

PLO Artifact # 3 Reflection

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SPP6570: Capstone

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PLO #3 : Demonstrate, through presentation and in writing, the development of a professional consulting philosophy integrating psychology, sport science, and counseling.

Artifact: SPP 6230: Mental Skills Training Curriculum.

Introduction

The artifact which best highlight the achievement of PLO #3 is the Mental Skills Training Curriculum I created in SPP 6230. This curriculum is an articulate and organized approach that was crucial to developing my consulting philosophy. The purpose of the assignment was to design a mental performance curriculum demonstrating both conceptual understanding and applied skill. At the time, I was still forming my identity as a consultant, drawing heavily from psychology, sport science, and counseling theory to build something that felt authentic and grounded. This artifact is meaningful because it reflects a framework that integrates cognitive, emotional, and physiological principles with the lived experiences of athletes. Now, nearing the end of the program, I can see how this artifact reflects early strengths, early gaps, and the emergence of my professional voice. It also shows how my consulting philosophy evolved through academic learning, applied practice, and real interactions with athletes in my community.

Theoretical Foundations

The curriculum was originally informed by several theories and models that shaped my early understanding of human performance. Cognitive Behavioral Theory and Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy helped me understand the role of thoughts, beliefs, and interpretations in performance outcomes. Self Determination Theory shaped how I viewed motivation and the importance of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in athlete development. Mindfulness frameworks, including the Mindfulness Acceptance Commitment approach and MSPE, informed

my understanding of present moment awareness, emotional regulation, and psychological flexibility. Attentional Control Theory and related principles guided my early ideas on focus, arousal regulation, and the interaction between body and mind.

When I created the curriculum, my understanding of these concepts was accurate but largely descriptive. I knew the definitions and mechanisms, and I could explain why each theory mattered. What I had not yet developed was the deeper integrative reasoning that now guides my work. I can now synthesize these theories as part of an intervention, rather than separate pieces. The curriculum explains how cognition, emotion, physiology, motivation, and environment intersect to influence performance. I also applied counseling principles, such as empathy, unconditional positive regard, developmental sensitivity, and cultural responsiveness. The curriculum is very reflective of how I still use CBT and REBT to create effective mental skills training programs.

Artifact Significance and Insights

The Mental Skills Training Curriculum is significant because it is a complete intervention sequence aligned with my philosophy of performance excellence. It helped me build the basis for my TOPE. I believe that high performance requires full physical preparation, joy in the activity, awareness of thought, emotion, and physical cues, and the ability to regulate those states in the moment are crucial to performance excellence and the curriculum allowed me to articulate how to translate these ideas into lessons, activities, and progressions for athletes.

Through the creation of the curriculum, I gained insight into how theory shapes practice and how a consulting philosophy must be both evidence based and responsive to the athlete. I learned that mental skills cannot be taught in isolation and that athletes benefit when skills build

on one another in a logical and meaningful sequence. I also saw how foundation principles are the key to learning more advanced techniques and influence how interventions are delivered.

Strengths, Weaknesses, and Challenges

A major strength of the curriculum is the clarity and organization with which I structured the lessons. I translated theoretical concepts into practical teaching methods. I demonstrated a strong grasp of motivation, confidence, attention, and emotional regulation and attempted to embed these concepts in developmentally appropriate ways. There is also strength in the human centered tone of the curriculum. Even then, I emphasized supporting the athlete as a person, not just as a performer.

However, the weaknesses really lie in the lack of application. I sometimes struggled to truly understand why certain interventions were chosen or how they should be adapted based on cultural, contextual, or developmental differences. The curriculum was structured, but at times too structured, because I had not yet developed the flexibility that comes with applied experience. My early approach lacked some of the nuance required for coach relationships, team culture, and the ethical complexity of working in a small community.

Challenges included synthesizing multiple theories without overwhelming the curriculum and finding ways to balance evidence based strategies with my emerging consulting style. These challenges ultimately supported my growth, as I have revisited the curriculum, I make revisions based on what I am learning in applied practice.

Future Directions

I will use this curriculum as I move into my consulting career, reflecting on efficacy and an accurate time frame for various interventions and anticipated outcomes. I plan to refine the integration of physiological, cognitive, and emotional components into cohesive routines and

expand my use of experiential techniques. I also want to continue strengthening my skills in teleconsulting, especially now that virtual work has become a permanent part of the performance landscape. My long term goal is to build a consulting model that is developmentally informed and can be modified for each athlete depending on their needs, as well as being culturally responsive, and grounded in evidence.

Integration of Course Concepts

This artifact reflects the integration of seemingly endless sports psychology theories and concepts across the program into a tangible curriculum. Motivation theory, self awareness, emotional regulation, attention control, mindfulness, psychophysiology, counseling skills, and ethical foundations all influenced the structure of the curriculum and the philosophy behind it and how I continue to use it today. The curriculum represents an intersection of psychology, sport science, and counseling, which is the essence of mental performance consulting. This artifact marks the point when course concepts shifted from nebulous academic theory into a cohesive, applicable plan for behavior modification and performance enhancement.

Conclusion

The Mental Skills Training Curriculum demonstrates my ability to integrate psychology, sport science, and aspects of counseling into a coherent, tangible sports consulting philosophy. It captures my commitment to supporting athletes holistically, while utilizing the canon of mental skills training. My approach is now more refined, more integrated, and more grounded in realistic situations. I am developing into a practitioner capable of designing and delivering thoughtful, evidence based mental performance training. The curriculum remains a meaningful milestone in my development and continues to shape my approach to supporting athletes in achieving performance excellence.

References

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