

# Chapter 6.2

## Supporting coaches

### Benefits of this chapter

Many factors can greatly influence an athlete's behaviour. Athlete's commitment and drive can greatly be affected and influenced by their environment, their team mates, and especially their coach.

As a leader in the national aquatics federation in your country, the values that aquatics carries and the impact the sport can have on athletes of all levels is understandable. For this reason it is important that coaches, who are often the one who personify these values and ideal, should be aware of their responsibilities and act accordingly. But they cannot do it alone, as the leaders in aquatics; your federation needs to be there to provide them with the right tools and guidance.

This chapter takes a look at ways of supporting your coaches.

## Introduction

The philosophy of a team is commonly initiated, implemented and determined by coaches. The impact of a coach on athletes is immense; they have the ability to influence positively or negatively the outcome of performance. With this in mind, it should be understood that the educational background and the quality of a coach should be at the highest level.

As sporting authorities, coaches have the responsibility to maintain the balance between developing and educating an athlete all in keeping a professional demeanour. They have the ability to motivate or deteriorate a player's ambition, and as such they themselves should be supported and inspired by your National Federation so that they can bring success to future generations of aquatics athletes.

Creating an adequate base for coaching education and development can help bring aquatics to a winning level in your National aquatics Federation.

## Getting started

As a vital member of FINA, your aquatics federation has access to many of the development programmes available for coaches. From the coaching development programme for elite coaches to development training programmes for grassroots coaches, there are support programmes at the disposal of your aquatics federation.

Further to the support programmes of FINA, your federation can also put into place further structures to support your coaches. These can include:

### Coaching Association

Forming a Coaching Association in which all your aquatics coaches should become members can serve as a strong link between your federation and all your coaches.

The aim of the Coaches Association would be to improve the educational level of coaches through scientific ways. Coaches can use the Coaching Association to draft proposals, suggestions and initiatives for all coaching related topics. As well, all criteria and standards for coaching license as well as the coach's license themselves can be issued through the Coaching Association. Last but not least, the Coaching Association can organise clinics, seminars, refreshment courses, conferences and round tables for coaches on a regular basis.

Keep in mind that your National Federation would be providing all the input from the sporting perspective as to tailor the programmes to aquatics.

### Code of Conduct

Implementing a Code of Conduct within your federation or within the Coaches Association is a necessary document. The main purpose of the Code will be to set adequate standards and guidelines that each Coach should respect in the best interest of aquatics.

Coaches Code of Conduct should at least include the following inputs:

- Coaches should be role models and educators for the athletes and community and they should take care of their status and reputation.
- Coaches shall conduct themselves in a manner that reinforces their place as leaders and role models, and encourage positive communication between themselves and athletes, referees, administrators and general public.
- Coaches shall at all times conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the spirit of fair play and sporting behaviour.
- They shall give due regard to the authority of officials and the rights of opponents, spectators and others.
- Coaches shall not give, make, issue, authorise or endorse any public statement which would damage best interest of aquatics.
- Coaches should respect the rights of others to hold values, attitudes and opinions that differ from their own.
- Coaches shall perform their duties on the basis of careful preparation and be reasonable in demands on athlete's time, energy and enthusiasm.
- Coaches should take an active role in prevention of drug, alcohol and tobacco abuse.
- Coaches should take reasonable steps to ensure their skills are regularly updated.

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### **Educational programme**

Creating an educational programme for all the aquatics coaches in your country is a large task. There are ways of implementing the process to ensure that the knowledge transferred easily across your country. One possibility is to link the coaching programme with a school or University and another is to create a coaching programme all on its own to include seminars, clinics or practical workshops.

Building an educational coaching system can set a benchmark for people who pursue coaching. As aquatics are evolving, coaching has become a position which requires individuals with experience, education and knowledge. By developing a coaching system in your country, this will ensure that your aquatics federation will have consistent standards of developing coaches and athletes as well as develop a strong and solid base of confident athletes who are both mentally and physically prepared.

Whichever programme your federation implements, your coach education system should increase confidence and competence in coaching ability and promote ongoing progressive improvement of knowledge and expertise. It should incorporate all aspects of coaching from sport science to sports ethics in order to enable coaches to gain a better understanding and more in depth approach to coaching.

Coach education should:

- Increase enjoyment of sport for all coaches and athletes
- Encourage the development of innovative coaching techniques
- Be relevant and meet the requirements of aquatics
- Be flexible and user friendly
- Promote sports ethics and fair play