player Evaluation**



**Player's Role in the Team**

Big Role (lots of PP / PK)	
Normal Liability	
Small Role	

**Game Roles (1-5)**

OP <del>Puck Carrier</del>			
OP Without-Puck			
DP Defending Puck Carrier			
DP Defending Non-Puck Carrier			

**Ranking at the end of the season**

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**Written Feedback:**

**GAME:**

**CHARACTER:**

**PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTE:**

**GENERAL:**

Feedback Author/Contact:

**Trust in the coach Reflection sheet**

This questionnaire is made to assess the coach's relationship with the athlete. The athlete will circle the number that best corresponds to how the athlete generally feels about the relationship with the coach. The athlete should not write their names on the questionnaire. The coach should appoint someone else to collect the questionnaires. This protocol will encourage the athletes to respond truthfully. Coaches can use the questionnaire **as a way to** spot-check the team trust account and make adjustments as needed. **2 times in the season**

**5. CONDUCT PRACTICE AND COMPETITION**

**A**

**Quality practice design factors:**

- Setting challenging and specific practice goals:

The coach creates practice goals before every practice, practice goals connected to the vision and main points of the team's game plan and the game vision that the organization and coach agreed on. Before every practice, there will be a written team goal. Players will get an option to choose goals they would like to follow during the training. One of the coaches will be responsible for following the set goal.

- Players vote for the last activity:

Players can choose the last activity of the practice, whether a small area game or any activity. Players will be provided with 2-3 options for what they like to do.

- No explanations in the first 20-30 mins of practice:

The coach will explain the first part of the practice to avoid any breaks and stops. We will focus on skill and tempo as quality factors in the beginning.

- Evaluation of Practice and Competition:

The coach chooses which practice to evaluate. It must happen at least once a week. Used scale:

- You performed like a national champion today.
- You performed like a conference champion today.
- You performed average today. You were present but not performing to your potential.
- You performed below average today. If you perform like this in a game, you lose or be benched.
- You performed poorly today. If you perform like this in a game, you are helping the competitors defeat us.

The same scale applied after every game.

**B**

**Annual plan and mesocycle presentation**

Every coach has a prepared vision of the game, playbook, and annual plan before the season starts in a visible place in the coach's locker room and team locker room. The coaches present a new video preview for every new mesocycle.

**1. REFLECT AND LEARN – EVALUATION**

**A**

**Trust in coach – reflection sheet**

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
1. I can talk freely to my coach.	1	2	3 4 5 6 7
2. My coach listens and gives <input type="checkbox"/> I choose to share my ideas, feelings, problems.	1	2	3 4 5 6 7
3. My coach acts professionally and dedicatedly.	1	2	3 4 5 6 7
4. I can rely on my coach to improve my skills.	1	2	3 4 5 6 7
5. I would feel unsure of <input type="checkbox"/> my coach left.	1	2	3 4 5 6 7
6. Other players trust and respect my coach.	1	2	3 4 5 6 7
7. Given my coach's last performance, I believe in my coach's ability.	1	2	3 4 5 6 7

**B**

**Practice coaching evaluation checklist**

The evaluation checklist will be provided to the head of coaching of the organization twice a month.

Set challenging and specific practice goals:

- Were practice goals shared with the athletes: at or before the start of practice?
- Were practice activities demanding yet attainable for most athletes?
- Were athletes told why they were doing each activity before they started it?
- Were athletes given feedback on their practice performance and effort?

Keep athletes physically and mentally active throughout practice:

- Did the coach arrive with a detailed written practice plan?
- Was practice space being used to the best advantage?
- Was transition time kept to a minimum between activities?
- Did the coach end practice with a fun, positive activity?

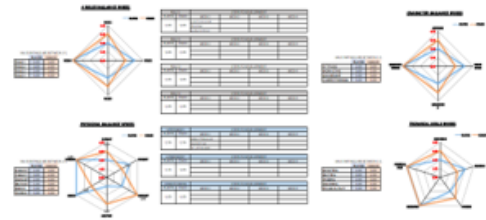
Give athletes choices and ask them for input on practice design:

- Were athletes set aside a few minutes for free play or athlete-directed practice?
- Were athletes given a choice of activities during the practice?

Create competitive game-like practice activities:

- Were athletes required to perform some activities under competition-like pressure?
- Were all athletes physically active and on task most of the time?
- Did the coach provide sufficient and clear teaching cues?

Individual goal setting sheet example pt.2



1