

Coaching from the top of a Double Decker Bus

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I am reading Good Ideas – How to Be Your Child’s (and Your Own) Best Teacher by the excellent Michael Rosen and one of his many wonderful analogies covers the different view you get of life from the top of a double decker bus, travelling down streets and areas that you know well and see most weeks. However, from this different vantage point, you see very things very differently and, as Rosen points out, can be a great source of new questions, perspectives and insight into things you think you know so well (I have found the same thing when looking at our house from our neighbours' back garden...give it a try!)

After reading [Blake Richardson's](#) recent post around [embracing technology](#), it started me thinking and reflecting more about how useful it is to gain different perspectives on your coaching session - both from your own different viewpoint, as well as how others view what you see.

To be effective in judging situations and making the beneficial decisions, our perception (the process of gaining relevant and correct information) informs our decisions – the identification of what the ‘problem’ is, and the solution to solve it. To enable us to ensure the action we take is the most relevant and constructive, it is vital that our judgements are based on clear and correct perceptions and the solution is implemented effectively. This in turn would lead to (hopefully) positive outcomes and consequences in the development of our athletes and sessions. (Based on Professional Judgement and Decision Making, adapted from Abraham and Collins, 2011)

Some top tips:

- Film from different angles to get an all-round view - if you look at the same thing the same way, you only ever see the same thing. Add in a video source or two, and even different types as a wide ranging view, close up shots or smaller cameras like a Go Pro. This enables you to collect a whole host of information to support your coaching such as identification of key technical points, a wider tactical view and how it looks to others.
- Change your own coaching position – watching practice and games from the same position will always mean you see the same thing from the same angle. From simply kneeling down to get a lower view, or finding a higher vantage point, the information you see will change. A great example of this is by sitting in different seats within a stadium to watch a game. You see so much more from varying your viewpoint
- Don't take the video capture as the be all and end all of analysis – utilise other sources of data such as sound clips and data statistics, and simply talking things through
- Understand the 'story' behind the performance - why is the outcome the way it is (e.g. injury, weather, stage of development. When linked to the other data, it can often support understanding of why something is the way it is.
- Involve others in the process – engage views from other coaches, support people and even parents – you may be missing or overlooking something obvious – You can't always see the wood for the trees and all that...
- Don't take the practice analysis as the only data – practice development and ‘real’ performance development can be very different – it may be easier to make the shot when you repeat the skill, or when you have the conditions to practice. Can you do it when the pressure is on, the environment is

different and it means the most (I can't take all the credit here as our fellow Connected Coaches member [Sarah Bennett](#) highlighted this)

- Always get the athlete to look at the video too - self-understanding and correction can have a big impact that being told - and creates a thinking player - as a coach you are creating an environment of learning, it doesn't mean you have to be the one telling that, merely providing the platform... My primary school teacher wife has found the use of tablets in PE to have a positive impact, both on the children's development and the overall impact of the lesson, as a means of instant feedback, review and adaptation.

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