

## **3D Case Study - An Interview with Nick DeForest from the American International School of Vienna**

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I have had the opportunity to work with Nick DeForest as well as other coaches, students, parents, and administrators from the American International School of Vienna over the course of the last 12 years. They are a rival of ours but also a sister-like school in many ways due to our make-up as international institutions. These experiences have been gained through participation in friendly games, festivals, tournaments, and activity events where I have had the opportunity to engage in, witness, and learn from the philosophies and methods AISV has in place for running their co-curricular programs. I've even been lucky enough to co-organize a week-long ski trip to the Austrian Alps for students from both of our schools numerous times over the years. As an educator, Athletic Director, and coach, I feel very fortunate to have this relationship in place to benefit from professionally and personally as Nick is a very good friend.

### **The 3Dimensions and AISV**

My overall impression of AISV is that they do a very good job of approaching, engaging, and positively impacting student-athletes through the 3Dimensions. They are fortunate as close to 80% of their coaching staff are veteran teacher-coaches at their school. AISV is the type of international school that attracts high-quality educators who typically stay in that role for several years. This contributes to the stability and soundness of their programs.

### **The First Dimension - Fundamentals**

Having learned from Nick through his answers, and my observations of AISV coaches, I would conclude that their coaches are very sound in their understanding of the basic skills required for coaching through the first dimension. Some of their coaches who are not teachers are highly qualified Austrians who coach professionally outside of their school role for clubs or private means. They know what they are doing when it comes to fundamentals and I appreciate how Nick continually supports coaches by directing them to further professional development opportunities through NFHS courses, as well as pairing up new-comers with veteran coaches as needed.

For improving this dimension, I would recommend further exploration of new professional development channels that coaches can explore to learn more. Continuous learning and self-reflection is a critical part of being a coach, ensuring that our professional 'tools of the trade' are consistently being sharpened.

### **The Second Dimension - Psychology**

This is a definite strength of the AISV athletic program and is clearly indicated in their mission statement and work with student-athletes. I appreciate statements that use keywords like cultivation, differentiation of instruction, exploration, and motivation. When action is applied to these concepts, students greatly benefit from their sporting experience and relationships with their coaches.

To improve in this dimension, I would suggest that they continue to implement these core words into their coaching and find time to evaluate at the end of the season how they were applied. Additional research and professional reflection by coaches into the ideas of what the Second Dimension is comprised of would be recommended as well.

### **The Third Dimension - Heart**

A core word that is woven into the fabric of AISV's beliefs as a program is the word Nurture. Nurturing is utilized by encouraging student-athletes to respect others, being empathetic, and embracing diversity in an international school environment. Coaching and leading students with these concepts in place improves overall learning and prepares them to be good people who will positively contribute to the world.

A suggestion I would make to support this concept is to explore service-related activities/projects that teams or student-athletes can participate in to further engage in utilizing the heart in their actions.