

## Implications for coaching women and girls

Trudi Kemp



“A coach works with the belief systems, drivers, needs, wants, and the ‘why’ of the athlete to create something that neither athlete or coach could create on their own. “

Trudi Kemp

### **Athlete/Player Centred Coaching**

Understand the athlete as a person. This approach is the same regardless of gender. However there are gender tendencies which need to be reflected in how information is presented to better connect with the athletes to enhance the performance improvement.

**Things we can do**....listen, group discussions, one to one discussions, questionnaires, whiteboard parking, minibus rides.

### **Myths**

#### **Women are more difficult to coach**

Compared to male athletes, females tend to be more open to coaching and new ways of doing things. They are willing to try new techniques, especially if it will help them perform better. Females tend to give their coaches much more initial respect, rather than reserving judgment or making their coaches prove they are credible.

**Things we can do**....explain or pull out the why or the reason we are doing a certain exercise, more whiteboard sessions before and during training,

### They lack confidence

Some women tend to not give themselves enough credit for the things they are good at. They attribute their skills and successes to luck rather than to their talent and hard work. They also tend to base their confidence more on what they think others (coaches, teammates, fans) think of them -- rather than relying on their internal sources of confidence. Because of this, their confidence becomes very fragile and fleeting.

**Things we can do...** Notice when the athletes succeed and acknowledge this, remember the female athletes are tougher on themselves than they need to be, the fastest way to gain confidence is to complete the task and therefore gain the knowledge that you can do it.

### They over analyse and cannot take criticism

Many females take the coach's criticism personally. They believe a general statement made to the team is something that was meant for them individually.

**Things we can do...** Discuss the difference between performance communication rather than personal communication.

### They just want to chat to their mates.

Yes but not 'just'. Chemistry is important for both genders, but seems especially **critical** for females. Good team chemistry is highly valued by many female athletes. At some levels and on some teams, the importance of team chemistry is at least on par with and sometimes trumps winning.

**Things we can do...** build in time so that they can talk to each other during or before training, build in problems to the training that need discussion as part of the solution, monitor social cohesion regularly, use 'we' rather than 'you' e.g "the team needs you to..." rather than "you need to"

### Women and girls



### Men and boys

