

# Contextology – is this a new approach to effective coaching?

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## INTRODUCTION

Effective coaching is a constant battle for improvements, enhancing the quality of our coaching interactions and interventions, with the goal of developing the performance of our athletes. We have never before had so much information to ensure our approach is evidence-based. And yet anyone who has spent any time coaching in strength and conditioning knows that, despite this plethora of information, coaching remains a land of paradoxes and nothing like the theoretical utopia we are often presented with when studying the subject. The evidence-based approach we have spent hours developing doesn't produce the results we expect, and yet a far weaker programme on paper does. An autocratic style of coaching actually gets results in some scenarios, yet the exact same approach results in a toxic environment in others. We present our athletes with clear facts about the benefits they will gain from following the programme, yet they continue not to engage with strength and conditioning. How do we explain these paradoxes and more importantly what can we do to address them?

### The environment matters

Successful performance, whether of a team or an athlete is seldom, if ever, down to a single factor. Instead, it is dependent upon a whole panoply of factors, many intricately linked, with a dose of randomness and luck thrown in – all of which ultimately play out in a context-specific scenario. In this complex world, opportunities for improvement will be many and varied, but similarly, there will be many traps lying in wait which can doom even the best planned intervention. One challenge we face is our potential lack of awareness of these opportunities and – more worryingly – of the traps, many of which lie in plain sight, but require a different perspective before they come into view.

History is full of examples of factors that were hardly noticed, but once attention was paid to them became powerful tools. One such factor in strength and conditioning

is the way that the environment can influence the ultimate success of any training intervention.<sup>5</sup> Without the correct environment, no programme, no matter how well constructed, will ever have an optimal effect.<sup>4,5</sup> Simply put, the environment matters, yet in strength and conditioning the environment is often relegated to the role of something whose effect we have to 'control', so that its influence can be minimised and analysis can be placed upon what is important – the programme. As a result, we treat it with alarming insouciance. This is not to say that the programme is not important: it is of course, but it must not be viewed as the sacred tenet, enforced and analysed with monolithic certainty, that it currently is.

Our almost total emphasis on the programme as the delineator, results in a severely limited analysis and consequently, many of the paradoxes of strength and



conditioning elude explanation. Instead of thinking that the environment is something whose effect should be controlled, we should be inverting this to a mind-set where our goal is to manipulate and optimise the environment, in order to provide the necessary conditions to allow our programmes and our coaching to thrive, which provides a powerful new tool for our armoury – welcome to the world of contextology.

### **Contextology and its challenges**

One challenge we have with contextology is that, as the name suggests, it will be context-specific, and so there will be no universal solutions. Indeed, covering all potential solutions is simply not feasible in a short article. Instead, this article will simply aim to raise the awareness of the opportunity, outline the need for contextology and provide a framework around which to base analysis and entertain solutions. Hopefully, armed with this framework, the reader will be able to ponder a wider range of potential solutions to challenges and develop their own unique approaches to optimising performance.

### **BEWARE OUR BIASES**

Opportunities to enhance performance present us with an array of options, yet all too often we fail to capitalise on these or – even worse – even to be aware of them. Unfortunately, this is not surprising and is to an extent written into our developing strength and conditioning DNA. One of our enduring, but often overlooked, challenges is that we are tempted to see what we want to see, or perhaps increasingly what we are trained to see.<sup>4</sup> As a result, we often have a conceptual blindness, a problem that severely limits our ability to see factors outside our field of vision, leaving us unable to integrate potentially effective strategies into our work. Given our increased dependence upon academic training, we are encouraged to view the field through a reductionist lens – focusing on the impact of a training intervention, utilising a cause and effect mindset. Yet performance is not a linear entity and depends upon multifarious

factors. A failure to take these factors into account means that we will naturally have blind spots in our analysis, blind spots that can have potentially catastrophic effects on our ability to function and optimise our role as coaches. In essence, removing these blind spots can help us see, interact with, and move closer to understanding the complex reality of performance.

When explaining an event, we are naturally drawn to what is most salient, which is itself affected by proximity of space and time. In our case, this naturally draws us towards the programme and the events that happen in the direct implementation of that programme – important yes, but totally explanatory, probably not. A more effective analysis of performance requires that we look wider and deeper. Events that happen away from the training environment, factors that happen well before the current time, factors that affect beliefs, and factors that influence behaviour can all have a pervasive effect on the ultimate impact of any training intervention. What we need to do is to become aware of these factors, learn from them and, where possible, integrate the teachings into our work.

### **THE COMPLEXITY OF COACHING PEOPLE**

The predominantly linear lens we use to analyse, dissect and construct strength and conditioning interventions suffers from one simple factor – we coach people, people with diverse capacities, backgrounds, beliefs, motives, work ethics and so on. Although a linear approach works perfectly in a deterministic world, where behaviour is predictable and cause and effect reigns supreme, as soon as chaos raises its ugly head all bets are off, and we require a different type of analysis. People are beautifully unpredictable, often chaotic and subject to bifurcations – ie, abrupt changes in behaviour that hugely influence training, yet our conventional linear models fail to account for that. In this world the wheels can come off, and we often won't know when and similarly, we may not know why – this is the great frustration and beauty of what we do. Unless we start to understand context, we will always be at risk of these catastrophic events.

### **Moving from first to second principles**

It is often said that methods are many, but principles are few, and this is definitely true. There is no doubt that we should base all of our training around key scientifically validated principles. Frustratingly though,

even when we do this, we can never guarantee results and the demons of our paradoxes still raise their ugly heads. The idea of using first principles as a cornerstone of knowledge has a long tradition, extending back to the work of Plato, Socrates and Aristotle. Essentially, first principles thinking looks for the foundational knowledge that does not change and around which we can build our programmes. As a result, we base our programmes on the first principles generated through the lens of disciplines such as physiology or biomechanics – and yet the paradoxes still exist. Unfortunately, as already explained, we are coaching people, who bring their own unique abstractions to the table. So, although first principles are important, they cannot explain everything and as a result we often crucially fail to consider the challenges of execution. Simply put, our first principle models fall well short of fully representing the world we work in and as a result we often fail to utilise a sufficiently broad canvas of principles. Consequently, many potential solutions are left insufficiently exploited. To get closer to reality we have to expand our models beyond first principles and add second order thinking to our toolbox.

Second order thinking requires that we shift to a far wider-ranging analysis of the factors that affect performance: we need to focus on the likely challenges of implementation and the multitude of factors that have the potential to impact upon this.

Second order thinking involves thinking farther ahead and thinking holistically. It requires us to not only consider our actions and their immediate consequences, but critically the subsequent effects of those actions as well. Failing to consider the second order effects can unleash disaster, even in the best designed programmes. Effective thinking in strength and conditioning requires that first principle thinking is supplemented by second order thinking. We must be comfortable that the best solution generated through first order thinking may ironically be a poor choice when second order thinking is added to the mix.

#### **THE IMPORTANCE OF SENSITIVITY TO INITIAL CONDITIONS**

At first this may seem anti-scientific: how can the evidence-based solution not be the best option? Part of the explanation is interdependence. No training intervention is ever independent: it depends upon what has happened before, and what is happening right now – ie, the interdependency of things. Consequently, the result of any

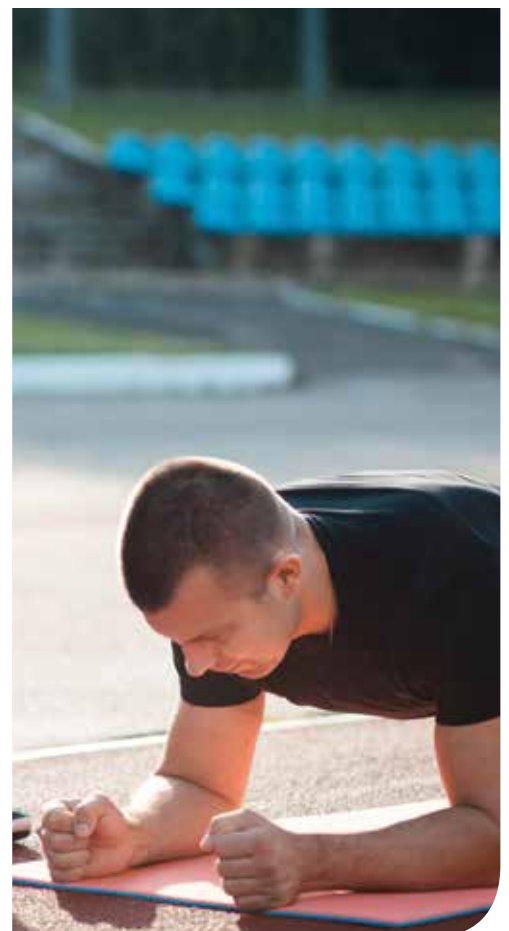
training intervention can never be solely analysed in and of itself, but instead requires an understanding of the principle of ‘sensitivity to initial conditions’. No matter how much we try to ‘control’ for starting conditions, there will always be a potentially large degree of variance. Even two athletes with the exact same physical characteristics may differ hugely in their training history, in their beliefs in strength and conditioning, in their behaviours towards the interventions etc – all factors that will ultimately affect the results of any intervention. In this way, unless we understand the context we can never fully evaluate the optimal solution. This undoubtedly adds significantly to the challenge of effective coaching yet, as Einstein said: ‘in the middle of every difficulty lies opportunity’. Viewing these contextual challenges as opportunities to positively affect practice opens up a range of potential solutions.

#### **The value of the pre-mortem**

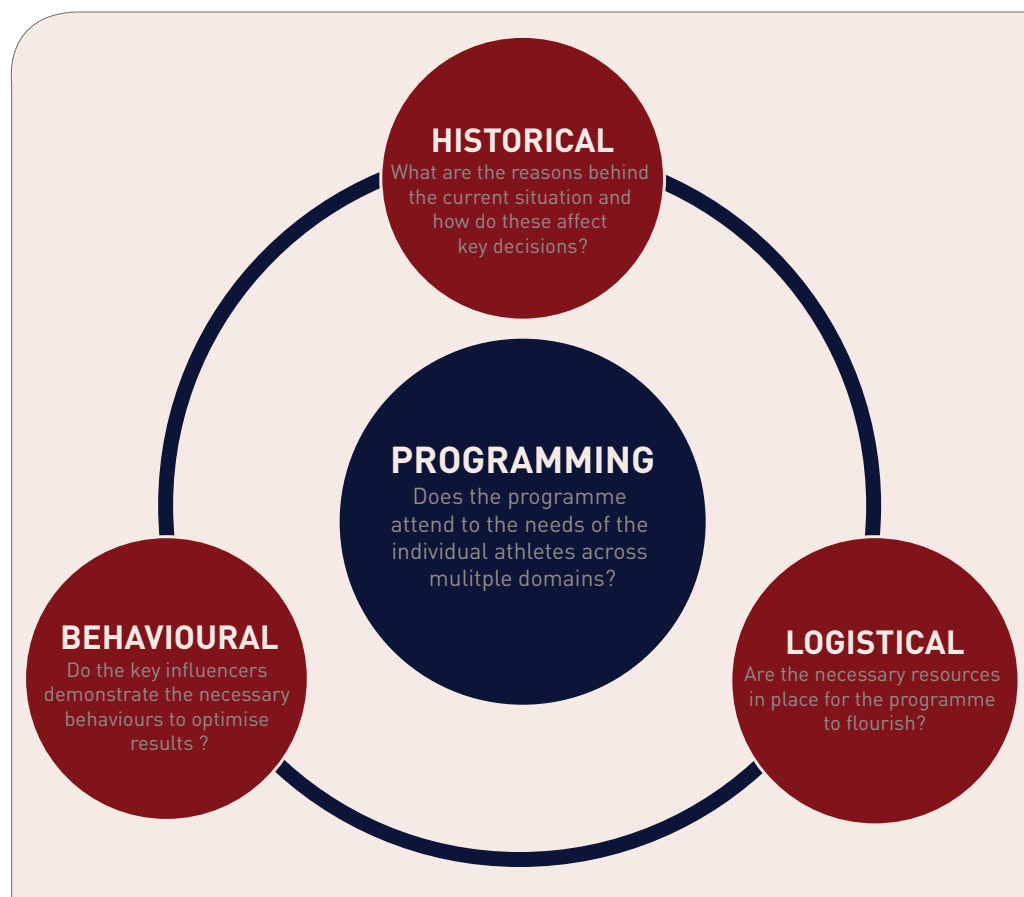
So how do we start to identify the likely players in this context? Here the pre-mortem, a concept developed by psychologist Gary Klein,<sup>6</sup> provides a potentially beneficial tool. Essentially the opposite of a post-mortem, the pre-mortem attempts to evaluate the range of factors that have the potential to derail a training programme, and to develop strategies to mediate for these in advance. Simply by asking two key questions – what could go wrong to stop this intervention working and what would need to be in place for this intervention to be most effective? – radically changes the analytical landscape.<sup>4</sup> Crucially, it starts to shift focus from a merely deterministic programming lens to one that evaluates the challenges and opportunities of execution.

#### **The need for multiple lenses**

Our issues with bounded rationality often result in sub-optimal, linear analysis of the reasons behind the success or failure of a training intervention. However, shifting from a deterministic to a systems analysis opens up new avenues of investigation



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**Figure 1.** Lenses through which to identify contextology opportunities

and new opportunities to impact practice. Critically, if our mental model of the system fails to include all of the contributory stocks and flows, we will always be at risk of being surprised by the system’s behaviour. Our first principle approach, focusing solely on the programme, means that too many contributory factors are overlooked and we are always at risk of the system shocking us. Consequently, huge opportunities to enhance our practice are lost. By developing a second order approach, examining multiple domains of function, we open up the analysis, allowing for a far greater range of potentially contributory factors to be considered and potentially applied.

To do this requires utilising a lattice work of models, drawing on multiple disciplines allowing us to get closer to the reality we face in our everyday practice. Importantly, we should feel comfortable utilising models drawn from disciplines not typically associated with strength and conditioning. As long as a model can enhance our clarity of thinking and help us make better decisions, then it can be considered a useful model. Figure 1 outlines the potential lenses through which to consider applying

contextology to generate the most effective solution. Although listed separately, these lenses should be considered as being intricately linked to the optimal decisions, which will require analysis from all four.

The programming lens looks at what is typically associated with strength and conditioning, identifying the athlete’s characteristics from disciplines such as physiological, biomechanical and motor control basis and identifying their key needs in relation to their sport/activity. This is built predominantly around first principles thinking, yet even here it is less than foolproof, as training often involves a farrago of methods, all of which have differing effects on the body’s systems, rather than the singular intervention on which much of our evidence is based.

Critically, this lens in isolation is insufficient and needs to be supplemented by other second principle lenses if the contextual best solution is to be generated. Using these second order lenses, factors such as the historical contexts, the potential impact of logistical issues and behavioural factors on the programme can be evaluated.



**Figure 2.** Characteristics of a high performance environment

The behavioural lens examines how the behaviours of all key influencers within the ecosystem contribute to, or subtract from, the training goal. Without consistent and high quality actions, no training programme can ever be successful. As a result, ensuring the correct behaviours are present is crucial and this may require modifying the solution generated from first principle thinking. Importantly, behaviours are themselves often driven by deep lying attitudes and beliefs and a failure to understand and address these can often lead to ineffective behaviours becoming endemic and consistently undermining the training interventions. Behavioural analyses should include reference to the coach themselves, other members of the S&C coaching team, the athletes, the wider coaching team, and indeed anyone who can influence the potential success of the programme.

The logistical lens will focus around whether the necessary resources are in place with which to deliver the programme. This will include analysis of diverse factors, such as the overall time allocation to the programme and how sacrosanct this is, the consistency of delivery opportunity, the time efficiency

of delivery, the provision of resources and so on. Where these are insufficient, programming may need to be adjusted and/or the resource implications addressed at the appropriate level.

The historical lens is technically not a separate lens in itself, but one that can be applied to the others to get a deeper understanding of the challenges. Behaviours, for example, are often dependent upon attitudes which can result from previous experiences. Understanding the historical context can help identify deep-seated attitudes to strength and conditioning, which may be preventing an athlete engaging in the programme.

Additionally, when viewed with the logistic lens, the lack of time dedicated to strength and conditioning may be down to issues with a previous regime and misunderstandings between the S&C team and the wider coaching team, that affects the underpinning attitudes to strength and conditioning. Understanding the historical contexts can help unearth the reasons behind behaviours and help generate appropriate solutions.

**‘although first principles are important, they cannot explain everything and as a result we often crucially fail to consider the challenges of execution’**

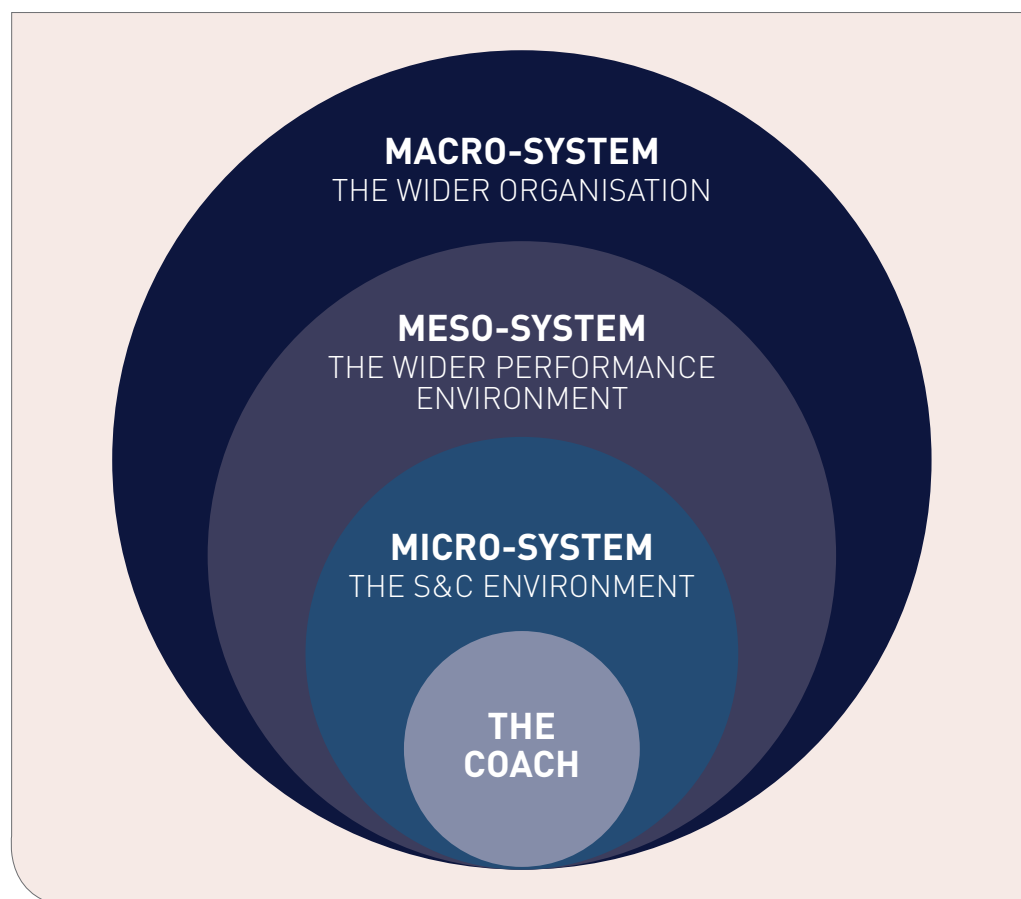


### High performance environments

As contextology involves manipulating the environment, to be optimally effective, it has to have an idea of what it aims to achieve and this requires an understanding of what constitutes a 'high performance' environment. Daniel Coyle, in his book *The Culture Code*,<sup>2</sup> outlines that high performance environments are not necessarily happy, light-hearted places; instead they are energised, engaged and focused on success. Often this involves candid debate and challenge, but eventually results in everyone pulling in the right direction. Ultimately, high performance environments are generally believed to demonstrate the following key characteristics (see Figure 2) and these provide a template around which to both assess and build our own ecosystem.<sup>3</sup>

- 1) **A clear vision:** a performance environment must have a clear vision. A vision of what it is, what it stands for, what it wants to achieve and how it will achieve this. Crucially, this vision needs to align to the wider ecosystem and also be communicated so that everyone is aware of the purpose of the programme.
- 2) **Challenge:** getting better demands that we shift out of our comfort zone and into a stretch zone: what Dave Alred calls 'getting ugly'.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, without a suitable level of challenge, there will never be optimal growth and the success of the programme will always be compromised.
- 3) **A supportive environment:** providing challenge is not as easy as it sounds. Moving into our stretch zone often exposes our weakness and can be a huge challenge to the ego. A supportive environment, or what Daniel Coyle calls a safe environment,<sup>2</sup> is crucial if an athlete is to feel comfortable regularly exposing themselves to the challenges required for improvement.
- 4) **High levels of motivation:** regularly moving into the stretch zone can be challenging and requires motivation. Often, this will be intrinsic in nature and driven by the athlete. However, there will undoubtedly be times where extrinsic motivation is needed. Understanding where this is needed, how it is delivered, and how the actions of each individual contribute to the overall motivation is a crucial part of effective contextology.

**Figure 3.** Layers of ecosystem function



5) **Effective communication:** high performance environments are facilitated by effective communication, communicating the right things at the right times, to the right people and through the right mediums. Analysing communication structures and systems and ensuring these are optimally functional is crucial to developing the performance culture.

Coaches can evaluate their ecosystem against the above to identify areas of strength and areas for possible development. Binding the above together it can be suggested that our performance ecosystem goal can be characterised through the following statement: 'This group is special and has high standards. You are a vital part of this group, and we believe you can reach our high standards and together we will reach our goals and achieve great things'.

### **The ecosystem – the key to applying contextology**

As explained earlier, contextology will ultimately be context-specific and as a result hard and fast rules are difficult to develop. So, although the above may be axiomatic, the challenge of execution looms large – what can I do? Effective action needs a structure or model around which to work, and the concept of strength and conditioning working within a training ecosystem can be beneficial.<sup>5</sup> Figure 3 outlines functioning levels of a training ecosystem, ranging from the smallest to the largest zones of functioning.<sup>4</sup> Clearly, the scope and nature of these will differ between organisations, but the overall structure provides a model around which to conceptualise challenges and opportunities.

At the centre of the ecosystem is the coach: this is the most controllable part of the ecosystem, and clearly has a huge potential to impact upon the overall success of any training programme. Indeed, in strength and conditioning we routinely fail to fully acknowledge the impact of a coach on the level of success of any programme, with this impact not even reported in many scientific papers. Yet in other fields the influence of the individual is acknowledged and often handsomely rewarded. Considering our own effects on the ecosystem, whether our actions and behaviours contribute to the goals, is a crucial part of developing the performance environment we crave. In general, as we move outwards from the centre, the overall influence of the S&C

coach decreases, yet the overall importance of each system to the overall functioning of the ecosystem increases.

Moving out from the coach, the next level of functioning is the microsystem. This can be thought of as the domain comprising the delivery of strength and conditioning. Importantly, this is not simply the weights room, but encompasses everywhere where a strength and conditioning interaction takes place. Clearly, effective and consistent actions are crucial in achieving optimal results and all of the lenses should be used to analyse the effectiveness of the microsystem across multiple domains.

The next level up is the mesosystem. Strength and conditioning seldom exists in isolation: it is part of a wider performance programme, typically dominated by the sport-specific programme. It must always be remembered that this level of function will always impact upon the ultimate success of any strength and conditioning programme. Decisions made here will affect multiple factors that will ultimately shape and influence what can and cannot be done, as well as influencing the type of behaviours that will be crucial to effective results. Understanding this, and taking appropriate actions to mediate negative flows, and positively affect stocks and flows, can make an enormous difference to the impact of any training intervention.

However, even the meso-system is often not the highest level of functioning. The macro system can be thought of as the highest organisational level of any sports entity. Here the ultimate decisions are made on areas such as funding, staffing, organisational structures and so on, that ultimately impact upon functioning at a meso and micro level. Decisions made at this level impact upon the overall purpose of the organisation and set the structures around which all levels must function. Indeed, one of the least noticed part of the ecosystem, but one which plays a fundamental role in its functioning, is the overall purpose as this profoundly affects function, even where every stock and flow remains the same. This is why understanding the ecosystem structure and its upper levels is crucial as, often, the 'purpose' will be set at a level far higher than that of the microsystem. Although an S&C coach is likely to have little, if any, impact upon functioning at this level, it is nevertheless important to be aware of what is happening in order to ensure optimal functioning within the structures. Where appropriate, aligning microsystem

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functioning to the overall organisational purpose can greatly enhance the likelihood of success.

### **Developing the micro-system**

Ultimately, the aim within the microsystem will be to develop an effective ‘culture’, where high quality actions lead to high quality outputs, and where everyone pulls in the same direction with a clear vision, and with clearly directed actions towards this vision. Clearly, this is the ultimate goal of any S&C programme. However, the term culture can be quite vague and its development undoubtedly takes time. Ultimately, culture will emerge from two key parameters: the development of excellent relationships, and the development of norms – or what can be thought of as standard operating procedures.

In terms of relationships, the key ones at this level of functioning are those with other S&C staff and athletes. Importantly, building relationships doesn’t necessarily mean personal relationships in the standard sense, but what Aristotle terms utility relationships – an exchange of expertise for effort. The words attributed to Theodore Roosevelt – ‘nobody cares how much you know until they know how much you care’ are often bandied about when it comes to relationships. These are undoubtedly important, and belonging cues are crucial in developing the safe environment in which athletes feel free to challenge themselves. However, and critically, once athletes know you care, they do care how much you know – or more accurately how much you can deliver on your words and their needs.<sup>3</sup> Credibility is crucial and it may be that it is the interaction between credibility and relationships that is crucial, and one without the other may always compromise coaching performance. Ultimately, effective utility relationships are built on clarity, trust and consistent actions. Communicating consistently to the athletes why the strength and programme is important, what it is trying to achieve and how this is being achieved is critical. Especially important is relating and aligning this to the athlete’s

needs, through clear and understandable communication. Similarly, the provision of honest and straightforward feedback is also crucial.<sup>4</sup> Simply put:

- 1) When they’ve done well – acknowledge it
- 2) When they are under pressure – support them
- 3) When they are not coming up to expectations – address it.

Critically, our interaction with athletes and coaches does not simply occur within the microsystem: it also occurs within the meso and macro-systems. We must ensure a consistency of action across all of these levels and at every interaction. Our relationships do not simply develop in our interactions within the micro-system; they occur at every exchange we have, even those that occur outside the ecosystem itself. We must also remember that so much of the success of the programme will depend upon decisions made by multiple agents across all levels of the ecosystem and, again, the utility relationships we build are ultimately crucial to the success we will engender. This is the value of the ecosystem approach as it widens our understanding of potential explanatory factors. Again, this reflects a challenge of trying to understand coaching interactions simply from an analysis of our interactions within a coaching session. Without understanding the wider relationship, an analysis of our coaching behaviours will always miss a higher level of analysis, whereby the behaviours are dependent upon the prior relationships that have been developed.

Relationships are a crucial element of building culture, but so are actions. Consistent actions, aligned to a clear purpose, are crucial to developing a performance culture. This requires the development and enforcement of norms – norms which span our own actions and behaviours, those of the athlete, and indeed of everyone involved in the micro-system operation. It is here that simple, and often at first glance banal, actions can be crucial, and add up to a far bigger effect than an analysis



of the actions themselves. Importantly, it is not necessarily the actions themselves but what they represent that are crucial. So, for example, a team returning all their weights to a clearly defined starting position is not just an action in itself but implies that they take pride in their environment, they have high standards and there are expectations on all to adhere to these standards. Similarly, having simple coaching actions for starting a session, running a session, ending a session and so on can be very impactful, especially when planned through a multi-lens lattice approach. Again, there is no magic formula for norms and this will vary between organisations and also over time. What is important is that the norms are clearly communicated and enforced for all.

### **Leverage points**

No matter how skilled we become, we will never be able to control a complex system totally and ultimately our goal should simply be to develop some ability to 'steer' the system. Fundamental to this is identifying the key leverage points - points at which actions will have the greatest impact. As stated previously, any training intervention is never independent and depends on a sensitivity to initial starting conditions. Importantly, this analysis should not simply focus on the stocks (the elements of the system), but should also focus on the flows (the interconnections) and the purpose of the system, in order to identify the major factors driving the programme forward and those holding it back.

Contextology ultimately aims to recognise the structures and flows that contain the required behaviours and what conditions release these behaviours; then it arranges and develops them in a way that maximises the likelihood of success. It is here that the law on the minimum proposed by the 19th century German scientist Justus von Liebig is especially useful. He summed it all up with: 'it doesn't matter how much nitrogen is available to the grain if what's missing is phosphorus'. What von Liebig identified is the leverage point, the factor that has the greatest potential to affect performance at any given time. Successful identification of leverage points can result in relatively small actions having very large effects. Clearly, an effective physical needs analysis will help to pinpoint the physical capacity that may offer the greatest performance potential, but this analysis alone may not identify the true leverage point, which may be identified through a different lens. Perhaps the crucial

factor at that point may be to change the athlete's belief in strength and conditioning, to facilitate the necessary behaviours, to convince the head coach to allocate greater time to strength and conditioning, and so on. Critically, leverage factors change over time, which explains many of the paradoxes we face. What is crucial is our ability to shift our emphasis from abundance onto the next potential limiting factor: this is when we start to gain a real control over the training process and fully utilise contextology.

### **To do or not to do – that is the question**

Interestingly, effective contextology is often as much about not doing as it is about doing. Our focus in strength and conditioning is naturally drawn to action, things we need to do to improve a situation. Clearly this is important, as by developing key actions we can look to address as many of the leverage factors that our analysis has identified. However, there is another approach that when added into the mix can be especially beneficial. This involves inverting the goal and looking at what actions and behaviours are holding the programme back and therefore need to be eliminated. So, rather than solely focusing on what actions we need to take to address a problem, effective contextology also looks at what actions that are currently being taken are actually eroding the culture and relationships we are trying to develop, and then eliminating these behaviours.

The concept of force field analysis, developed by psychologist Kurt Lewin in the 1930s, can be helpful for developing an effective contextology approach which essentially recognises that in any situation where change is desired, successful management of that change requires applied inversion. A condensed version of the process involves:

1. Asking what is the key objective of the programme
2. Identifying the actions that support improvement towards the objective and building on these, while identifying potential barriers to further development
3. Identifying the actions that are impeding progress towards the objective, and eliminating these
4. Developing a solution, identifying the key first steps and critical actions to optimise stage 2 and 3.

## The gardener coach

Perhaps the best analogy for the effective use of contextology is the concept of the gardener coach. The gardener knows that the growing process is about much more than simply planting and reaping. It is a varied process of observation, care and nurturing that responds to the context in both an anticipatory and reactionary nature. The process starts well before planting, where the ground is prepared to develop the maximal fertility to allow the seed to thrive. How much preparation depends upon the starting conditions: some years much more is needed than in others and some years planting may not even be possible and the land is left fallow. The time of planting will depend upon the internal conditions developed and the prevalent external conditions such as the weather. This will be timed in response to the information the gardener picks up from a range of sources and analysed through their tacit knowledge, built over years of practice. After planting there will be a regime of care and nurturing, providing the necessary conditions for optimal growth; in times of drought there will be watering, in times of wind there may be additional support, in times of frost a layer of insulation may be used. These are not pre-planned but instead respond to the characteristics of the environment and the plants' subsequent needs. The gardener knows implicitly that they are not creating growth but merely facilitating it through manipulating the environment in response to what they feel the plants need at any time. They are also acutely aware that, ultimately, there will be many factors that

they simply cannot account for and much will come down to luck - all they are doing is stacking the odds in favour of success. Importantly, a successful harvest this year is not a guarantee of success the following year, even if the same process is followed rigidly, as the challenges of the following year will be unique and require a similar, but different, approach. Gardeners are masters of contextology, and we can learn much from this approach, slowly but surely developing our ecosystem and stacking the odds in our favour.

## Summary

The success of any training programme will never be dictated solely by the programme alone. Instead, it will depend upon multiple factors, including crucially the context in which it is delivered, with a little bit of luck thrown in. Using contextology - manipulating the environment to maximise the likelihood of success - is a potentially powerful tool for any S&C coach. This ultimately involves addressing the following questions from a number of lenses: what things are we doing that are essential to our success and that we absolutely must not stop doing? What don't we do enough of, and why don't we do this more often? What don't we do that would really help, and why don't we do it? What do we do really badly and that we should stop as soon as we can, and what's preventing us from stopping it? Answering these questions through multiple lenses is the key to contextology and a way of immediately enhancing our coaching practice.

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