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Goalie Development Programme - GDP 2000

The Mentoring GCoach Model

April 2002

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The Mentoring GCoach

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The Mentoring GCoach¹

There are many forms that a Mentor can take. We will outline how we see the 'Mentoring GCoaches' role, within the Goalie Development Programme (GDP). In order to understand the requirements, we need to ask ourselves and then answer the following questions:

- ◇ Why mentoring?
- ◇ What is the mentors role outline?
- ◇ Who gains from Mentoring?
 - ⇒ Benefits for the learner (Goalie)
 - ⇒ Benefits for the mentor (GCoach)
 - ⇒ Benefits for the organisation (English Hockey, Region etc)

Why mentoring ?

We all recognise that there are a number of learning methods, which will appeal to different people for different reasons. Over recent times there have been a number of surveys, which have highlighted mentoring as one of these methods, both in business and in sport. However, when people are questioned they are unable, in most instances, to either give specific examples or clarify why they believe it to be a powerful medium.

The major factor is that many GCoaches have not had the opportunity to discover or develop more fully their expertise and capabilities in mentoring. We need to therefore look at the reasons why people feel that mentoring has the potential to be such a powerful organisational tool.

The following characteristics can help us to explore these reasons:

◇ It has flexibility

There are no set rules for the way in which mentoring takes place. The only certainty is that it needs 2 people. Clearly, there is a need to outline the guidance measures.

◇ It can be an off-line activity

It can take place outside the normal operational activity. It could be perceived as an informal activity, but by using the original guidelines, it forms an important part of the process.

◇ It does relate to the role within the team or group of Goalies

The focus is highly team and role related and therefore seen as practical

◇ It is individual

The needs and well being of the individual Goalie are taken in to account, which means that there is a personalised focus which group activities do not always achieve.

◇ It is Goalie centred

Which means it relates to the way Goalies are motivated and how they feel. It puts the individual's values into perspective and helps to understand the emotional processes somebody goes through at various stages in their development.

¹ GCoach is the *panda hockey* term for a Goalkeeping Coach

◇ **It is a feedback system**

As part of any process, the feedback an individual receives is a major factor in its success. Within the mentoring environment it is paramount to the success of the individual as it helps to focus attention onto key development areas, which will be continually monitored and counselled throughout the relationship.

◇ **It is all encompassing**

Mentoring can explore the whole range of the working environment. It will cover an individual's feelings and emotions, as well as the practical and technical skills and desired performance competencies.

◇ **It is not restrictive**

If we choose mentoring, we are not discarding the other learning methods. It will quite happily 'work' with the other methods and at the same time give added value to the process.

Overall, mentors are crucial to the success of the programme as they can exert great influence in developing the required attitudes and competencies to be a successful Goalie.

What is the mentors role outline ?

There are many descriptions of the roles and responsibilities that a mentor should undertake. It is our wish that we provide an outline of the allocated GKoaches role within the mentoring process. A number of verbs describe the role such as support, guide, facilitate etc. Significant actions that should take place include listening, questioning and enabling as opposed to telling and directing.

It must not be perceived that it is an easy task, but you will discover that the potential rewards are immense to the mentor, the Goalie and the relevant team or squad. In order for the relationship to be successful, we believe that the mentor needs to be:

- ◇ a good motivator, perceptive and able to support the objectives of the programme and thus fulfil their responsibilities to the learner (Goalie).
- ◇ unlikely to feel threatened by, or resentful of, the learners opportunities
- ◇ able to establish a good professional relationship, be sympathetic, accessible and knowledgeable about the Goalie Development Programme (GDP).
- ◇ sufficiently senior to be in touch with the relevant structure, sharing the English Hockey's or Regions values and able to share with the learner the necessary resources and information
- ◇ able to advise and instruct without interfering or prejudicing
- ◇ able to allow the learner to explore and pursue ideas even though they may not be ideal avenues

In very simplistic terms, everyone will gain. It is a two-way model, which means that it is very difficult for situations to become stale, as the interaction of both parties is required to ensure the process is effective. In spite of this global statement, there are individual focus groups of GKoaches and tutors, which need to be outlined by way of what mentoring can offer them.

⇒ **Benefits for the Learner (Goalie)**

We already encourage that Goalies are responsible for their own learning & development. In addition to this, we will support the learning and development by designing appropriate training programmes to satisfy the learning and developmental needs.

Again, it must be stressed that individuals need to be increasingly seeking new sources of guidance and information. English Hockey naturally encourages these behaviours, purely by the changing nature of the game.

The main benefit to the Goalie is that they receive support and guidance throughout the GDP process. There will be specific benefits to individuals depending on the mentoring relationship, but overall with the original guidelines adhered to throughout, the overall benefit will be the successful completion of the GDP and advancement into the 'arena' of International, National League or Regional Hockey and being a competent Goalie.

We need to consider the generic benefits, which are likely to amass for any Goalie who goes through the programme. These may include the following benefits:

1. A more global GKoaching outlook

Mentoring should enable a Goalie to build a greater understanding of how the team operates and the playing culture it is trying to create. The more knowledge they can attain outside of their own sphere of influence, the chances that they will become part of the culture will be enhanced.

We must not forget that the 'animal' we call Hockey is fast moving and Goalies are very much part of that continual shift in prowess. We have seen a number of rules in the last 10 years or so, which have focused in to the Goalies sphere of influence. The Goalie will also begin to, not only collect information and build networks, they will also understand the processes and structures involved. This will assist in the global development of the Goalie if they move geographically or through Club migration

2. Individual benefits

A good focused mentor - learner relationship is no different from any other relationship, it will enable both parties to derive the satisfaction that we human beings need. The individual feelings and emotions will be better understood and the positive side of self confidence and respect will be enhanced through feedback - especially as a Goalie increases their skill and capability levels.

3. Learning and development outcomes

The quality of these outcomes will be dictated by the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship.

4. Development of skills

The feedback and the relationship will enhance the Goalie ability and desire to develop the skills

5. Playing career benefits

These are one of the main reasons why we would wish to undertake a mentoring programme within GDP. The relationship developed at this stage will assist in any future playing career developments.

6. Assistance in problem solving

By sharing problems and situations at this early, or in rare cases, late stage in their playing careers, Goalies will be better placed to tackle future problems for themselves.

7. Strengths and weaknesses

We have already mentioned this through objective and focused feedback. By analysing these areas at this stage it will help in understanding the learning and development needs as part of a continuous process.

⇒ *Benefits for the mentor (GKcoach)*

GKcoaches are being encouraged to take a more active role in not only developing themselves, but also their own teams. As an organisation, we are already seeing GKcoaches become facilitators and supportive of learning & development. As we move into mentoring, GKcoaches will also need to look at the development and application of those skills. In respect of the Goalie Development Programme (GDP), we are outlining guidance which is based on good mentoring techniques, but specific to our needs.

As with the benefits to the Goalie, the benefits to the GKcoach will be determined by the success of the mentoring relationship. In this case we are looking at using GKcoaches, who may not come from the same club or part of the organisation (once removed) and therefore, the situation becomes specific with regard to performance, capability and development

We still need to look at the generic benefits that exist of which the main one is:

◇ *Personal development*

The opportunity is in place for the emphasis of the mentoring relationship to be of as much value to the Goalie as the GKcoach. The role will also create situations that will encourage both the Goalie and GKcoach to work together towards a satisfactory solution.

⇒ *Benefits for the organisations (English Hockey, Regions etc)*

We are looking at the mentoring process to be a methodical approach to assist in providing a skilled and focused Goalie after approximately 18 months or 2 seasons. If this is achieved then this will be the main benefit to the organisations.

Again, there are generic benefits and mentoring will be a part of the lattice of support. The benefits include:

1. Exceptionally GKoached & trained Goalies

The support given by the mentoring process will have assisted in allowing the Goalie the opportunity to focus on the GDP.

2. Development of an effective communication structure

Within the GDP there is scope to establish effective communication networks. The mentoring relationship will enhance those opportunities by ensuring that the knowledge and experience gained will assist in the development of new productive and supportive relationships, which will be role and team orientated.

3. Part of the GKoaches development process

The experiences gained will contribute positively to any solutions to scenarios, which may form part of the GKoaches own development programme.

4. Development of the learning culture

We have already stated that mentoring is part of the learning processes. By enhancing the individual's desire for learning, it will provide support towards the establishment of a focused learning culture within the Goaleeing² fraternity.

Conclusion

The word 'culture' has appeared many times in this model. To change that culture, we need time. We can ensure we manage that time better by providing trained and dedicated Mentors to work with the individual Goalies.

It won't happen overnight and it won't happen in one season! But, we will see and be able to evaluate effectiveness as soon as we start to share the experiences which GKoaches, Mentors and Goalies have.

We will all develop and evolve and thus benefit from this attached and focussed involvement. There will be risks, but if we manage those risks by managing the expectations which go with them, the benefits of a mentoring culture will provide the harvest we long for, for many years to come.

² Goaleeing is the *panda hockey* term for Goal Keeping