

1. Understanding Leadership

Introduction

The success of any organisation in achieving its goals doesn't always depend on effective resources or advanced technology alone. More often success relies on people and people require leaders to recognise and deploy their potential, skills and commitment to get the job done. In fact effective leadership has been shown to be a key characteristic in teams and organisations in a wide variety of achievement/performance environments. Clearly leadership is an integral part of the role of the Elite Coach and it is therefore important that we understand what makes an effective leader and gain some insight into how the leadership process works.



Reflection on Leadership

Select a leader from sport, business, politics or a fictional leader from literature or the movies and study their biography/autobiography *OR* Select someone in a leadership role that you know well and conduct a semi-formal interview with them. Focus on answers to the following questions:

- *What are the characteristics that make them an effective leader? How do effective leaders differ from ineffective ones?*
- *When and why is leadership seen as being important?*
- *How do leaders come to be perceived as such?*
- *Is it possible to draw conclusions about their philosophy by examining their leadership behaviors/style? In what ways do their actions represent well established thoughts and feelings about what they do?*