

Some recent work with decision-makers

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Three scissors of different sizes being chased on black background



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I have reached the stage when I have learned to 'cut to the chase' with all decision-makers. I have tried the diplomatic route which has failed too many times. The following are notes from recent meetings to let the practitioners in the field know that the bureaucracy is getting the facts delivered to them sometimes.

1. This from my slides of a summary at the end of a presentation to a well-known National Sporting Federation:

"In the last 10 years I have observed the following actions from you as a Board of Management:

More investment in written strategies and pathways.

The creation of more HP Squads and Camps.

Investment in more Talent Identification.

More overseas visits to see what other countries are doing.

More investment in technology.

The creation of more Directors, Managers, Committees and administrators to support them.

All actions that are convenient and easy for you to create and administer.

You continue to maintain a system that sees Development and High Performance as two separate entities yet do nothing when they continue to drift apart at a terrifying rate.

I leave you with one question - when will you invest appropriate human, physical and financial resources directly at the place where the athletes and coaches interact?"

Needless to say, I am not expecting another invitation to address them. All they do is just enough so they think they have a clear conscience.

2. Some of my notes from a Leadership presentation to senior business leaders: I am betting that these thoughts will still be pertinent in decades from now.

"Maybe things might change for the better if NGB 'management' were to become more engaged and aligned with the coaches and athletes. With career bureaucrats now flourishing in the sporting decision-making environment, it is unlikely that this will happen. Management must know and share the beliefs of the coaches and athletes; agree and embrace the definition of success of all echelons of the athlete/coach continuum; understand what enables and blocks progress along this continuum. It may be of benefit for management to see the coaches and athletes as the customer as opposed to seeing themselves or sponsors and service providers as such. By creating a strategy of co-ownership between management and the customer (coaches and athletes) the issues holding the sport back may well be reduced. The precarious balance between the need for challenge (increased participation; increased quality and depth of performance) and the need for support (maximising quality at coach/athlete interface along the entire continuum) could, under such a management system, be optimised. While the 'customers' cry out to have their voices heard, current management remains in their silo."

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