

Task 4: Evaluation as a client

Before starting my training, my coach carried out two diagnostic tests to determine my body strength and stamina:

1. A rowing test – to measure number of times per minute I managed to row on the rowing machine
2. A weight lifting test – to measure number of times per minute I could lift weights

The above diagnostic tests were conducted to help gather information and assess my strengths and weaknesses; consequently, and based on the results, my coach developed a fitness plan catered to my needs to help me improve.

The diagnostic test results showed that I performed 30 rows and lifted 26 reps in one minute. These readings showed that my overall upper body strength is weak. Having weak upper body strength will not allow me to excel in my field sport of shot put, resulting in my distance throw to be below average. However, as I was able in my rowing test to complete 30 rows in a minute – a row every 2 seconds – meant I did possess fairly good stamina. None the less, my weaknesses lie in lifting weights – weights that are more than 2.5 KG. This is a source of great concern, as the shot put that I must throw must be 3KG and I must be able to throw it 8 meters in order to meet the world average. To overcome these weaknesses, my coach prepared a four-week fitness plan that focused on strengthening arm strength, leg strength, technique and general fitness. My coach consciously incorporated a general fitness section in my fitness plan, as my fitness goal for the four weeks was to also improve my general strength and tone my body.

My Initial Start:

When first attempting to throw my shot put, I became aware of the fact that the method I used to throw the shot put was incorrect for the following reasons:

1. My wrist hurt after throwing the shot put
2. I was only able to hurl the shot put for a distance of 5 meters
3. I saw in the video that my throw did not look aesthetically pleasing
4. I was unaware of techniques to use for shot put, therefore, I just threw the shot like a normal ball

Due to all these factors, my throw was very weak and resulted in my distance being below average.

Re-watching my video in slow motion with my coach, we were able to identify my weaknesses and we used the data to discuss improvement strategies. We looked into two different techniques that could be used to improve throwing a shot put, and we discussed what areas in my body I needed to strengthen to achieve better results.

How did my Coach help me?

To overcome the obstacles that stopped me from achieving a good distance, my coach and I carried out two tests and used my first shot out video to assess all my strengths and weaknesses. After thoroughly analyzing all the videos takes of my performances, my coach produced a four-week fitness plan that will help me improve my technique, upper body strength, leg strength, and general fitness. These four weeks were extremely strenuous as I worked vigorously on my skills, my aesthetic performance, leg strength, and upper body strength.

I struggled very much during the first week of workouts as my coach's work out plan was challenging and pushing my boundaries; I was left feeling I needed more spacing between resting periods. For example, in Week One I struggled mostly with the push-ups for upper body exercises and with the scissor leg cross in the leg exercises. This was due to the fact that my upper body and leg strength were extremely weak. Consequently, I was not able to push myself off the ground when doing a push up without feeling extremely strained. Keeping my legs elevated during my leg cross exercises proved to be just as hard, as my legs continuously gave up on me and dropped to the ground. However, having said that, repeating these same exercises three times, helped me become more confident with them. By week four, I had no struggles with these exercises and was even able to increase the intensity of them, as planned out by the exercise plan. Thus, instead of doing 10 pushups, I was able to increase them to 20, with a feeling of confidence and accomplishment.

In addition, having been exposed to shot put techniques and skills by my coach really allowed me to understand my field sport from an athlete's professional point of view. Analyzing videos of famous athletes throwing shot puts and comparing them to my throw allowed me to critically analyze my weaknesses, where I was going wrong and how to improve my technique and throw in order to achieve a distance that would be above world average. Moreover, spending lessons discussing how to create the most aesthetically pleasing throw as possible permitted me to be able to ensure that my throw would not only meet international distances but also look professional and strong.

Fitness Plan in Action:

Stretching:

Stretching my muscles before every workout was important to ensure no muscles would be injured or pulled while practicing shot put throws. Also, this same method was applied as a cool down technique after my pulse raiser (the intense warm up).



Sit Ups:

Doing sit-ups was part of my daily workout routine to help increase core muscle strength – my personal fitness goal. It was also used as a cool down activity after every workout. I would do as many as I could per minute, record my results and try to improve at the next session.



I was pleased, that the number of sit ups I was able to perform per minute that every week increased; thus my stamina was improving systematically.

Elbows-hands-pushup plank:

This pushup technique was administered to increase arm and core strength. Daily, my coach would make me alternate between exercising side planks or elbow-to-hands-push up planks. The elbow-to-hand-push up planks was the hardest to do as it was a combination of a pushups and a plank, which was not my strong suit. However, as the weeks progressed, this task became easier and less strenuous.



Technique Practice:



Every day, 15 minutes of my training time would focus on the technique, skill, and aesthetics of throwing a shot put. I had learnt about the rotation and the shift techniques from studying the videos. However, after analyzing both and practicing with both, I chose to do my final performance using the shift technique, as I felt it gave me more power in my throw and it looked more aesthetically pleasing.

How did this training affect my aesthetic performance?

After the four weeks of vigorous training and skill training, I was able to not only improve my shot put distance but also learn about how the aesthetics of a throw also affects the velocity and power of a throw. When my elbow is held high and my toss is thrown at a 40-degree angle with a strong power, my throw increases in distance, the toss looks more fluid, and the thrower has more control over the toss.

Evaluation as a Coach:

In order to help my client improve on her personal and shot put goals, several steps were undertaken.

1. Performed a diagnostic test in order to determine the strengths and weaknesses of my client
2. Familiarized my client with the results of the diagnostic
3. Devised an fitness and skill improvement plan based off the results from the diagnostics
4. Ensured that the weekly fitness plans catered to my clients goals and increased in intensity and challenge
5. Provided video footage of best techniques and aesthetic throws by Olympic throwers
6. Encouraged and ensured that client self reflected and evaluated her own performances
7. Video taped client's throws on a weekly basis to provide visual feedback on improvements and other areas still needing improvement

By the end of the fourth week, results showed that my client's stamina, fitness level, shot put techniques and aesthetics had significantly improved. The distance my client was able to achieve at the end was 7 meters, 1 meter away from the international benchmark, and 1 meter more than the standard, her individualized shot put goal. This was all achievable with good communication skills, open mindedness to new techniques and methods, and having a good knowledge on the topic at hand as a coach. My client's throw became more aesthetically pleasing as her elbow was held high, allowing more power to be used in her throw, and the shot was thrown at approximately 40 degrees allowing the throw to have optimal height for the trajectory of the shot. Therefore, the methodology I devised as a coach, which incorporated the various steps mentioned above, proved to be successful. If my client continues to persevere and train using similar methodologies, I do believe, she will reach international, if not even, higher standards.

Who determines a performance is visually appealing?

When throwing a shot put, there are multiple factors that one must taken into account to assure that the throw is visually appealing. Those include:

- High elbow to ensure maximum velocity
- Fluidity in the body stance
- The toss was at approximately 40-45 degrees to allow the throw to have optimal height for the trajectory of the shot

All of theses factors are judgment by a group of judges who have been professionally trained and have a vast knowledge on the field sport.

How did this project link to my Global Context?

My global context for this project is "Personal and Cultural Expression". This Global Context explores the themes of culture and personal expression through the use of any medium. For this particular project, the medium used was sports. This linked hand in hand as sports has no boundaries, sports is a universal medium practiced worldwide by all cultures, nations, and races. Shot put in particular is a recognized Olympic field sport and athletes practicing this sport hail from all corners of the world. During competitions, this sport brings them all together as they all adhere to the same rules and regulations of it. I used Olympic video shoots to show my client how shot put bring cultures together like the global context aspires and how the application of proper aesthetics creates a change in the power, velocity, and appearance of a throw. Sports is truly a melting pot for the world.

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