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SPORT PSYCHOLOGY

Dr James Dimmock and Dr Peter Whipp



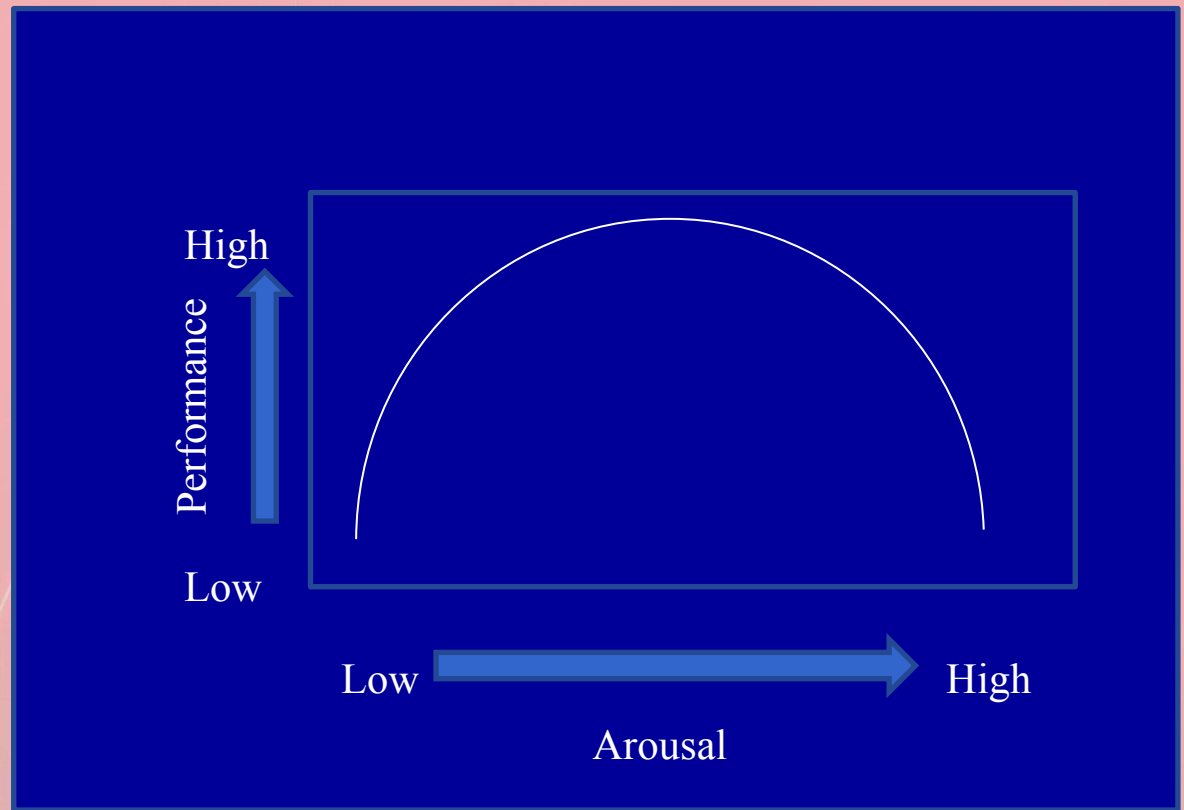
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The Inverted-U Hypothesis

Performance is best when athletes experience a moderate level of arousal.



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Routines and Arousal

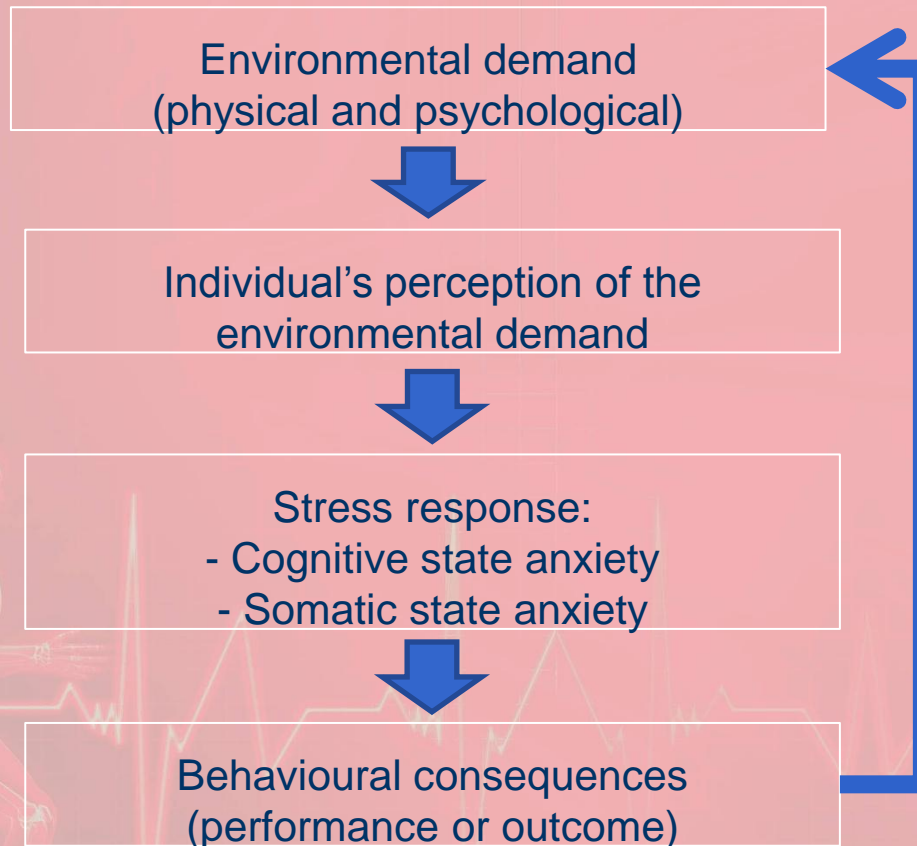
Routines to influence arousal are most useful when undertaken before and during performance.



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The Stress Process according to McGrath (1970)





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Routines and Stress

Performance routines can influence stages 2 and 3 of the stress process. An effective routine can ward away a perception that a demand is threatening and can moderate the reaction to stress.

Routines to reduce stress are most useful when undertaken before and during performance.



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Routines and Motivation

Routines can activate motivation that has come to be associated with events via a conditioning process.

Routines can stimulate motivational intensity before or during a performance.



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Routines and Concentration

Routines can help athletes to concentrate on relevant cues.

Concentration on task-relevant cues is important to performance success.

Routines to improve concentration are most useful when undertaken during performance.



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Routines and Confidence

Routines before and during a performance can influence the confidence of athletes as well as the confidence of their opponents.

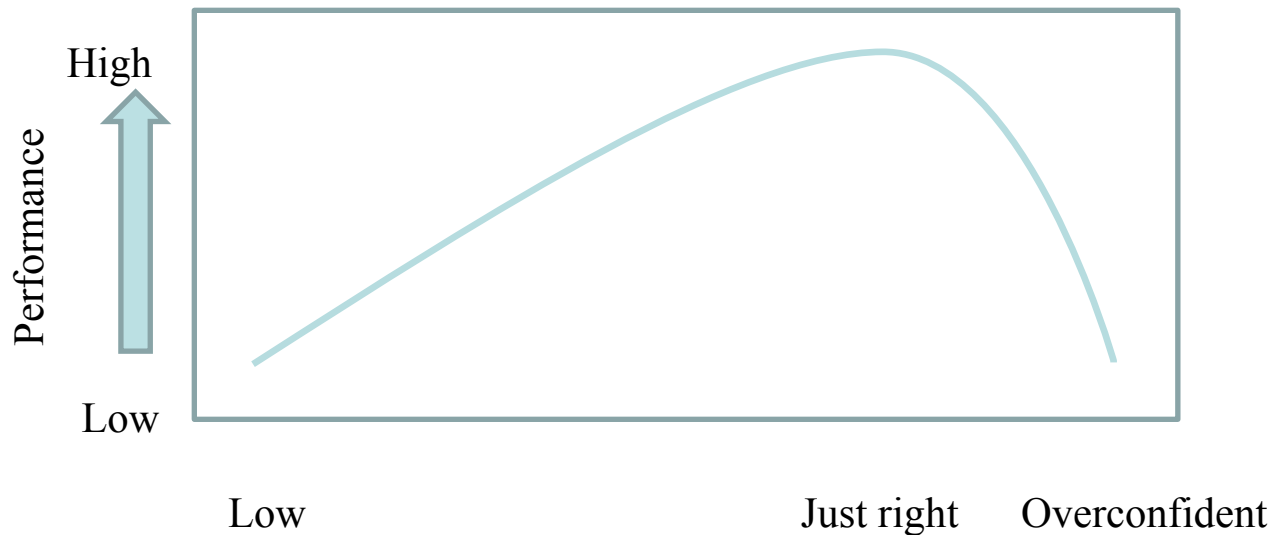


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Relationship Between Confidence and Performance



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Routines

Exam style question



A volleyball player has expressed that when in high pressure situations, and it is their turn to serve, they often feel rushed and distracted. Upon asking: what does your pre-performance routine involve?; they reply – ‘I don’t have a routine’.

Describe a possible routine they could employ and justify the use of pre-performance routines by identifying a likely benefit.



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Routines

Answer



A volleyball player has expressed that when in high pressure situations, and it is their turn to serve, they often feel rushed and distracted. Upon asking: what does your pre-performance routine involve?; they reply – ‘I don’t have a routine’.

Describe a possible routine they could employ and justify the use of pre-performance routines by identifying two likely benefits.

A possible pre-performance routine could involve:

- *hold the ball with one hand and use their serving hand to slap to ball with firm contact, then taking two deep breaths and exhaling slowly.*
1. *Routines can assist you not to neglect task-relevant thoughts or behaviours prior to execution.*
 2. *Routines can assist you to avoid distractions.*



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Imagery and Arousal

Using imagery to influence arousal is most useful when undertaken prior to performance.



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Imagery and Stress

Using imagery to influence stress is most useful when undertaken prior to performance.

Imagery is likely to influence stages 2 (perception of demand) and 3 (stress response) in the stress process.



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Imagery and Motivation

Imagery of successful performance can help an athlete approach activities (motivational direction) and persist at those activities (motivational intensity).

Using imagery to influence motivation is most useful when undertaken prior to performance.



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Imagery and Concentration

Imagery can be used by athletes prior to an event so that they focus on task-relevant cues during the event.



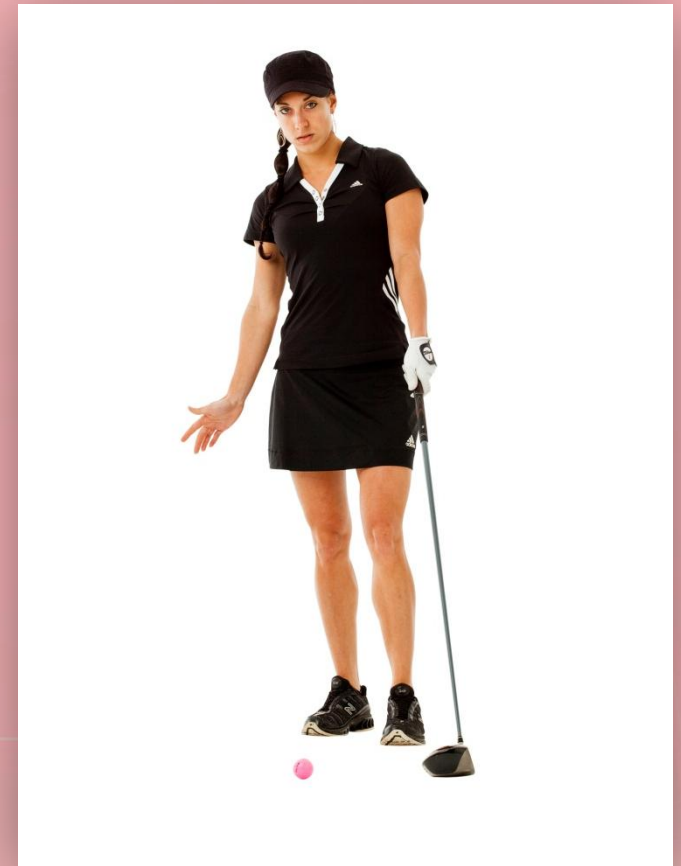
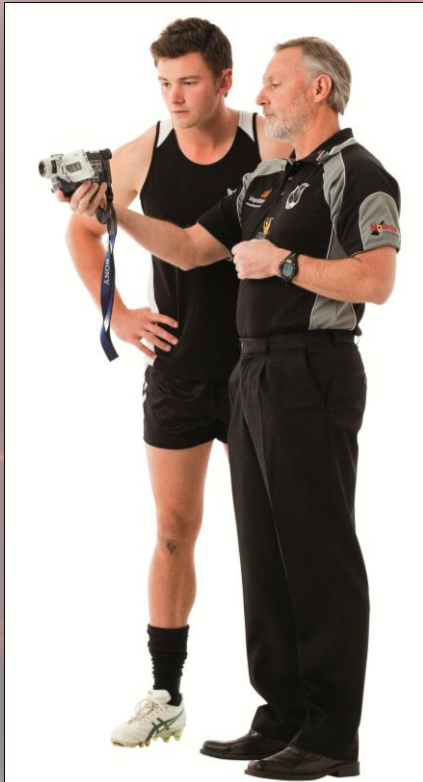
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Imagery and Self-confidence

Imagery can be used to build confidence before a game or during a game.



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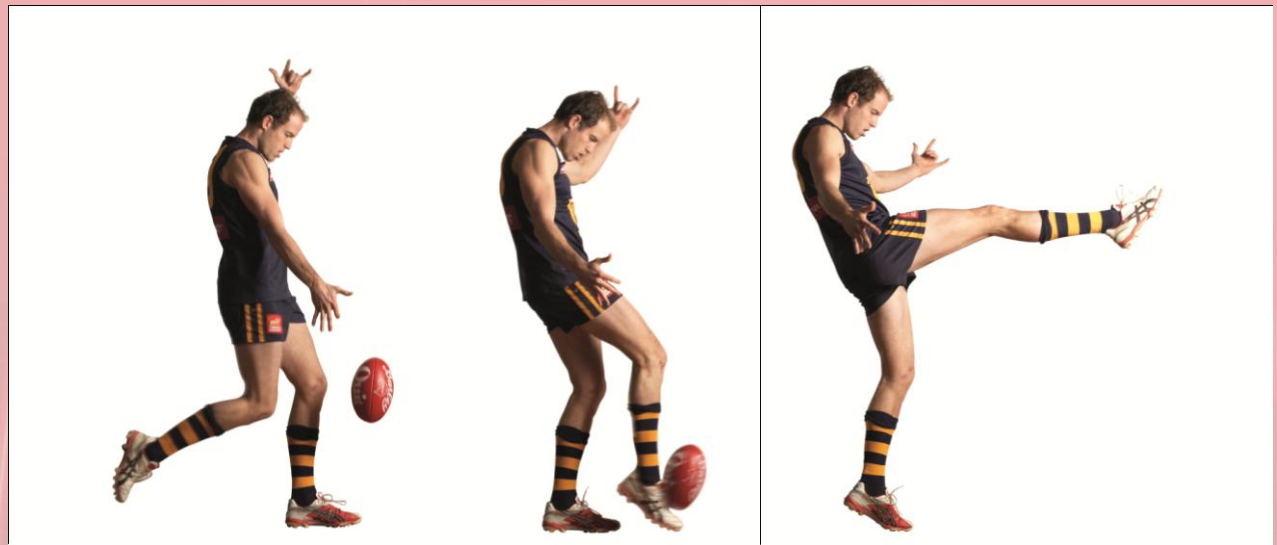


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Imagery

Exam style question

An AFL player tells you that he has been using imagery to improve goal kicking. But, he says it has made him worse at set shots. Having asked what does he imagine, he says: 'when I am running in to kick at goal, I mentally rehearse and see how I don't want things to go, then I imagine a good kick while I am kicking it'.



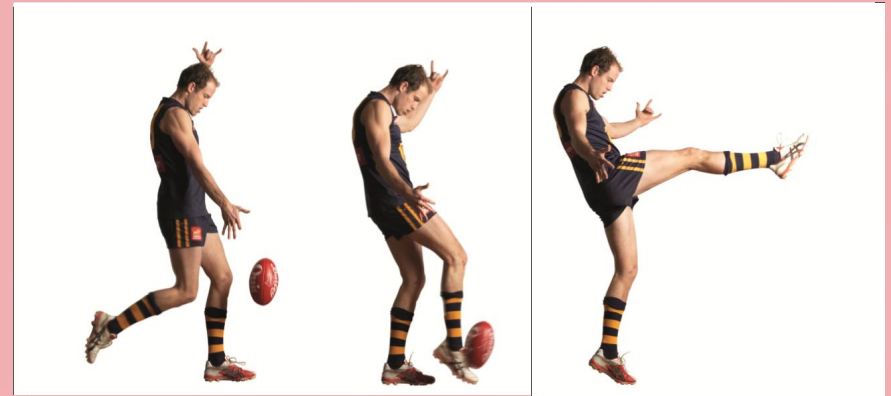
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Imagery

Answer



An AFL player tells you that he has been using imagery to improve goal kicking. But, he says it has made him worse at set shots. Having asked what does he imagine, he says: 'when I am running in to kick at goal, I mentally rehearse and see how I don't want things to go, then I imagine a good kick while I am kicking it'.

Firstly, the mental imagery should be performed in the time between having marked the ball and prior to running in and kicking the ball. That is, imagery should not be undertaken during the performance.

Secondly, imagery training involves focusing strongly on the desired way of performing and avoid imaginings of past mistakes or poor performances.



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Personal Relaxation

Arousal regulation techniques can include progressive relaxation, breathing control, imagery, thought stopping, performance routines, listening to music, and self-talk.



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Personal Relaxation and Arousal

The matching hypothesis recommends that athletes use physical anxiety reduction techniques to reduce physical symptoms of anxiety, and mental techniques to reduce cognitive symptoms of anxiety.

Relaxation methods can be used prior to an event, during an event, or after an event to decrease arousal.



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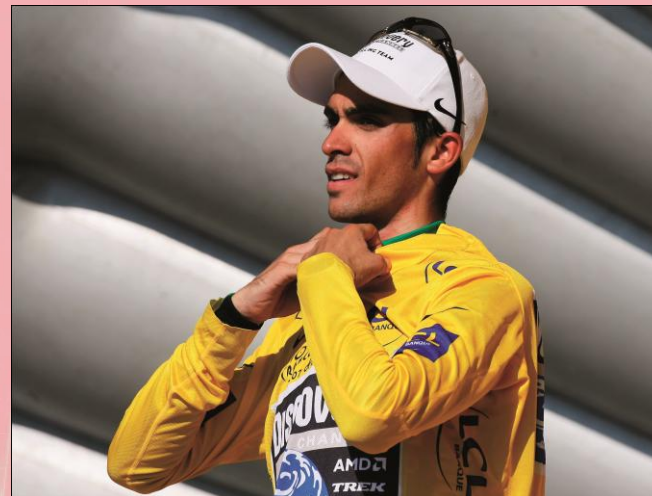


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Personal Relaxation and Stress

Relaxation methods can be used to reduce stress before competition, during competition, or after competition.

Using relaxation to reduce stress is most useful when undertaken prior to and after competition.



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Personal Relaxation and Motivation

Relaxation methods can be used to influence motivation before and during performance.

Using relaxation to influence the impact of high levels of motivation is most useful when undertaken prior to and sometimes during competition.



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Personal Relaxation and Concentration

Using relaxation to improve concentration is most useful when undertaken during performance.



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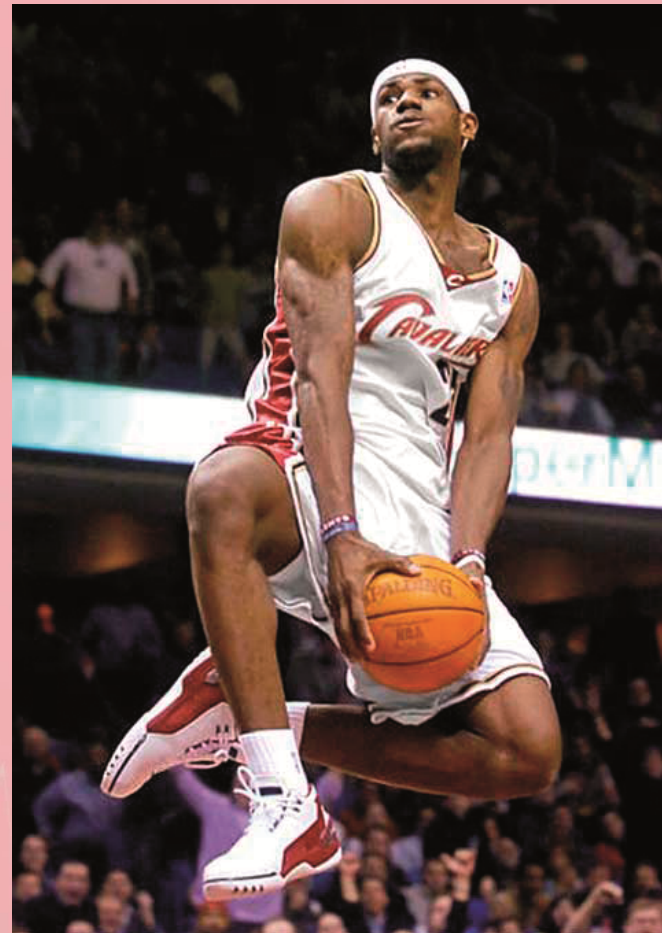


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Personal Relaxation and Self-confidence

Relaxation methods that are incorporated into a tapering process can be used to influence confidence.

Relaxation techniques such as breathing control may influence confidence during or after performance.



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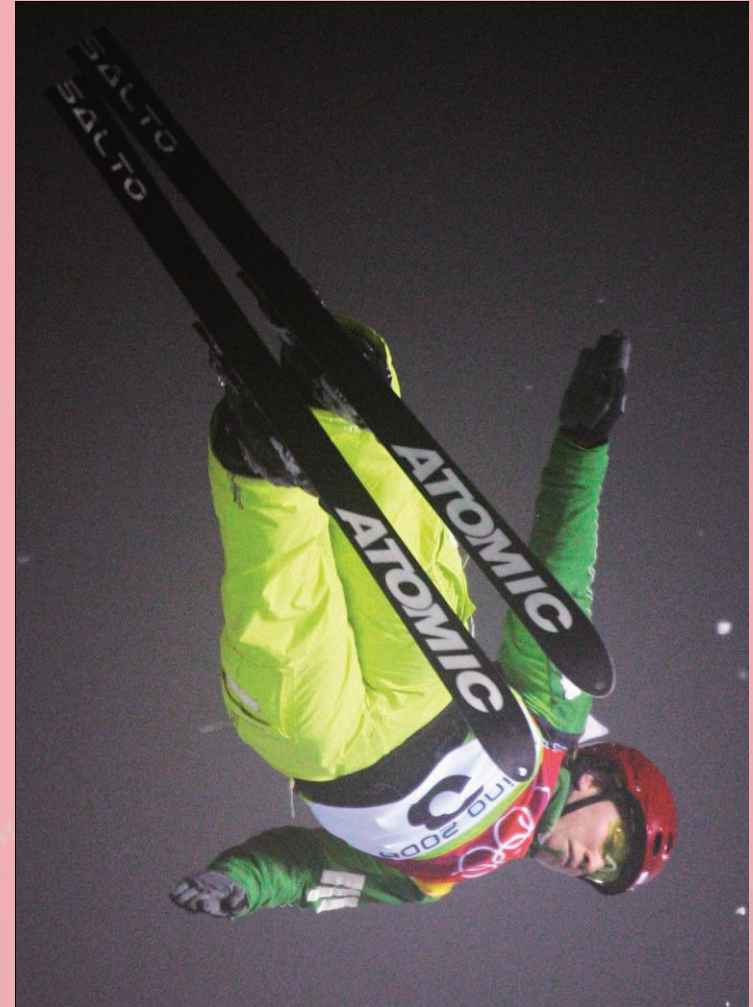


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Personal Relaxation

Exam style question

An athlete tells you that they have been experiencing physical symptoms of arousal or anxiety – in the form of sweaty palms and an elevated heart rate. They confirm that they are using ‘self-talk’ to address the situation. Using the ‘matching hypothesis’, explain why you might adopt a different mental skills strategy.



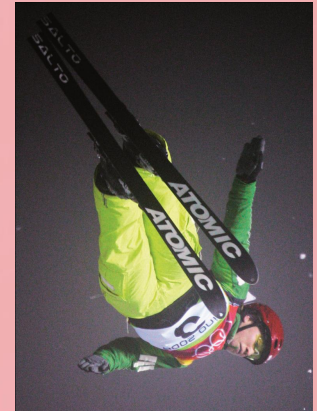
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Personal Relaxation

Answer



An athlete tells you that they have been experiencing physical symptoms of arousal or anxiety – in the form of sweaty palms and an elevated heart rate. They confirm that they are using ‘self-talk’ to address the situation. Using the ‘matching hypothesis’, explain why you might adopt a different mental skills strategy.

The matching hypothesis involves matching the personal relaxation technique to the context of the situation and the outcome sought. In this situation, the athlete is experiencing physical symptoms and therefore is advised to use a physical technique such as breath control, rather than self-talk which is a mental skills technique.



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Self-talk and Arousal

Using self-talk to influence arousal is most useful when undertaken prior to and during performance.

Self-talk can possibly be used after performance to influence arousal.



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Self-talk and Stress

Self-talk can influence stages 1 (environmental demand), 2 (perception of demand), or 3 (stress response) of the stress process.

Using self-talk to influence arousal is most useful when undertaken prior to performance.

Self-talk can possibly be used during and after performance to influence stress.



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Self-talk and Motivation

Self-talk can influence the direction and intensity of an athlete's motivation, and it can be used pre-, during, and post-performance.



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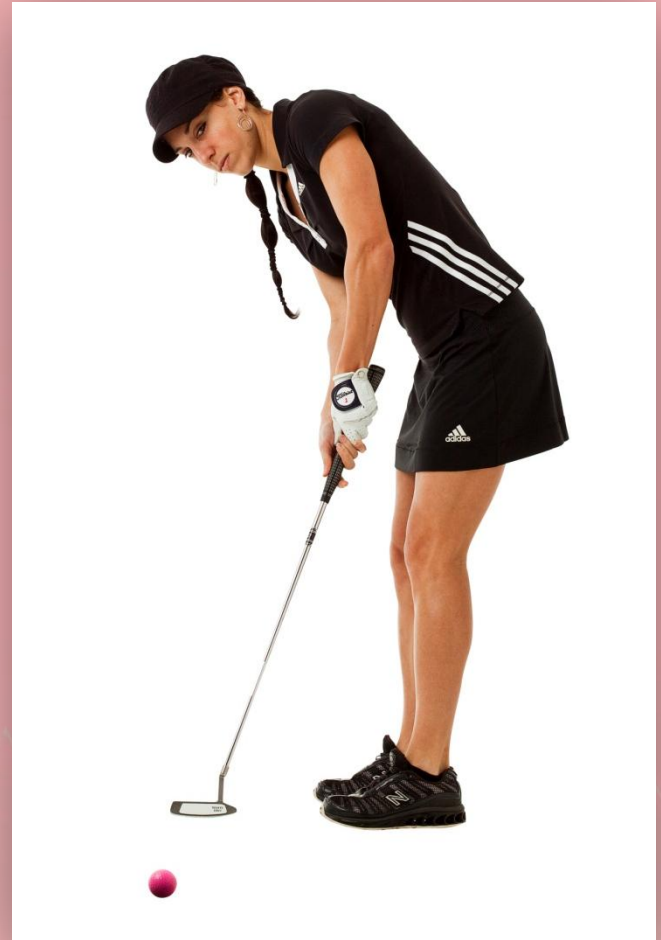


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Self-talk and Concentration

Using self-talk to influence concentration is most useful when done during performance.

Self-talk can possibly be used prior to performance to influence concentration.



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Self-talk and Self-confidence

Self-talk can possibly be used prior to, during, or after performance to influence self-confidence.



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Self-talk

Exam style question

A PE student feels stressed by the teacher's request to perform a gymnastics routine in front of the class. How might the use of positive self-talk influence the perception of the demand and their stress response?



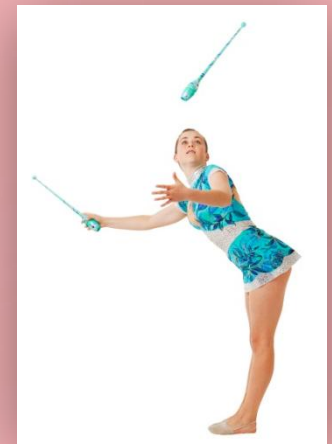
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Self-talk

Answer



A PE student feels stressed by the teacher's request to perform a gymnastics routine in front of the class. How might the use of positive self-talk influence the perception of the demand and their stress response?

Self-talk can be used to re-appraise an environmental demand (stage 2 of the stress response), or one's ability to meet it, or it can work to decrease the perceptions of the demand. Statements used before the class, such as 'what doesn't kill me will make me stronger' can be used to reduce the perceived significance of the task.

Self-talk can be used to moderate the worry and physical symptoms that characterise stage 3 of the stress process. By using phrases just before the performance, such as 'breathe deep', an athlete can reduce the physical symptoms of stress.



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Goal Setting and Arousal

Goal setting can be used prior to, during, or after an event to influence arousal.



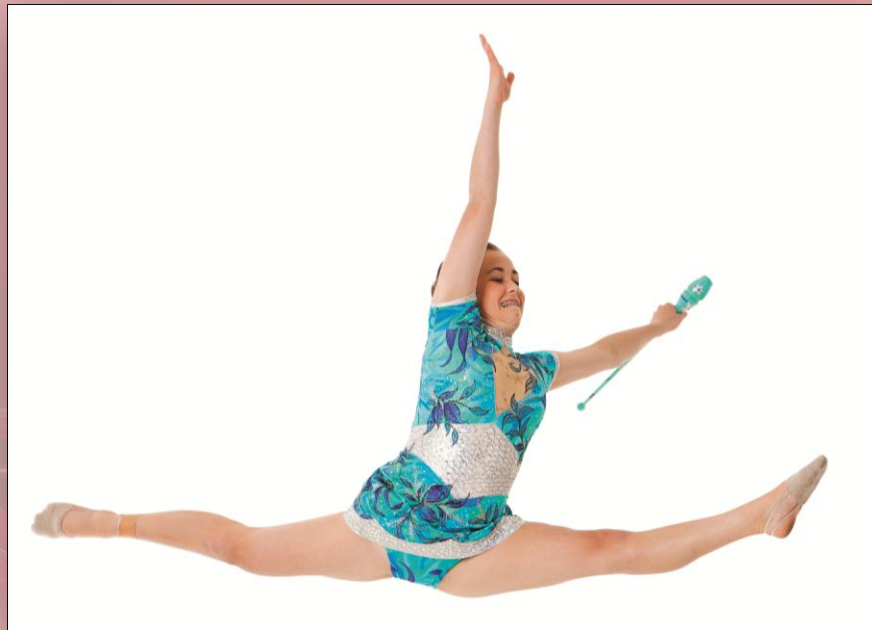
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Goal Setting and Stress

Goal setting can influence all stages of the stress process and can influence stress before, during, or after a performance.



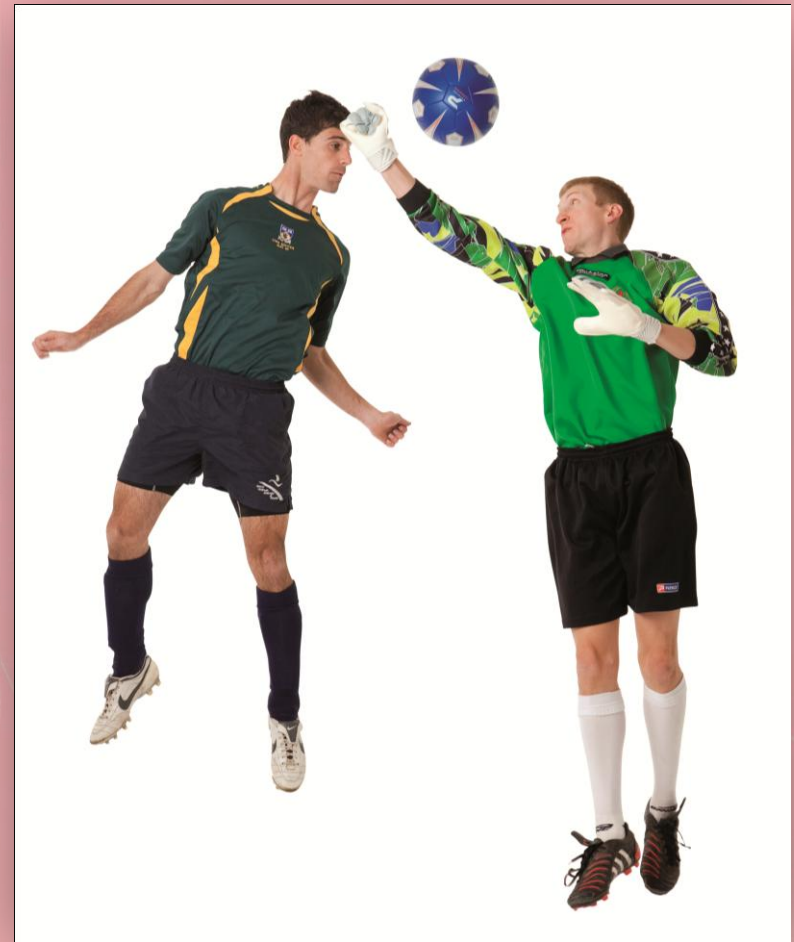
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Goal Setting and Motivation

Goal setting can influence motivation before, during, or after competition.



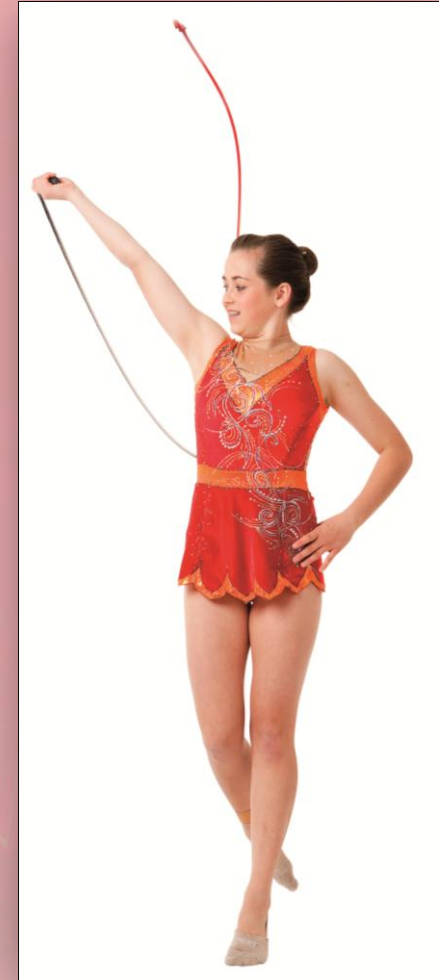
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Goal Setting and Concentration

Goal setting can be used to focus on relevant cues in training before a competition, during competition, or after a competition.



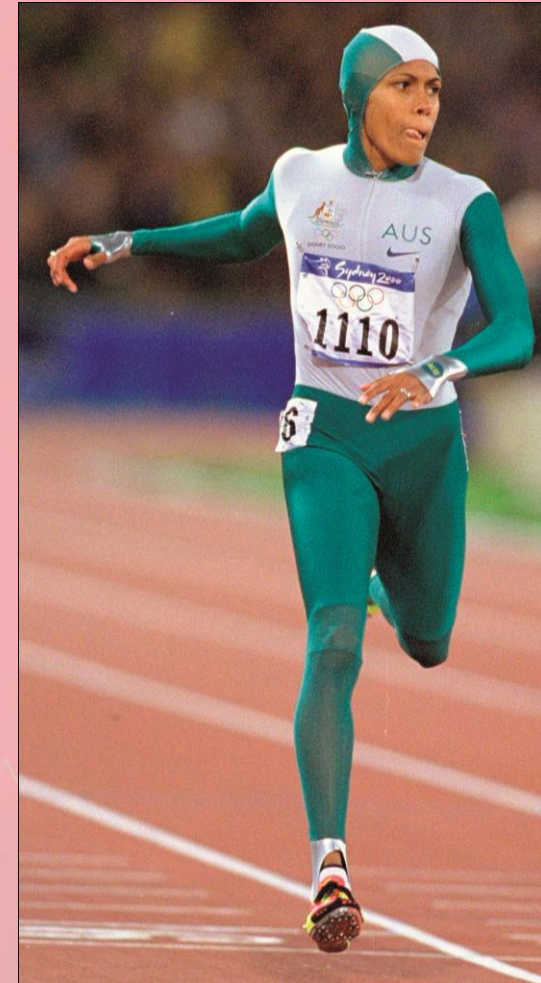
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Goal Setting and Self-confidence

Self-confidence after a performance can be boosted or diminished as a result of goals.



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Goal Setting

Exam style question

A player's concentration is seen to be waning during a game of badminton. Justify the use of goal setting after the performance to bring about potential improvements in the next tournament.



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Goal Setting

Answer



A player's concentration is seen to be waning during a game of badminton. Justify the use of goal setting after the performance to bring about potential improvements in the next tournament.

Setting goals will assist the badminton player to focus on particular aspects of their performance – thereby facilitating the player to maintain concentration. The goals will provide a reference point to evaluate the quality of the performance and these can be re-set to accommodate successes.



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Group Cohesion

“The most deadly of basketball viruses, a disturbing lack of chemistry and complaints about playing time, threaten to sink this stink bomb as one of the all-time American disgraces in Olympic competition.”

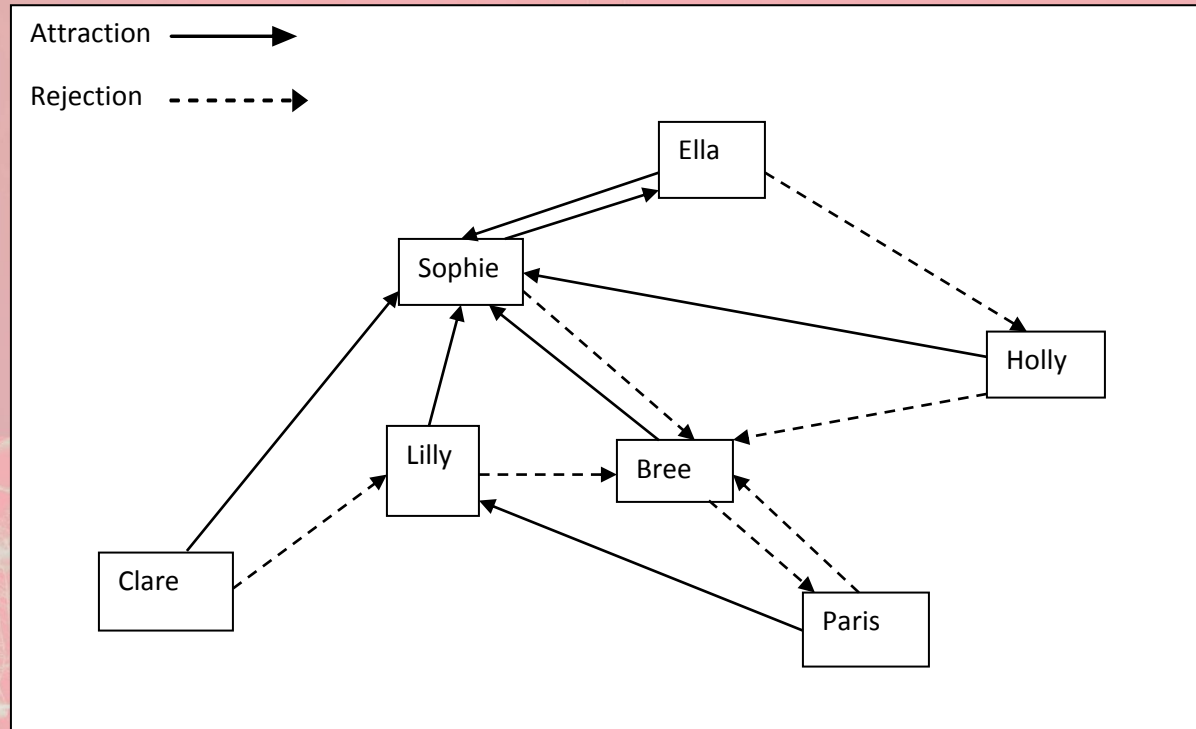
Mariotti (2004, cited in Carron et al., 2005)



Reigning gold medalists from the Sydney 2000 Summer Olympics, the 2004 United States of America Olympic Basketball Team failed to retain its men's title, which went to Argentina. While some players chose not to represent their country, the team included plenty of stars; Carmelo Anthony, Carlos Boozer, Tim Duncan, Allen Iverson, LeBron James, Lamar Odom and Dwyane Wade.



Sociograms

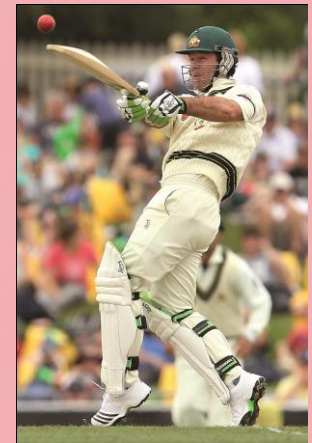


Issues associated with social cohesion can be measured with a sociogram.



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Group Cohesion



Group cohesion is a dynamic process which is reflected in the tendency for a group to stick together and remain united in the pursuit of its instrumental objectives and/or for the satisfaction of member bonds or friendship.

Carron's model states that:

- environmental
- personal
- leadership, and
- team factors

can influence cohesion, and cohesion can also influence these factors.

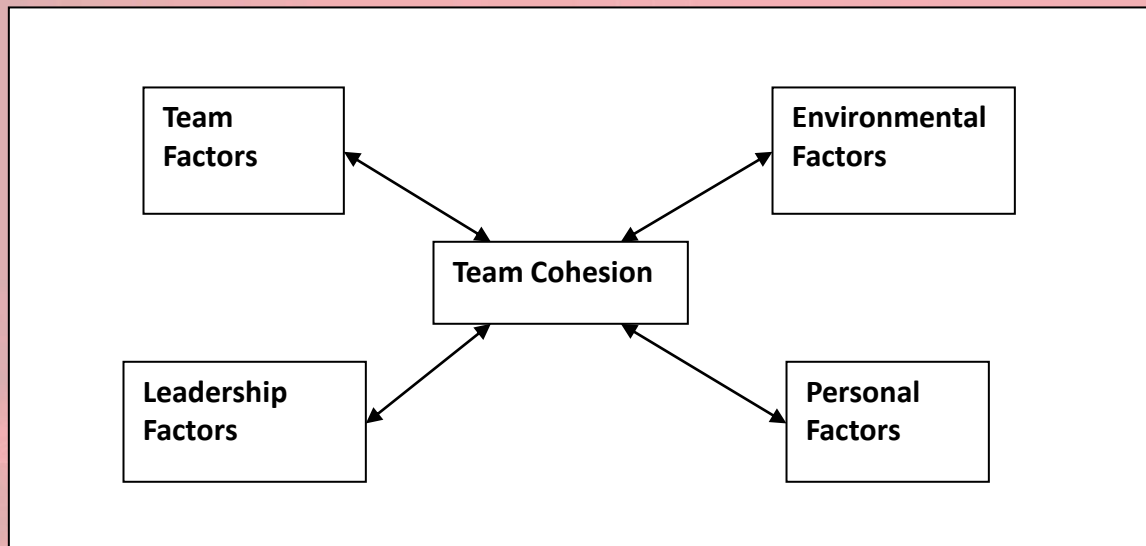


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Carron's Model: Showing relationships involving team cohesion



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The Ringelmann Effect and Social Loafing

The tendency for team members' performance to decrease as the team size increases is known as the Ringelmann effect.

The Ringelmann effect can partially be explained by social loafing, which refers to performance decrements as a result of losses in motivation.

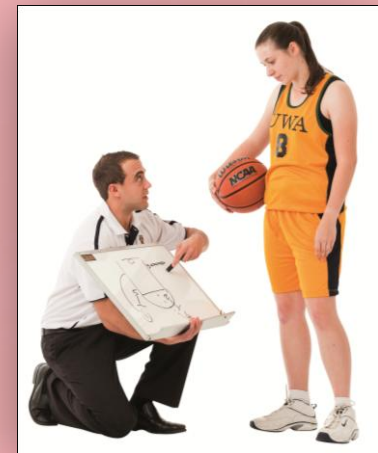


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Group Cohesion



Coaches and leaders can help to build cohesion by explaining individual roles in team success, setting challenging group goals, encouraging group identity, avoiding excessive turnover, and knowing the team climate.

Group members can help to build cohesion by avoiding the formation of social cliques, learning about other group members, helping teammates, giving encouragement and other positive reinforcement, and resolving conflicts quickly.



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Group Cohesion

Exam style question

Leadership factors are said to be one of the categories of Carron's model of team cohesion.

- (i) Describe the leadership factors.
- (ii) Provide two strategies a coach could employ to build team cohesion.



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Group Cohesion

Answer



Leadership factors are said to be one of the categories of Carron's model of team cohesion.

- (i) Describe the leadership factors.
- (ii) Provide two strategies a coach could employ to build team cohesion.

(i) Leadership factors include the coach's leadership style and the behaviours that professional's exhibit. The dynamics of the coach-athlete interpersonal relationships and the coach-team relationships are also included in leadership factors.

(ii) Two strategies include:

- a. setting challenging group goals*
- b. encouraging group identity*