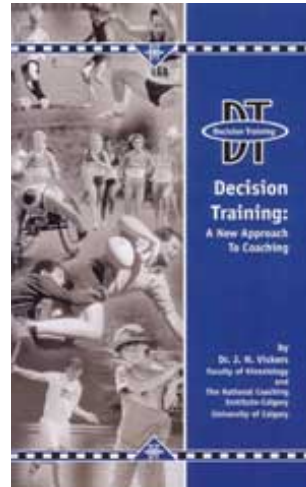


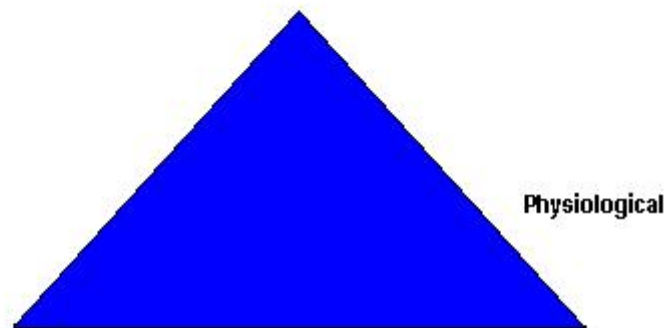
Decision Training: A New Approach To Coaching

The following is an excerpt taken from the coaching resource *Decision Training: A New Approach To Coaching* written by Dr. J. N. Vickers and commissioned by the Coaches Association of BC (CABC). For more information about the book or to place an order please go to the Resources section of the CABC website at www.coaches.bc.ca.



Decision training is the psychological training led by the coach within each and every practice and is composed of a three step decision training planning process and seven decision training tools. Decision training joins psychological training, biomechanical training and psychological training (see figure 1)

Psychological / Decision Training



Biomechanical / Technical

****Three scientific foundations of coaching: physiological training, biomechanical/technical training, and psychological/decision training. In order to be successful, the coach has to include all three in every practice**

The 3 Decision Training Steps

Step 1: Define the decisions your athletes have to make when competing/performing. These decisions should be sport and situation specific and define the cognitive skills needed to perform at the highest level. For example, to attend to specific cue(s), to retrieve from memory the correct solution(s), to retrieve from a number of alternatives, to recognize a specific strategic pattern, to concentrate on a specific strategic pattern, to concentrate on a specific location, to solve a problem, to be creative in adapting and exploiting all conditions encountered.

Step 2: Describe the drill or activity where the decision is best trained. These drills should simulate competitive performance situations. Each drill should be safe, developmentally appropriate and simulate conditions found in competition.

Step 3: Select one or more of the TD Too(s) that best trains the decision within the drill or activity.

The 7 Decision Training Tools

1. **Variable Practice:** requires the athlete learn a number of variations of a skill in a competitive setting
2. **Random Practice:** combines different skills of the sport within game-like drills that simulate
3. **Bandwidth Feedback:** feedback is gradually reduced or faded requiring the athlete to function more independent of external guidance
4. **Questioning:** requires asking questions that probe what the athlete understands about the drill, tactic or skill being trained
5. **Video Feedback:** the athlete views his or her own performance on video in order to detect what is done well and what needs to be improved
6. **Hard-First Instruction:** complex technical and tactical information is presented early in the season rather than later
7. **Modeling:** the athlete views and expert or other athletes in order to learn what is required to perform; this allows the athlete to learn how to analyze skills and strategies relevant to their sport.