

The Development & Review of Coaches' Duty Statements

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This article presents a procedure that can be used to review the existing work practices of coaching staff in relation to the expectations of the coach's original duty statement. The tools involved have been developed for and used with the coaching and executive staff of several state and national team programs and professional sporting organisations. This material is offered for your usage, experimentation, and modification.

The Roles & Responsibilities of Elite Coaches

It does not take much effort to identify the types of activities that elite coaches prefer to do and/or are expected to carry out on a daily basis. The concern is just how long the list is.

| | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Meeting with owners / management | Financial planning |
| Dealing with national sporting organisation | Planning athlete careers |
| Planning practices | Reviewing competition efforts |
| Conducting practices | Athlete counselling |
| Conducting / attending staff meetings | Administrative preparation |
| Interacting with media | Technical committee meetings |
| Strategic development | Drill development |
| Competition day direction | Dealing with teachers / employers |
| Servicing sponsors | Future planning |
| Dealing with parents / family | Coach education |
| Co-ordinating injury rehabilitation | Public relations program |
| Professional development | Enforcing discipline code |
| Programming athlete conditioning & development | Reading & keeping up to date |
| Crisis management | Athlete & program goal setting |
| Dealing with competition officials | Game / competition coaching |
| Equipment purchase & maintenance | Liaising with support programs |

Table 1 - The professional coach's functions, duties & responsibilities

You will be using this list in the exercises that follow, so you should take a few minutes to add any further activities that make up your working day / week.

Reviewing Your Duty Statement

In order to effectively review your present duty statement, some important questions must first be addressed :

- Where do you find yourself spending most of your coaching time at present ?
(Circle the activities that take up most of your time)
- What priority do you attach to the various ways you spend your time ?
(Identify 5 high priority activities with a "H", 5 low priority areas with an "L")
- Do you have full control over these priority decisions ?
(Mark any activity that you are forced to carry out with an "F")
- Do you have a system to check your time expenditure and priority planning ?
- What priority pressures have you experienced within your organisation in relation to these activities / responsibilities ?

The steps that follow assume that there is some difference (often considerable) between what you are expected to do and what your job actually involves on a daily basis. Position statements are usually developed with a purpose in mind, not an individual, and they are often developed without the benefit of anyone actually working in the environment the position must operate in. If your job has grown to be something quite different from the one you started in, this exercise is for you.

Review Step 1 - What is your Duty Statement ?

Do you have a duty statement ?

*Is it in the filing cabinet somewhere ?
Did you ever actually get one when you started the job ?
Who wrote it ?
Have you read it recently ?
How well do you think it represents what you do from day to day ?*

If you have a duty statement, have it close to hand. Whether or not you have a duty statement, if you have not done so yet, complete your list of Duties, Roles & Responsibilities. If the document you are looking at goes for pages, write down the key areas. If your version is a little simpler, you might care to add some of the unstated expectations from your organisation.

Is there a plan in your organisation for regular review of your duty statement ?

*Has the document been reviewed since you began working there ?
Has anyone from the organisation expressed a concern that your duty statement should be reviewed ?
What is your attitude to the possibility of your work structure & practice being reviewed ?
Is there a time each year where you formally discuss your roles & responsibilities with your organisation ?*

Who reviews your performance as a coach ?

*How do you feel about that person / committee reviewing your work ?
Do these reviews only cover selected aspects of your performance ?
Have you felt satisfied with the outcome of these reviews ?
Have these reviews been used against you ?*

Have you recently negotiated adding / deleting functions within your duty statement ?

*When ? What process was used ?
If your attitude is "why bother", then what are you bringing into play some years down the line in terms of someone new to the organisation challenging what you do ?
Who would you approach to make these changes ?
What would their attitude be ?*

If you are ready to re-negotiate your present role and expectations, you will find the next step very useful. Preparation is essential in any negotiation process.

Step 2 - Checking Your Present Duty Statement in Detail

To complete this exercise you will need to have your duty statement handy, or at least a list of the functions and duties you presently carry out or that you are expected to carry out. You will also need a couple of copies of the worksheet page headed "Coaching Activity Review - Duty Statement Planning".

For each daily activity or expectation you can identify, ask yourself :

- Do you currently perform this function / carry out this duty ?

Your Job ? Y N (*circle appropriate answer*)

This is simply asking whether you do this activity daily, weekly, or monthly.

- Is this area represented in your duty statement ?

Duty Statement ? Y N

You may carry out the function regularly, but it may not be included in your statement of duties. Of course, you might also find items in your duty statement that are not part of your present job.

Is this activity essential, useful, or just a distraction ?

Useful ? E U D

This is partly asking about the time pressures you experience as a result of having to carry out this duty, and partly asking about your attitude to that aspect of daily work. You may find that some activities are an essential distraction! Others may just be useful, or just a distraction. We are starting to address the essential priority issues of your present work practices.

Is this activity preferred or not preferred ?

Preferred ? Y N

If you "had your druthers" would you be doing that activity ? What are you really saying about an activity that you describe as an essential distraction that is non-preferred ? If it is not how you would prefer to spend your time, do you have some means of ensuring that it is carried out ?

Does this activity consume heaps of your time, some, or very little ?

Time Consum ? H S L

Just consider how much of your week the activity takes up. You choose what time frame you are referring to when you indicate "Heaps", etc.

Should / do you do this job or should you delegate some or all of this function ?

Delegate ? H/C DelS Del

This is asking both what SHOULD you delegate as well as what are you prepared to delegate. If you are in a position to delegate functions, this filter gives an insight into your ability to let go, as well as an indication of your attitudes & preferences towards certain activities. DelS indicates that you are delegating SOME of the activity, use Del for total delegation.

It will take at least a couple of hours to complete this exercise properly. You may choose to come back to it several times. You should work through this process for each activity that you carry out. If nothing else, the process provides a useful personal review of work practice and attitude.

In order to clarify the process, let us consider an example. Take the activities that can be listed under the heading "Reading & Keeping Up to Date". Have you ever been accused of wasting time by sitting and reading the newspaper ? Was your reaction something like "Who has time for that !" ? How well do you allocate time to these activities ? Here could be one coach's answers.

Reading & Keeping Up to Date

| | | | | |
|------------------|------------|----------|----------|-------------------------------------|
| Your Job ? | Y | N | | But others don't understand why |
| Duty Statement ? | Y | N | | It would be easier for me if it was |
| Useful ? | E | U | D | I need to be better organised |
| Preferred ? | Y | N | | That's part of the problem |
| Time Consum ? | H | S | L | I need to set aside time each week |
| Delegate ? | H/C | DelS | Del | I need to know |

How would you manage this coach if they were in your program ? Clearly the process gives insights into work practices, attitudes, and personal preferences.

After you have completed the exercise for each activity you are involved in, go back through your worksheet page(s) and number the activity areas from

- 1-5 to indicate your most preferred activities
- A-E to indicate your least preferred activities
- *1-*3 to indicate your 3 biggest time consumers
- !1-!3 to indicate the 3 activities you would most like to spend more time doing

If you have not got enough information to proceed with a review of your duty statement already, you may care to consider the next step.

Step 3 - Building a Working Job Description

There are 4 suggested procedures here. First, go back to the list of headings of work activities, cross out the ones you do not do, and then number the activity areas using 100, 200, 300, etc (this allows you to number code related activities as 110, 120, 121, 122, 130).

In order to make some decisions about when and if particular activities be done, we need to look at 2 priority filters. Using the list of numbered activities, work through the following filters to develop an overview of exactly what the job should involve.

Write down the numbers of activities under these headings, from the perspective of the worker in relation to getting the job done :

- Must be done every day
- Must be done every week
- Must be done every month
- Should do / would like to do every day
- Should do / would like to do every week
- Should do / would like to do every month

Don't forget to add more specific activities as you think about them. For instance if 800 is "Dealing With the Media", 810 may be Initiating Contacts, 820 may be Regular Telephone Conversations, 821 may be with a specific print journalist, 822 with a radio commentator, etc.

Next go back to the list of coded activities and write down the numbers under these headings :

- High Priority to Organisation / Program
- Medium Priority to Organisation / Program
- Low Priority to Organisation / Program

What remains is to build a weekly operational plan, to re-write the Duty Statement, and to develop review procedures specific to the position.

To develop a weekly operational plan, you will need a page with a space for each day of the week. For the activities that can or must be "locked in", enter the code number into the appropriate day and time. Clearly it becomes difficult if not impossible to make specific recommendations as to the next steps as each position will have its own unique features.

However, the decisions as to what activities must go into each week will most probably have been made when you considered the filters at the start of this section.

Sample Re-Worked Duty Statement & Review

This is the "simplified" Duty Statement of the Assistant Coach of an Australian professional team presented in the context of the review procedure that was developed in relation to the position. You will note the addition of the concept of primary & secondary responsibilities - indicating how this position should interact with other staff members in the organisation.

| Assistant Coach | | | | | |
|---|------|---|----------|---|--------------|
| Period December - July | | | | | |
| 1. Overall Performance of Primary & Secondary Duties | | | | | |
| | Poor | | Adequate | | High Quality |
| | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| Assist in development & documentation of weekly & 1 daily team operational plans & practices | | | | | |
| Conduct individual skill training sessions | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Monitor & direct skill change / maintenance programs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Supervise & facilitate conditioning & phys prep of players | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Run components of team trainings | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Maintain & update a file on upcoming junior players 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| Maintain contact on a monthly basis by mail & telephone to these junior players | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Provide daily liaison between Dev & Full playing programs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Video-tape editing | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Management / direction of individual game review | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Assistant at games & trainings | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Conditioning coach of Dev - attend & document all Full conditioning sessions | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Preparation of statistical/tactical anal of players, opposition | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Drill development | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Assist team equip/uniform needs under direction of Team Mgr | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Assist in player injury rehab under direction of Team Mgr, facilitate recovery programs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Table 2 - Professional Assistant Coach's Duty Statement Review

2. Time Allocation

During this review period what % of weekly time have you spent on carrying out the functions of Assistant Coach ?

What % of this time have you spent on :

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|
| Team Operation ? | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| Individual Training Sessions ? | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| Monitoring / Directing Skill Change ? | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| Supervising Cond & Physical Prep ? | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| Running Components of Training ? | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| Liaising With Juniors & Dev Team ? | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| Video-tape Editing | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| Individual Game Review | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| Assisting Head Coach - Training & Game | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| Conditioning Dev Team | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| Preparing Statistical & Tactical Info | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| Drill Development | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| Assist Mgr - Equipment & Uniform | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |
| Assist Mgr - Recov & Injury Rehab | 10 | 20 | 30 | 40 | 50 | 60 | 70 | 80 | 90 | 100 |

(Should total 100%)

What % of time SHOULD you have directed to these areas ?

What time & activity recording systems do you use ?

Give a report on your actual time expenditure.

Table 3 - Time Management Review linked to Duty Statement

3. Duty Statement Review

What are your 3 most preferred functions / duties ?

What are your 3 least preferred functions / duties ?

Are there any aspects of the duty statement that have turned out to be irrelevant ?

Are there any aspects of your daily operation that are not fully / properly represented in the duty statement ?

Table 4 - General Duty Statement Review

4. Operational Review

What are the biggest sources of frustration in the operation of the team ?

Where does the best support for the operation of the team come from ?

What aspects of the support staff operation most need review / change ?

What are the best aspects of the support staff operation ?

What new direction(s) should the team operation take in the next phase of the year ?

Describe the relationship between the team's on-court vs off-court organisations.

Table 5 - Interview Script for Operational Review linked to Duty Statement

5. Personal Performance

What has been your biggest contribution during this review period ? Why ?
 What would you say about your average program contribution during this period ?
 Which aspect of your role has been least emphasised during this review period ?
 Why has this happened ?
 Comment on your dealings with players & coaches during this review period.
 How well have you used / worked with / directed the support staff ?
 How well have you delegated authority / responsibility during this review period ?
 What have you done to assist the Head Coach review / modify game tactical
 & strategic performances ?
 How much have you enjoyed carrying out these duties during this review period ?
 Why are you doing all this hard work ?
 What does being associated with this Organisation mean for your professional career ?
 Do your career and season plan goals still mean as much to you ?
 Is your attitude & approach to training & player preparation and this competition
 doing justice to your career and season plan goals ?
 Are there any other comments / observation you have in relation to this review ?
 What of the future - what changes / improvements do you intend to make ?

Table 6 - Performance Review Interview - linked with Duty Statement

Summary & Recommendations

This article has detailed a procedure that has proven effective in reviewing the existing work practices of coaching staff, and in developing more precise job specifications and performance review materials. Whilst each coach's position is somewhat unique, the suggested procedures and steps provide a useful starting point for systematic review.

Duties, Roles & Responsibilities

Do you have a duty statement ?


Is there a plan in your organisation
for regular review of your
duty statement ?

Who reviews your performance
as a coach ?

Have you recently negotiated
adding / deleting functions
within your duty statement ?

When ?

What process was used ?





Coaching Activity Review - Duty Statement Planning

| Activity / Function | Your Job ? | Duty Statement ? | Useful ? | Preferred ? | Time Consum ? | Delegate ? | Rankings & Ratings |
|---------------------|------------|------------------|----------|-------------|---------------|------------|--------------------|
| | Y N | Y N | E U D | P N/P | H S L | HC DS D | |
| | Y N | Y N | E U D | P N/P | H S L | HC DS D | |
| | Y N | Y N | E U D | P N/P | H S L | HC DS D | |
| | Y N | Y N | E U D | P N/P | H S L | HC DS D | |
| | Y N | Y N | E U D | P N/P | H S L | HC DS D | |
| | Y N | Y N | E U D | P N/P | H S L | HC DS D | |
| | Y N | Y N | E U D | P N/P | H S L | HC DS D | |
| | Y N | Y N | E U D | P N/P | H S L | HC DS D | |
| | Y N | Y N | E U D | P N/P | H S L | HC DS D | |
| | Y N | Y N | E U D | P N/P | H S L | HC DS D | |
| | Y N | Y N | E U D | P N/P | H S L | HC DS D | |
| | Y N | Y N | E U D | P N/P | H S L | HC DS D | |
| | Y N | Y N | E U D | P N/P | H S L | HC DS D | |
| | Y N | Y N | E U D | P N/P | H S L | HC DS D | |
| | Y N | Y N | E U D | P N/P | H S L | HC DS D | |
| | Y N | Y N | E U D | P N/P | H S L | HC DS D | |
| | Y N | Y N | E U D | P N/P | H S L | HC DS D | |
| | Y N | Y N | E U D | P N/P | H S L | HC DS D | |
| | Y N | Y N | E U D | P N/P | H S L | HC DS D | |
| | Y N | Y N | E U D | P N/P | H S L | HC DS D | |

Do you currently perform this function /
carry out this duty ? Y / N

Is this area represented in your duty statement ? Y / N

Is this activity essential, useful, or
just a distraction ? E U D

Is this activity preferred or not preferred ? P / NP

Does this activity consume heaps of your time,
some, or very little ? H S L

Should / do you do this job or should
you delegate some or all of this function ? H/C DeIS Del

Go back through page and number from

1-5 your most preferred activities

A-E your least preferred activities

*1-*3 your 3 biggest time consumers

!1-!3 the 3 activities you would most like
to spend more time doing

Weekly Activities (numbered)

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

Must do every day

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

Must do every week

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

Would like to do every day

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

Would like to do every week

| |
|--|
| |
|--|

Developing a Job / Duty Statement

| | |
|---|--|
| S | |
| S | |
| M | |
| T | |
| W | |
| T | |
| F | |

Priorities

| | | |
|------|--------|------|
| Low | Medium | High |
| | | |
| High | Medium | Low |

Performance Enhancement Systems

Knowledge of Sport

Leader

Concerned for Individual

Technically Innovative

Qualified

Interpersonal Skills

Inquisitive Nature

Disciplined

Personal Life in Balance

Knowledge of Equipment

Works with Pro Consultants

Understands & Respects Risks

Empathetic

Biomechanical Mind

Understands Coach's Role

Time Management Skills

Qualities of Effective Coaches

Teaching Skills

Patience

Respected by Officials

Vision

Clearly Identified Personal Goals

Tactically Creative

Student of Human Behaviour

Planning Skills

Knowledge of Athlete Preparation

Knows Limitations

Works within Professional Role

Professional Role

Sense of Humour

Knowledge of Rules

Teachers

Campaign
Debriefing

Parents /Family

Event

Debriefing

Interpersonal
Skills

Education

Diet

Tactical
Skills

Time

Teamwork

Flexibility

Management

Technique / Style

Equipment

Season Plan

Technical
Understanding

Motivation

Emotional
Control

Coach's Role :
Master
Programmer

Attitude

Recovery

Confidence

Self-Esteem

Career Plan

Competition
Preparation

Friend

Strength

Injury
Management

Fitness

Discipline

Training
Program

Competition
Plan

Reactions
to Officials