



# **Athletic Performance Consultant / Specialist**

Starter Guide for Burned-Out Clinicians  
Transitioning into Sports Performance

# Role Snapshot

Athletic Performance Consultants work with athletes to improve performance, reduce injury risk, and support safe return-to-play decisions. This role combines clinical movement knowledge with sport-specific demands.

Day-to-day work may include:

- Assessing movement quality and physical performance
- Designing or advising on training modifications
- Interpreting data from video analysis or wearables
- Communicating with coaches, athletes, and strength staff
- Creating readiness or recovery protocols tailored to individual needs

You'll find these roles in college and professional teams, private sports training centers, tech companies focused on human performance, or as independent consultants for local teams and clubs.

## Why It's A Good Fit

If you've ever managed an athlete's rehab timeline, adapted programs for return-to-play, or analyzed how fatigue or mechanics impact performance, this path may feel familiar.

Your clinical experience gives you the tools to understand performance through a health and movement lens, which is something most coaches or data analysts can't offer on their own.

# Action Plan

## 1) Translate Your Experience

Start by reframing your resume and personal pitch. Focus on work with athletes or active populations. Highlight moments where you modified rehab, communicated with coaches or tracked recovery.

Some examples:

- Adjusted rehab timelines based on sport-specific demands
- Coordinated return-to-play plans with athletic trainers or coaches
- Analyzed fatigue and adapted training plans accordingly

Look at real job listings on TeamWork Online or the NCAA Career Center to borrow language directly from the roles you're targeting.

## 2) Learn the Language of the Role

You don't need to be a tech expert or own expensive tools, but you should understand what's commonly used and how to talk about them.

Video & Movement Analysis:

- Kinovea (free, widely used by coaches and clinicians)
- Hudl (popular in team sports for video feedback)

Note: You don't need to be an expert. Just be familiar with how coaches and teams use these tools.

# Action Plan

## Wearables & Monitoring:

- WHOOP or Catapult (commonly used to track athlete workload and recovery)
- Polar or Garmin (used more recreationally, but relevant in some settings)

Note: These tools are widely used, but the science behind them is mixed. Don't rely on them as proof of expertise. Learn how they're used in practice.

## Dashboarding/Data Platforms:

- Smartabase or VALD

Note: These platforms are used by elite teams and performance organizations. You do not need hands-on access, but it's helpful to understand what they offer and the kinds of data they collect. Only mention these tools if you can speak confidently about how they're used in real-world settings.

## 3) Build a Micro-Portfolio

Create a one-page case study to show how you'd approach a performance problem.

### Example:

- Athlete: High school sprinter, post-hamstring strain
- Screens: Single-leg hop, range of motion, sprint video
- Plan: Return-to-sprint timeline with specific milestones
- Outcome: Clear progression tied to readiness markers
- Deliverable: A consult summary you would share with coach or parent

This gives potential employers or clients a clear view of how you think and how you would work in a performance setting.

# Action Plan

## 4) Take One Short Course (Not for Certification)

Choose a course that gives you real structure or language.

Example Resources:

- Data in Sport (FutureLearn/Deakin University) – clear introduction to performance metrics
- Foundations of Sport Performance (Human Kinetics) – covers key movement principles for sport
- Avoid CSCS unless you're moving directly into strength and conditioning (not required for most consulting roles)

## 5) Make 3 Strategic Connections

Use LinkedIn to connect with people in the space. Start with small interactions like commenting on posts, then send short messages that show you've done your homework.

- Join groups like Sports Science Collective or Strength Coach Network
- Comment on content from performance staff in schools or private centers
- Ask one person, “If you were starting over today, how would you break into this space?”

# Action Plan

## 4) Take One Short Course (Not for Certification)

Choose a course that gives you real structure or language.

Example Resources:

- Data in Sport (FutureLearn/Deakin University) – clear introduction to performance metrics
- Foundations of Sport Performance (Human Kinetics) – covers key movement principles for sport
- Avoid CSCS unless you're moving directly into strength and conditioning (not required for most consulting roles)

## 5) Make 3 Strategic Connections

Use LinkedIn to connect with people in the space. Start with small interactions like commenting on posts, then send short messages that show you've done your homework.

- Join groups like Sports Science Collective or Strength Coach Network
- Comment on content from performance staff in schools or private centers
- Ask one person, “If you were starting over today, how would you break into this space?”

# Transferrable Skills

- Functional testing and movement analysis
- Athlete communication and education
- Load progression and fatigue management
- Return-to-play planning
- Experience working with sport-specific populations

These are common themes across performance roles and are often listed in job postings.

## Typical Salary Range

- Entry to mid-level private facility: \$55,000–\$80,000
- Collegiate or pro-level roles: \$70,000–\$110,000 depending on credentials
- Freelance consulting: \$75 to \$200 per hour based on reputation and client type

Note: These numbers vary significantly depending on your region, the setting, and whether you're employed or working independently.

# Example Resume Bullets

Use these to reframe your clinical work into performance language:

- “Designed individualized warm-up and recovery programs for athletes based on movement screen outcomes.”
- “Collaborated with coaching staff to modify return-to-play progression after lower extremity injuries.”
- “Monitored recovery status using perceived exertion and basic workload tracking.”
- “Delivered performance consults for youth athletes and provided readiness education to families.”
- “Used video analysis to identify movement inefficiencies in athletes returning to sport.”

## Common Interview Questions

- How do you balance short-term performance with long-term athlete health?
- Tell me about a time you had to adjust an athlete’s program based on fatigue or data.
- How do you communicate technical findings to athletes or coaches who aren’t medical professionals?
- What’s your approach to monitoring progress without high-end tech?

## Key Insights

- Most jobs won’t advertise as “consultant” roles. Look for titles like “Performance Specialist” or “Sports Scientist.”
- Many smaller clubs, academies, and schools don’t have formal performance staff. You can pitch your services.
- You don’t need to be a data expert. If you can show logical thinking and communication skills, that’s often more valuable.
- You can build your own niche locally with part-time consults to test the waters before leaving clinical work completely.



# Who This Role Is For

- Clinicians who've worked with athletic or sport-minded populations
- Individuals comfortable with uncertainty, experimentation, and hybrid roles
- Those interested in bridging the gap between rehab and performance

# Who This Role Is Not For

- People looking for fully remote work or low-interaction environments
- Anyone uninterested in the physical demands or expectations of working in sport
- Those unwilling to build relationships with athletes, parents, or coaches

## Disclaimer

This resource is for informational and educational use only and is not intended as legal, medical, or career advice. Always verify role requirements and consult a professional where appropriate.

© 2025 Charting Out. All rights reserved.

No part of this guide may be copied, reproduced, or shared without written permission.