

Consultant's Self-Awareness in Sport Psychology Consultation

Although consultant's self-awareness was considered important for sport psychologists more than twenty-five years ago (Nideffer, 1981), it has received little attention in the sport psychology literature or in the training of graduate students in sport psychology (Giges, 1999). In recent AASP Conferences, considerable interest has been expressed in workshops that demonstrate how experienced sport psychology consultants interview athletes. These presentations usually consist of role-playing situations, in which the interviews are completed before any comments are made.

The present workshop will differ in several ways. First, a brief presentation will be made on the importance of self-awareness for sport psychology practitioners, as well as on psychological barriers to self-awareness. Second, the volunteer athlete interviewed will be dealing with a real life situation rather than role-playing. This will allow the consultant to observe the athlete's actual experience in the interview, and be guided by this experience in his interventions. Finally, the consultant will utilize his own self-awareness during the interview by occasionally commenting before some interventions are made. Specifically, at unscheduled times during the interview, and with the prior agreement of the athlete, the consultant will interrupt the interview, turn to the audience, and describe his own immediate experience. This may include telling his thoughts or feelings, explaining the reason for his next intervention, or describing any difficulty he may have in knowing how best to proceed. This technique will provide an opportunity for members of the audience to observe what goes on in the mind of the consultant immediately before he makes some interventions. As a result, workshop participants will be able to understand more clearly the connections between the athlete's remarks and the consultant's responses. After the interview, there will be an opportunity for the participants to discuss the consultation and ask questions.