



Australian Government
Australian Sport Commission

COMMUNITY

COACHING

INSIGHTS

HOW CAN CLUBS SUPPORT COMMUNITY COACHES?



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Many factors contribute to an individual's enjoyment of sport and therefore their willingness to participate. Coaches are critically important – a good coach will encourage participants, a bad coach will turn them away.

Yet despite having such a pivotal role, there may be as many as 500,000 people currently coaching sport in Australia who have no formal training to do their jobs. Why? And what should be done about it?

To answer these questions, we first need to know more about community coaches. Why do they coach? What support do they need? How should this support be given?

To date very little research has been done on community coaches in Australia, particularly those who are not accredited.

The ASC commissioned qualitative research to find some answers and give guidance to the sector.

The research identified three 'segments' of typical community level coaches.

HAPPY HELPER

The **'Happy Helper'** is typically a parent of a child currently playing the sport. They are generally volunteers and tend to be first time coaches. Depending on the sport, they may not have even played the game before.

COMMUNITY COMMITTED

The **'Community Committed'** is likely to be a former player or a parent who has stayed on after their children have moved to older grades. They tend to be longer term coaches.

OPPORTUNIST

The **'Opportunist'** is typically a teenager or young adult still playing the sport.

Different sports will have different percentages of these segments, but overall the largest portion of community coaches are Happy Helpers.

The following pages outline the key characteristics of the three segments and suggests the best ways to provide support to them.

HAPPY HELPER

WHO ARE THEY?



Mostly parents who coach because their children are involved. Primarily motivated to spend time with their child, set a good example, see their child having fun and achieving through the sport.



May have never played the sport before and are susceptible to criticism and feeling overburdened due to their lack of knowledge.

PERCEPTIONS OF AN EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY COACH

- Believe that being an effective coach is more about 'controlling the kids behaviour', 'ensuring the kids are having fun' and 'keeping them engaged' rather than the technicalities of the sport
- As a result many place an emphasis on 'knowing children' and 'personality' as the necessary skills for an effective coach. As parents, they tend to believe they have these skills.

PRIORITIES WHEN COACHING



Prioritise 'fun' and 'enjoyment'

- Believe that as parents they have the skills to be able to achieve this
-

“You see something has to be done so you step up and do it”

ACCREDITATION



Low levels of accreditation



Not seeking accreditation

PREFERRED TRAINING

AND SUPPORT

- Do not believe they need training in general coaching principles (but it would probably help)
- Seek sport specific skills and techniques to help keep kids engaged, having fun and building confidence
- Looking for some thanks for their efforts and tangible incentives to coach

PREFERRED TRAINING DELIVERY

Face to face



Online



- Face to face support as it offers opportunity to socialise and develop peers in the club or sport, as well as being time efficient
- Provide approved apps or videos online to enable ongoing access to ideas

HAPPY HELPER

OPTIMUM TRAINING

PROGRAM





MESSAGE...

The ideal message to promote training of Happy Helpers is to say they will gain techniques, skills and coaching drills that will help them keep kids engaged, having fun, help them achieve and gain confidence.



DELIVERY...

The ideal delivery channel is face-to-face, practical delivery by the club or sport. It should be in a definitive time and place, and attempt to be done within the shortest duration possible.



MOTIVATE...

Incorporating a social element or offering something special or unique, such as watching an elite coaching session will help to motivate Happy Helpers. In addition, consider the offer of a sport specific 'app' or online support to enable ongoing access to ideas to help with coaching.

COMMUNITY COMMITTED

WHO ARE THEY?



Usually an ex-player or parent who continues to coach after their children have moved on



Motivated by the sense of identity and status they gain from coaching and the social aspects of being part of a club

They like coaching

PERCEPTIONS OF AN EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY COACH

- › Personality and knowledge of the game are believed to be required attributes of an effective coach
 - › They feel an effective coach provides an engaged environment, while also having knowledge of the rules of the game and being organised and prepared
-

PRIORITIES' WHEN COACHING



Prioritise enjoyment.

- › Emphasise organisation and knowledge of the game as priorities
 - › Place importance on keeping the club running
-

"I used to play so I've got some skills. I want to pass them on and see others achieve"

ACCREDITATION



Low levels of accreditation or lapsed accreditation



Not seeking accreditation

PREFERRED TRAINING

AND SUPPORT

- Not interested in learning general coaching skills (though they likely will need them) – only interested in learning specific skills
- Interested in new and emerging techniques, changes to rules or regulations of sport and club administration
- Interested in courses or training that will assist them to help other new coaches learn the basics
- Need to be recognised for their role in the club and achievements in coaching
- Can be resistant to new methods or training, believing that with their playing and coaching experience they know the best way

PREFERRED TRAINING DELIVERY

Face to face

Face to face



COMMUNITY COMMITTED

OPTIMUM TRAINING

PROGRAM





MESSAGE...

The ideal message to promote training of the Community Committed is to say there are new ideas and techniques for coaching the sport.



DELIVERY...

The ideal delivery channel is face-to-face, practical delivery by the club or sport. It should be in a definitive time and place, and attempt to be done within the shortest duration possible. This segment will also be encouraged by a social element and the offer of an app they can access for the latest sport specific drills/skills.



MOTIVATE...

Motivate this segment to participate in training by highlighting how the information or training will enable them to be in a better position to help 'new' coaches. If they understand what new coaches are learning, this will assist them in being better 'mentors'.

Incentivise or reward this segment with the offer that they could be trained to be the content deliverer of the new materials, or mentor to new coaches.

OPPORTUNISTS

WHO ARE THEY?



Usually a young adult, currently playing the sport

Motivated for personal benefits such as learning more about the sport, building their curriculum vitae, and to earn an income whilst studying or first working.

PERCEPTIONS OF AN EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY COACH

- Feel effective coaching is about skill development, placing a high priority on the 'technical' knowledge of the game and on how to develop necessary skills.
 - Having played the game for a long time and received training themselves, Opportunists perceive themselves to have these technical skills.
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PRIORITIES' WHEN COACHING



Prioritise 'skill development' and therefore emphasise sport specific technical skills

- Likely require general principles training, though they don't rate it as important
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"I'd always played, so I saw it as a way of gaining some qualifications"

ACCREDITATION



High levels of accreditation



Seek qualifications for personal benefit

PREFERRED TRAINING AND SUPPORT

- Online training is suitable however needs to be more than text based content including short video and gamification if possible
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PREFERRED TRAINING DELIVERY



Online



Face to face

Online and face to face



OPPORTUNISTS

OPTIMUM TRAINING

PROGRAM





MESSAGE...

The ideal message to promote training of the Opportunist is to highlight it as a necessity or pre-requisite for the qualifications they are seeking.



DELIVERY...

The ideal delivery channel is the online general principles then face-to-face sport specific. It will be necessary to minimise online content to approximately one hour. Making use of graphics, video and gamification will assist in maximising engagement.



MOTIVATE...

This segment will be motivated or rewarded by the completion of the required training.

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