



Swansea University
Prifysgol Abertawe



Cronfa - Swansea University Open Access Repository

This is an author produced version of a paper published in:
Scandinavian Journal of Medicine & Science in Sports

Cronfa URL for this paper:

<http://cronfa.swan.ac.uk/Record/cronfa50985>

Paper:

Figgins, S., Smith, M., Knight, C. & Greenlees, I. (2019). A grounded theory of inspirational coach leadership.
Scandinavian Journal of Medicine & Science in Sports
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/sms.13513>

This item is brought to you by Swansea University. Any person downloading material is agreeing to abide by the terms of the repository licence. Copies of full text items may be used or reproduced in any format or medium, without prior permission for personal research or study, educational or non-commercial purposes only. The copyright for any work remains with the original author unless otherwise specified. The full-text must not be sold in any format or medium without the formal permission of the copyright holder.

Permission for multiple reproductions should be obtained from the original author.

Authors are personally responsible for adhering to copyright and publisher restrictions when uploading content to the repository.

<http://www.swansea.ac.uk/library/researchsupport/ris-support/>

2

3

4 **A grounded theory of inspirational coach-leadership**

5

6 Date of Submission: 07/01/2019

7 Date of resubmission: 24/04/2019

8 Date of second resubmission: 28/05/19

9 Sean G. Figgins ^{a*},

10 Matthew J. Smith ^b,

11 Camilla J. Knight ^c,

12 Iain A. Greenlees ^a

13 ^aUniversity of Chichester, ^bUniversity of Winchester, ^cSwansea University

14 Author Note

15 Sean Figgins and Iain Greenlees are with the Chichester Institute of Sport, University of
16 Chichester, Bishop Otter Campus, College Lane, Chichester, PO19 6PE; Matthew Smith is
17 with the Department of Sport, Exercise and Health, University of Winchester, Sparkford
18 Road, Winchester, SO22 4NR; Camilla Knight is with the School of Sport and Exercise
19 Sciences, Swansea University, Bay Campus, Fabian Way, Swansea, SA1 8EN.

20

21 *Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Sean Figgins, Chichester
22 Institute of Sport, University of Chichester, Bishop Otter Campus, College Lane, Chichester,
23 PO18 6PE.

24 Email: s.figgins@chi.ac.uk; Telephone: (+44) 1243 816 357.

Abstract

25
26 The purpose of this study was to develop a grounded theory of the process of inspirational
27 coach-leadership in sport. A Straussian grounded theory methodology was used. Semi-
28 structured interviews and focus groups were conducted with athletes (n = 22) and coaches (n
29 = 15). Data were analysed through a process of open and axial coding, and theoretical
30 integration. Through the process of analysis, data were broken down into smaller units
31 (concepts), relationships between concepts were identified, and a substantive grounded
32 theory was developed. The grounded theory of inspirational coach-leadership was built
33 around the core category of 'athlete(s) inspired through changed awareness of their
34 capabilities.' The core category was underpinned by three categories: (a) Establishment of
35 mutual trust and respect with athletes, whereby coaches need to establish trust with athletes in
36 order to inspire athletes; (b) conditions under which inspiration has the potential to occur,
37 which highlighted that athletes are inspired in situations where they are vulnerable or
38 ignorant regarding their potential; and (c) coach acts to change athlete's awareness of their
39 capabilities, which denotes the specific behaviours coaches should display to inspire athletes
40 in such conditions. The theory also highlights that a range of contextual factors relating to the
41 coach, athletes, and performance-environment interact to impact upon the process. The
42 theory predicts that consistency between coach behaviour and the conditions in which
43 inspiration can occur will lead to athlete-inspiration, but only if the coach has established a
44 foundation of trust and respect with the athlete.

45 **Key Words:** Leadership, inspiration, awareness, trust, connection, coaching

46 1. Introduction

47 Inspiration is a motivational state that raises an individual's intentions regarding something
48 of high intrinsic value (e.g., a vision of an ideal self) and motivates the individual to engage
49 in efforts to achieve these intentions.¹ An episode of inspiration is characterised by evocation,
50 where we attribute the experience of inspiration to an external stimuli (eg, somebody else);
51 transcendence, whereby we gain awareness of new or better possibilities; and approach
52 motivation, where we are compelled to invest effort to bring this new idea into fruition.² Put
53 simply, inspiration is posited to serve as a mediator whereby intrinsically valued qualities
54 evoked by an external stimuli (eg, people, ideas) induce inspiration, which, subsequently,
55 motivates the individual to extend these qualities into a personally relevant context.³
56 Research in social psychology has shown inspiration to be associated with performance-
57 related variables (eg, enhanced efficiency and productivity),³ improved well-being,⁴ and
58 positive emotions.² Given that this conceptualisation of inspiration is proposed to be
59 applicable to any context¹, and that anecdotal examples exist of teams being inspired to
60 extraordinary achievements,⁵ researchers have extended the construct of inspiration to sport,
61 finding inspiration to be related to feelings of dominance and decreases in amotivation,⁶ and
62 higher levels of mental toughness.⁷ As inspiration leads to such positive outcomes and is an
63 experience that we cannot consciously control or evoke for ourselves,¹ understanding the
64 sources of inspiration is important. However, limited research has explicitly explored the
65 sources of inspiration.

66 One theoretical framework that has relevance for the concept of inspiration and
67 sources of inspiration in a sporting context is transformational leadership (TFL) theory.
68 Transformational leaders are proposed to *inspire* followers to achieve exceptional outcomes.⁸
69 To achieve this, transformational leaders are proposed to engage in four behaviours: idealised

70 influence, where leaders enthuse pride in followers, set a good example for followers, and
71 earn followers' respect by behaving in ways that maximise values; individualised
72 consideration, where leaders display consideration for the unique needs and desires of each
73 individual; intellectual stimulation, where leaders actively encourage followers to challenge
74 commonly held assumptions about their work and be creative in producing solutions to
75 problems; and inspirational motivation, where leaders develop, articulate and inspire others
76 with their vision for the future.⁸ Based upon this conceptualisation, intuitive links can be
77 made between TFL and inspiration theory. For example, inspirational motivation would
78 satisfy the transcendence characteristic of inspiration because leaders articulating an exciting
79 vision of the future may make followers aware of better possibilities. Research in sport by
80 Turnnidge and Côté^{9,10} has further highlighted how coaches can show TFL behaviours to
81 inspire followers (eg, by discussing goals and expectations). However, while TFL provides
82 useful suggestions into how inspiration can be evoked by leaders, there are several theoretical
83 issues with TFL that have been identified in contemporary reviews within organisational¹¹
84 and sport¹² literature. Specifically, these reviews propose that transformational leadership is a
85 fuzzy construct that lacks a clear and consistent definition and underpinning theory that
86 explains what transformational leadership is and how transformational leadership impacts on
87 outcomes.^{11,12}

88 The theoretical problems are highlighted by measurement issues, whereby research
89 often finds consistently high intercorrelations between the proposed distinct dimensions of
90 TFL, which does not support the proposed multidimensionality of TFL.¹¹ To explain this,
91 Arthur, Bastardo, and Eklund¹² highlight that TFL uses tautological definitions, where
92 transformational leaders are described based upon their impacts on followers, which prohibits
93 transformational leadership being used as an independent variable in quantitative research.

94 An example of this tautology is inspirational motivation. Specifically, inspiration is proposed
95 to be a behaviour of transformational leadership. This is problematic because inspiration is a
96 response not a stimulus (i.e., an outcome not a behaviour; cf.¹). Consequently, Arthur et al.
97 propose that transformational leadership theory is vague and does not outline how leaders are
98 able to effect followers. Thus, van Knippenberg and Sitkin propose that research should use
99 the central facets of transformational leadership theory to further our understanding of
100 leadership. Given how central inspiration is to transformational leadership theory, and the
101 positive influence inspiration has been shown to have on a range of outcomes (e.g.,
102 motivation, goal attainment, productivity, and wellbeing), research could use inspiration as its
103 central focus to explore leadership in sport.

104 In light of the above critique, it is worth considering research that has explicitly
105 examined inspirational leadership. Searle and Hanrahan¹³ used semi-structured interviews to
106 explore the practices of seven inspiring leaders from a range of contexts (eg, business). The
107 findings suggested that leaders believed they could consciously inspire followers at the
108 opportune moment, but in order for inspiration to happen there must be connection between
109 the leaders and follower, and followers must be highly motivated towards the organisational
110 cause. However, the findings provide limited detail surrounding the specific actions leaders
111 engage in to inspire followers and the situations (ie, “opportune moments”) where leaders can
112 inspire. Also, while the leaders were proposed to be inspiring, leaders may not understand
113 how they inspired followers. Further, this research was not specifically conducted in sport.

114 To build on Searle and Hanrahan’s work, Figgins, Smith, Sellars, Greenlees and
115 Knight¹⁴ investigated follower perceptions of inspirational leadership in sport, by
116 interviewing 17 athletes’ about their experiences of being inspired by coaches. The findings
117 demonstrated that athletes were inspired in situations including those accompanied by

118 negative cognitions and emotions (eg, following poor performance). In such situations,
119 athletes reported being inspired by coaches' demonstrations of belief (eg, outlining their
120 potential), showing the way forward (eg, providing technical information that enabled them
121 to overcome a performance plateau), and exhibiting emotional support (eg, empathising with
122 athletes). Further, Smith, Figgins, Jewiss and Kearney¹⁵ used real-life footage (from the 1997
123 British and Irish Lions tour to South Africa) to explore how leaders communicate to inspire
124 athletes. Amateur athletes viewed clips of leaders delivering speeches in different scenarios
125 (eg, at half-time) and reported being inspired by leaders creating and enhancing belief and
126 showing how the team can be successful, embracing and reinforcing the underdog status,
127 creating feelings of pride in the team, empowering athletes to take responsibility, and
128 expressing the challenges and rewards of success.

129 While such research enhances our understanding of how leaders inspire athletes, little
130 is known about the factors (eg, personal and contextual factors) that impact upon a leader's
131 ability to inspire athletes. Furthermore, although existing theories (ie, Transformational
132 Leadership)⁸ mention inspiration, researchers have yet to provide a theory that *explains* the
133 process of inspirational leadership in sport.⁵ Given that research has demonstrated inspiration
134 to be positively related to performance-related variables and wellbeing, research is warranted
135 to develop a theory of inspirational leadership in sport. Consequently, the aim of this study
136 was to use a grounded theory methodology to explore the process through which coaches
137 inspire athletes. Aligned with the critique of TFL, there are three specific reasons grounded
138 theory is particularly useful for studying inspirational leadership. First, grounded theory is
139 used to explore social processes involving interactions between participants and their social
140 context, and theories of leadership consider the interactions between individuals (eg, leaders
141 and followers) and the context in which these happen (for examples see ref. 6, 14). Second,

142 grounded theory is useful when studying phenomenon where adequate theories do not exist
143 for a specific population and to date a theory of leadership that explains the inspirational
144 impact of leaders in sport does not yet exist.⁵ Third, grounded theory can be used where
145 existing theories are underdeveloped,^{17,18} which is the case within this area as current theories
146 of leadership cited in contemporary sport psychology research have yet to propose a valid
147 model of the process of inspirational leadership.

148 **2. Method**

149 **2.1 Grounded Theory Methodology**

150 Consistent with Corbin and Strauss'¹⁹ variant of grounded theory, this study was underpinned
151 by a pragmatic philosophical perspective. Pragmatists assume that knowledge is developed
152 and meaningful through our actions and interactions and is shaped by the social
153 environment²⁰ and developed with other people in this environment.²¹ Therefore, the
154 knowledge developed in this research is a product of the participants' and researchers' beliefs
155 and experiences.

156 **2.2 Sampling and Participants**

157 Initially, purposeful sampling was used to recruit information-rich participants. Athletes who
158 had experience of being inspired by a coach were sampled. As data collection progressed,
159 theoretical sampling was used to further explore concepts identified within the initial data
160 collection and analysis.¹⁹ Phases of theoretical sampling included interviewing: (a) coaches
161 (at grass roots, county and regional level) to identify athlete characteristics which impact
162 upon the potential for athletes to be inspired; (b) high-level coaches (eg, coaches who had
163 experience of coaching at national and international level) to explore how group factors
164 influence trust in the coach; and (c) participants who had experiences of a coach who did not
165 inspire them (ie, negative cases) to further challenge and refine the theory. In addition to the

190 Semi-structured interviews were used to explore the process of inspirational coach-
191 leadership in sport, as they capture rich and in-depth data.¹⁹ An interview guide was created
192 to address the aims of the study, which covered: (a) what coaches did to inspire athletes (eg,
193 “Can you tell me about any instances where you have been inspired by your coach during
194 your sporting career?”); (b) when (ie, the situation) the athletes were inspired (eg, “What
195 happened before you were inspired?”); and (c) why they found that moment inspiring (eg,
196 “What is it about the [coach] that made you perceive this moment as inspirational?”). Probe
197 questions were used to develop a deeper understanding of participants’ experiences (eg,
198 “What was the situation?”). Throughout data collection, the interview guide was consistently
199 revised to explore emerging concepts and categories.¹⁹ For instance, when interviewing
200 experienced athletes, questions were added which focussed on their experiences of
201 inspirational coach-leadership later in their career (eg, “Are there any differences between the
202 ways you were inspired when you were less experienced to later in your career?”). Also,
203 during the later phases of data collection, the emerging theory was shown to participants to
204 evaluate its applicability to their experiences. Finally, two focus groups were conducted with
205 a total of 9 participants (4 athletes, 5 coaches). The purpose of these focus groups was to
206 examine the emerging grounded theory, as well as to provide additional data. Consistent with
207 previous research,²² focus groups were used to gain insights into whether ‘experts’ (ie, those
208 with experience of inspirational coach-leadership) thought the emerging theory was
209 applicable to their experiences.¹⁹

210 **2.4 Data analysis**

211 Data analysis followed an iterative process whereby analysis followed each interview.¹⁹ As
212 many individual interviews as possible (n = 24) were transcribed and coded during the data
213 collection phase. Where this was not possible, the lead researcher reflected upon the

214 interviews and listened to the interviews, writing memos to record his perceptions of
215 concepts reported by participants. These memos then informed refinement of the interview
216 guide for subsequent interviews.

217 Transcription produced 431 pages of single-spaced data, which were analysed using
218 open coding, axial coding, and theoretical integration.¹⁹ Initially, during open coding, line-
219 by-line analysis of the transcript was conducted to identify concepts, their properties, and
220 dimensions related to inspirational coach-leadership. Open coding was used to fracture the
221 data into the smallest units (ie, concepts), which were given a code (eg, ‘showing care for the
222 athletes’). Throughout this phase concepts were compared with one another to establish
223 similarities and differences. Once key concepts started to be identified, axial coding was used
224 to describe and establish relationships between concepts.¹⁹ Through axial coding, concepts
225 identified during open coding were grouped into categories to specify a more holistic
226 explanation of the inspirational coach-leadership processes. For example, descriptive codes
227 relating to coaches’ ability to demonstrate competence and coaches’ ability to create a
228 connection with their athlete(s) were grouped under the category trust and respect.

229 The final stage of analysis was theoretical integration.¹⁹ Theoretical integration was
230 used to identify the core category, establish links between categories and the core category,
231 and add density to categories. For instance, the concept of ‘establishing mutual trust and
232 respect’ was identified as important to the coach’s ability to inspire athletes and was
233 integrated into the developing theory. During this stage, the emerging theory was presented to
234 participants who were asked to comment on the extent to which the theory represented their
235 experiences. This feedback enabled further refinement of the theoretical framework by
236 ensuring that findings were grounded in the data and reflected participants’ experiences.¹⁹

237 **2.4.1.1 Delayed literature review.**

238 An initial review of inspiration and leadership literature (ie, transformational leadership) was
239 conducted to inform the rationale for this study. However, this served to ensure that the lead
240 researcher was thinking theoretically from the start of a grounded theory and, thus,
241 demonstrated theoretical sensitivity.²³ Importantly, however, concepts identified during
242 analysis were not compared with existing literature until the latter stages of data
243 analysis/collection. At this point, a delayed literature review¹⁹ was undertaken to contrast,
244 compare, and integrate findings with relevant theories and constructs, to reduce conceptual
245 overlap and confusion.

246 **2.5 Methodological rigour.**

247 As well as the methods described previously (ie, the use of focus groups, theoretical
248 sampling, and the iterative process), further analytical tools were used to enhance the study.
249 First, the data were subjected to constant comparison whereby codes were compared with
250 each other for similarities and differences.^{19,23} Fifty-three memos were written (ranging from
251 half a page and two pages long) during data collection/analysis to encourage reflexivity,
252 clarification, category saturation, and concept development.¹⁹ Memos covered a range of
253 topics including the impact of perceived coach care, the complexity of influencing a group,
254 and how athlete experience effects the ways in which they are inspired. Diagramming was
255 used to visually represent the data with a focus on integrating concepts, checking whether
256 relationships between concepts and categories were logical, and to assist the lead researcher
257 in viewing the data at an abstract level.¹⁹

258 Two further methods were used to enhance the rigour of this study. Firstly, a reflexive
259 journal was written throughout the study, which allowed the researcher to record any
260 preconceived ideas or biases in relation to the data. Further, throughout the process two of the

261 research team acted as “critical friends” and a theoretical sounding board by challenging the
262 lead researcher on his interpretations of the data.²⁴ This process took place several times
263 during both formalised presentations of data, more informal discussions, and via comments
264 on the memos. Finally, the substantive grounded theory can be evaluated using the criteria of
265 fit, relevance, work, and modifiability.¹⁹

266 **3. Results**

267 The resulting substantive grounded theory of the process of inspirational coach-leadership in
268 sport is presented in Figure 1. Based upon the experiences of participants interviewed in this
269 study, inspirational coach-leadership changes athletes’ perceptions of their capabilities (in
270 both the short- and/or long-term). The grounded theory is constructed around the core
271 category of ‘athlete inspired through changed awareness of their capabilities’. The core
272 category is underpinned by three other categories: establishing mutual trust and respect with
273 the athlete/team; conditions under which inspiration has the potential to occur; and coach acts
274 to change athlete(s) awareness of their capabilities. In addition, factors that impact the
275 process of inspirational coach-leadership are also discussed. The following sections present
276 an overview of the core category, the underpinning categories and the links between them. In
277 the quotes presented, acronyms are used to preserve participants’ anonymity (eg, Athlete 1 =
278 A1; Coach 3 = C3).

279 **3.1 Core category: Athlete(s) inspired through changed awareness of their** 280 **capabilities.**

281 Coaches were proposed to inspire athletes by changing perceptions of their capabilities. For
282 example, one athlete discussed how being inspired by their coach altered their long-term
283 goals:

284 I thought my potential was a lot higher [after my coach inspired me]. My goal always
285 then was just to compete for GB one time, but once that was achieved I had to set
286 myself a new goal. So, rather than just compete for them, compete and do well. I set
287 more challenging goals in general (A8).

288 Athletes discussed how the change in their perception of their capabilities could also be
289 short-term in nature. For instance, one athlete discussed how a coach's half-time team-talk
290 inspired his team to perceive that they could turn the game around in the short-term (ie,
291 second half), stating that the coach "just made us all think that 'yeah, we can beat these guys.
292 Yeah, they are better than us, but what is to say we can't go and score two and not concede
293 one.' So, he gave us the belief to go and do it" (A4).

294 **3.2 Category 1: Establishment of mutual trust and respect with athlete(s).**

295 Trust was proposed to be the foundation of coaches' ability to inspire. That is, without trust,
296 participants suggested that it would be very unlikely for athletes to be inspired by their
297 coaches. This was illustrated by one athlete who said:

298 That's [trust and respect] kind of like the core isn't it, it does boil down to . . . having
299 that trust and having that respect between the coach and the athletes, because if you
300 don't have that then you're not going to feel inspired, are you, by them (A16).

301 Trust was proposed to facilitate belief and buy-in in the coach's methods as well as
302 enhance communication between coaches and athletes. For instance, one athlete said trust
303 made them, "more likely to listen to [the coach] . . . you are more likely to tell them like if
304 you have a specific goal you want to aim for . . . you are more likely to speak to them if you
305 trust them" (A10).

306 The establishment of mutual trust and respect was based around: athletes' perception of
307 coach competence; the level of personal connection between coaches and athlete(s); and the
308 extent to which coaches were perceived to demonstrate trust in athletes.

309 **Coach Competence.** Coach competence was suggested to be an important factor in
310 athletes trusting, and thus being open to being inspired by, the coach. Such trust informed
311 athletes' expectations of the coach and lead athletes to be more open-minded. Athletes'
312 perception of coach competence was informed by coach reputation. As one athlete said:

313 I had a coach two years ago who . . . was one of the best coaches I've ever had . . . and
314 he'd coached a swimmer to 3 Olympic gold-medals . . . and that actually greatly
315 influenced my decision to come to University, because . . . I'd be able to be coached by
316 . . . this legend . . . So, yeah that had a massive influence on feeling inspired . . .
317 because you feel as if "ah, if they did it under that coach then why can't I?" (A16).

318 Coach-attributed improvements also resulted in inspiration. For example, one athlete asserted
319 that coach-driven improvement "leaves you open to being inspired . . . For example, if they . .
320 . change things and . . . you see your times improving. I suppose you can see it is actually
321 having an effect" (A8).

322 The content and tone of communication was also proposed to impact on athlete
323 perceptions of coaches' competence and inspirational capability. Inspirational coaches were
324 perceived as passionate and outgoing. Indeed, when discussing factors that influence
325 coaches' ability to inspire them, said they needed to be "someone with a bit of what I would
326 say is charisma" (A15). Coaches' charisma and personality was proposed to impact on
327 coaches' ability to inspire by increasing the potential that an athlete would listen to them.
328 This was illustrated by one athlete who said that if a coach "turns up with a personality of a

329 wet dish rag, then you don't particularly want to listen to them . . . I need someone bubbly,
330 somebody than can get through to me and be energetic about it" (A3).

331 **Creating a personal connection with athlete(s).** Coach-athlete connection appeared
332 pivotal to perceptions of a coach's inspirational capabilities. Athletes and coaches agreed that
333 personal connection was at least as important as coaching competence. This was highlighted
334 by one athlete who said:

335 I think football knowledge is not as influential as someone who can talk to people and
336 understand people . . . respect every member of the team and make you feel valued.
337 Umm, I think it's personal qualities . . . which are more influential than any football
338 specific [knowledge], no matter what level they play there football . . . so it's not
339 necessarily where they've played, it's more about their ethos and the way they deal and
340 communicate with people, which is more inspiring to me (A15).

341 To connect with athletes, coaches were proposed to demonstrate interest in athletes both in
342 (eg, providing personalised performance-related support) and outside of sport (eg, providing
343 social support, protecting athletes in public). For example, one athlete described how her
344 coach demonstrated care by doing "simple things, like I had to take my car to the garage for a
345 MOT, and he followed me there and took me home, because obviously I couldn't get home"
346 (A16). To connect with, and inspire, athletes it appeared important for coaches to be
347 perceived as authentic and altruistic. This perception was fuelled by honest communication.

348 With regards to selection, one athlete said:

349 Even if it is not what a player wants to hear, I think that honesty is more beneficial . . .
350 for instance, I've been dropped or something like that and they [the coach] tell me
351 exactly why . . . So, actually, players will respect coaches more if they give them
352 feedback. And also . . . I learned with things like selection it is that it is not personal it

353 is just a matter of opinions . . . but players will take it more personally if there is no
354 communication (A11).

355 The extent to which the coach represented, and embedded group values was also
356 proposed to impact upon a coach's ability to connect with, and inspire, athletes. For instance,
357 one athlete outlined the importance of his coach embedding team values stating, "Another big
358 thing for him was that, I suppose it was inspirational, he made sure that players bought in to
359 what the club was about" (A11). In accord with this, one coach discussed the importance of
360 translating club values to his team in order to enhance connection:

361 So, when [the old coach] left I thought it was my duty to, yes win, but look after the
362 soul of the club to what it means . . . I also think . . . I get the club; I get what it stands
363 for and what it believes in, what its point of difference is. I think I have been very good
364 at translating that (C3).

365 **Coach demonstrating trust in their athlete(s).** Athletes and coaches agreed that trust
366 needed to be reciprocated in order for athletes to be inspired by the coach. For example, a
367 Paralympic athlete discussed how his coach inspire him through demonstrating trust in him:

368 He [the coach] was all about giving visually impaired people that independence and
369 doing things for themselves and . . . I've passed it on to others. So, I know he has
370 inspired me because things he has done, I am passing on to others (A9).

371 Coaches providing athletes with choice and autonomy, and then acting on athlete feedback,
372 was proposed to demonstrate trust in athletes. For example, one athlete perceived her coach
373 to trust her because, "he used to ask us things like if we enjoyed the session, what we'd prefer
374 to do, what we liked doing" (A5).

375 Providing leadership responsibility was posited to demonstrate trust in athletes, but
376 also served to reinforce coach influence over, and thus ability to inspire, athletes. For
377 instance, one coach described the importance of having a “core group” of players onside:

378 You do need . . . some really senior, influential core people who live and drive by the
379 values of the organisation . . . you are not going to get 12 or 13, but you have to get
380 the majority . . . of the influential ones to be driving and then that allows you to
381 absorb your maverick (C3).

382 **3.3 Category 2: Conditions under which inspiration has the potential to occur.**

383 When recalling instances of being inspired, athletes discussed the situation prior to being
384 inspired by their coach. Overall, athletes seemed to lack knowledge relating to their
385 capabilities and or their future potential prior to being inspired

386 **Athlete uncertain regarding potential or ways to improve.** Athletes discussed how
387 they were inspired by coaches when they lacked direction (eg, uncertain of their next goal,
388 transitioning to a new context). This was illustrated by one ex-international coach who
389 discussed how his athletes were often oblivious to their potential:

390 . . . uncertainty regarding potential is again what I said to you that “I want to convince
391 you, you can do what you think you are unable to do”, right . . . it’s rather lack of
392 knowledge . . . you just don’t know what you are capable of (C9).

393 Further, athletes were inspired in scenarios where they lacked knowledge regarding
394 how to improve their own performance. This was illustrated by one athlete who said:

395 So, umm, I kick a lot and especially like when I wasn’t the most effective swimmer
396 like last year, I kicked more and he [the coach] went behind me for one length and
397 then we finished, and I was quite out of breath. . . I didn’t really understand that we

398 weren't meant to be going that hard, and . . . basically he was telling me to pull more
399 and to kick less and relax when I swim (A2).

400 In addition, experienced athletes discussed how a lack of awareness of what they
401 could achieve following a high-level of personal achievement (eg, having had a successful
402 international career) could precede inspiration. This was highlighted by one international
403 athlete who discussed how towards the end of his career he was uncertain of what his next
404 goal could be:

405 For me personally when I gave up the captaincy and stopped playing for England I
406 struggled . . . because I didn't know what the kind of next goal was . . . I think that is
407 very dangerous for a coach because they can think they can stop inspiring those older
408 guys because they feel that they know everything and they feel that they should know
409 everything themselves (A11).

410 **Athlete lacks knowledge or belief regarding ability to overcome challenging**
411 **circumstances.** Athletes were inspired in situations where they lacked belief or experience
412 (eg, following poor performance, in novel situations). For instance, prior to being inspired,
413 one athlete recalled how her team was feeling pressure as they did not have experience of
414 competing at that level recalling, "I think, the main issue with that is we hadn't had the
415 previous experience of medal racing, so whatever [the coach] said or did, I think there was
416 going to be an element of we didn't know how to deal with the pressure" (A1).

417 Athletes reported lacking belief in their ability prior to being inspired by their coach.
418 This was illustrated by one athlete when describing how she felt prior to being inspired
419 stating, "I got into this other club. Umm, and I didn't know that I was [good enough] . . . so
420 when I got there, I didn't think that I was actually worthy of being there" (A21). Inspiration

421 was needed when athletes were at extreme lows, as illustrated by one coach who described
422 how his athlete was in a desperate state prior to being inspired:

423 A little bit earlier in the year I had one athlete that was really struggling with burnout
424 and she is one of the girls that, using this next gen programme, I'm working with
425 now. She had about 4 to 6 weeks sort of in March and April this year where she was
426 just close to saying "that's it, I've had enough. I'm not going to do this anymore"
427 (C2).

428 **3.4 Category 3: Coach acts to change athlete's awareness of their capabilities.**

429 To inspire athletes, coaches need to change athletes' perceptions of their capabilities.

430 Coaches are proposed to inspire athletes by demonstrating and instilling belief in their ability;
431 and outlining what and how an athlete can achieve in the future.

432 **Demonstrating and instilling belief.** Athletes discussed being inspired when they
433 perceived that their coaches demonstrated belief in them. This was illustrated by one athlete
434 who discussed:

435 He's [the coach] always said to me "I'm watching your results. I'm watching what
436 you're doing. Why are you going to Uni? Why are you not going full-time sailing?
437 Why are you still at college? I want you to be full-time sailing." And I think it was
438 somebody else having that full belief in me that I found inspirational . . . He always just
439 said "this is what you should be doing. You can get to the Olympics. Why are you not
440 going for it?" (A1).

441 Coaches agreed that athletes were inspired by demonstrations of belief (eg, providing
442 encouragement and reassurance). For instance, one coach discussed how she perceived she
443 inspired an athlete struggling for confidence:

444 When I met her [the athlete] she was English Universities, [University] student, I only
445 had her for one year . . . and she was trying to get into England . . . but at the time her
446 face wasn't fitting. . . and I just said to her "look, as far as I'm concerned I've seen a
447 lot of players through here." I said "you are the most athletic, capable player I have
448 ever seen come through the door. You need to keep knocking until the door is open." .
449 . . The first time I saw her since she'd made it into England (C6).

450 As well as directly demonstrating belief (eg, outlining athlete potential), coach
451 behaviour was also proposed to display belief. For example, coaches making sacrifices for
452 athletes (eg, giving up their own time to provide extra support) was deemed inspiring. For
453 instance, one athlete recalled how she was inspired by her coach's support:

454 She'll [the coach] always take us to the competitions that allow us to progress . . .
455 fitness sessions or extra sessions at another club when we haven't got the hall, just to
456 make it the maximum opportunity to be what we can (A10).

457 Coaches also instilled belief in athletes by having a strengths-based approach to
458 coaching. For instance, one athlete discussed being inspired when his coach "emphasised my
459 strengths, and kind of suppress any weaknesses that I might have" (A15). As well as
460 highlighting strengths, coaches inspired athletes, by playing to these strengths. This was
461 highlighted by a retired former-professional athlete who described how his coach inspired
462 them despite being physically inferior to their opponents:

463 Liam [the coach], obviously, masterminded this way of play . . . we had the handling
464 skills, we had the fitness and the speed and ultimately, we'd wear them down . . . he
465 gave us confidence in our ability, our handling skills and certainly confidence in our
466 fitness and physical preparation because you know we were fitter than them and he

467 built the whole game plan around that, so that was inspirational because it made you
468 feel good about yourself (A18).

469 As well as something that the coach physically said or did, coaches could indirectly
470 instil belief in, and inspire, athletes based on their past accomplishments (eg, their
471 achievements with other athletes). For example, one athlete described:

472 . . . if I know that I could be coached by someone who, umm, has coached an athlete
473 to five Olympic gold-medals then I would . . . if I was to start being coached by them
474 then I would think that I could do that . . . yeah, definitely that would kind of motivate
475 me to think that “why can’t I do that if I’m under this certain coach that’s coached this
476 girl to five Olympic gold-medals?” and it builds your confidence, as well. I think
477 that’s . . . a massive thing because when I was being coached by this certain coach I
478 felt as if no one was going to stop me because, umm, he was such a renowned coach
479 and his training was so renowned (A16).

480 **Showing the way forward.** Athletes were also inspired when coaches provided them
481 with information that would allow them to reach goals or overcome challenges. Athletes
482 proposed that having long-term goals to work towards was inspirational, but for them to be
483 truly inspiring they needed to understand how to reach those goals. For example, one athlete
484 stated, “I think inspiration is seeing the goal that you want, umm, and . . . seeing the goal that
485 you want to get to and being able to highlight the steps that you want to get there” (A12).
486 Alongside understanding the path towards their goals, it was proposed that in order to
487 maintain inspiration athletes needed to understand the link between their current actions (eg,
488 in practice) and their long-term goals. This was highlighted by an international coach who
489 discussed how he continued to inspire athletes on a day-to-day basis:

490 It's reminding them [athletes] why we do it sometimes, what is at stake. You know, you
491 are doing the first one day game in May and you talk about road to Wembley, "you
492 know, this finishes at [the final]. It's May today but it finishes in August at [the final] . .
493 . So, this game today counts just as much as that one" . . . because if we don't deal with
494 that day in May we are not going to get to that day in August (C3).

495 As well as being inspired towards long-term goals, athletes were also inspired when
496 coaches were able to provide them with information that would allow them to overcome
497 short-term obstacles. For example, one athlete described how the coach provided specific
498 instructions to inspire her and her teammate:

499 He didn't speak to us about racing before the race and we'd never had that before,
500 before a race. The coaches would usually say to us the shifts are doing this, the breeze
501 is at this angle, this is where the course is, constantly thinking about it. What I think he
502 was doing is he knew we already knew that. We had already been racing there for a
503 week. . . Then when we set off to do the race he gave us three bullet points, like "this is
504 what you're going to do, that is what is going to happen, and here you go" . . . he
505 would tell us "start under this group because you know they are going to be quick" so
506 we'd do that and execute that, and we knew we put ourselves in a good position to start
507 the whole race. So, I think that was pretty inspiring because he took our mind off and
508 then said "focus on that, that's all you have to do. Now go and do it" (A1).

509 Experienced athletes reported being less likely to be inspired by coaches outlining a
510 long-term goal. In this instance, providing athletes with responsibility was proposed to
511 inspire them. For instance, one athlete discussed, following deselection from international
512 level, he was inspired when his coach presented him the opportunity to mentor junior players:

513 [The coach said] “We’ve got a young player here, a really good player; we need you
514 to work with him.” You know actually take the focus off the big goal and get some
515 energy in here, yes to help the other player but to give you another goal (A11).

516 **3.5 Factors that impact on the process of inspirational leadership.**

517 Athletes and coaches proposed that a range of factors (related to the coach, athlete, and
518 context) impact upon the process of inspirational coach-leadership. These factors were seen
519 to impact upon the other categories identified within the grounded theory and, consequently,
520 the potential for athletes to be inspired by coaches. The experience level of coaches had an
521 impact on the process of inspirational coach-leadership. Coach experience was proposed to
522 impact on coaches’ decision making, reflective practice, self-awareness, and ability to
523 establish trust and respect with athletes. Coaches having a positive outlook (eg, in their
524 general demeanour, their communication with and thoughts about their athletes) was
525 proposed to impact upon athletes’ perceptions of, and potential to be inspired by, the coach.
526 This was illustrated by one athlete who said that their coach was “always positive about the
527 team, even if we were losing every week, he’d still be like next week we will win. If he did
528 have any negative thoughts we wouldn’t have known about it” (A7).

529 Athletes’ experience, level of self-awareness, and desire to learn and improve were
530 seen to impact the extent to which they were open to being inspired. For instance, athletes’
531 previous sporting experiences were proposed to impact upon the way they perceive and
532 interact with their coach. The general consensus was that less experienced athletes were more
533 open to being inspired, whereas experienced athletes were less open (because of higher self-
534 awareness) and more likely to challenge the coach. Indeed, one athlete discussed:

535 I think the biggest thing when you are older in your career, you kind of know more. I
536 would argue to a certain extent, someone can’t keep selling you a dream. So, it’s like

537 when you are 19, 20, 21, 22 . . . you are kind of a little bit wet behind the ears and
538 you'll believe anything and think I can achieve that. Whereas, I think sometimes when
539 you get later on in your career it is difficult to kind of keep selling those dreams
540 because in a bad way you've got those experiences and had those knocks that make you
541 think "actually it doesn't kind of work out like this" (A11).

542 A commonality among athletes was that they appeared to have motivation to develop. For
543 example, one coach described athletes who he perceived to have inspired as being,
544 "motivated, they are committed, they do have . . . desire and have, umm, aspirations" (C5).

545 In addition, the context was proposed to impact on the process of inspirational
546 leadership. Participants suggested that the performance-level at which they were operating
547 and contact time with the coach impacts upon the potential for athletes to be inspired. For
548 example, when asked about what impacts on her potential to inspire athletes, one coach
549 responded, "whether you've got enough time with them; that is probably the biggest thing [in
550 terms of inspiration]" (C6). Athletes suggested that contact time impacted their perception of
551 their coach's dedication to their development. For instance, one athlete said, "I think time, as
552 well, I think that's crucial. I think if they dedicate a lot of time to you . . . I think that would
553 inspire me more because they are putting so much time into me" (A14).

554 **3.6 A substantive grounded theory of the process of inspirational coach-leadership** 555 **in sport.**

556 The proposed grounded theory (see figure 1) suggests that athletes are inspired when coaches
557 are able to change their awareness of their short- or long-term capabilities (see core
558 category). In order to change athletes' awareness, and thus inspire them, coaches need to
559 establish trust and respect with their athletes (see category 1) by demonstrating competence
560 (eg, showing they have the ability to have a positive impact on athletes), creating a

585 **4. Discussion**

586 The purpose of this study was to develop a substantive grounded theory of inspirational
587 coach-leadership. In doing so, this study adds to the limited understanding regarding
588 inspirational leadership by providing the first theory of inspirational leadership derived
589 specifically in the sporting context. The grounded theory suggests that athletes are inspired
590 when coaches act to change their awareness of what they can achieve (eg, by outlining their
591 long-term potential) in situations characterised by uncertainty (eg, when an athlete is unsure
592 how to overcome challenging performance circumstances) and ignorance (eg, when an
593 athlete is unaware of their potential).

594 The grounded theory highlights the potential to integrate several existing theories to
595 more fully understand the complex process of leadership. Several elements of other theories
596 appear to be embedded within the proposed grounded theory. For instance, the coach
597 demonstrating interest in athletes is consistent with the individual consideration element of
598 TFL.⁸ In relation to trust, the need for the coach to represent group values has consistently
599 been identified as factor that affects the potential for leaders to influence groups within the
600 social identity approach to leadership.²⁵ Providing choice to athletes relates to the autonomy
601 concept of self-determination theory²⁶ which is central to the premise of the empowering
602 coaching programme.²⁷ This theory also has elements from theories yet to be extensively
603 explored within the sporting context. Indeed, the concepts of empowering followers, showing
604 care for followers, and being authentic are elements of follower-orientated models of
605 leadership such as self-sacrificial leadership²⁸ and servant leadership.²⁹ Further, that leaders
606 who inspire demonstrate confidence and trust in athletes, appear passionate and show
607 conviction when communicating has parallels with central facets of charismatic leadership.³⁰

608 The current research provides information on leadership behaviours proposed to
609 inspire. These include demonstrations of belief (eg, outlining an athlete’s long-term potential,
610 providing encouragement, making sacrifices, focussing on athlete strengths) and showing the
611 way forward (eg, providing tactical information that helps an athlete to reach their goals,
612 providing specific instructions to overcome challenges, providing responsibility, and setting
613 new goals). These behaviours resonate with previous leadership theories. For example,
614 outlining an athlete’s potential and providing encouragement has links with the inspirational
615 motivation dimension of TFL.¹⁰ In addition, making sacrifices for athletes appears to relate to
616 self-sacrificial leadership.²⁸

617 Although the findings highlight ways in which coaches may inspire, a key proposition
618 of the grounded theory is that efforts to inspire will only be successful if an athlete trusts their
619 coach. By highlighting the importance of trust in the process of inspirational coach-
620 leadership, this study contributes to leadership theory more broadly by identifying
621 antecedents of trust (ie, why athletes trust their coach) and offering suggestions in relation to
622 the role that trust plays in leader effectiveness. Taking these in turn, factors that facilitate
623 trust in a leader identified in the grounded theory are similar to existing conceptualisations of
624 trust. For example, the concepts of ‘perception of coach competence’ and ‘personal
625 connection between coach and athlete(s)’ incorporate elements related to ability,
626 benevolence, and integrity (eg, demonstrating care for athletes, representing the values of the
627 group, demonstrating competence).³¹ However, the findings of this study add to the literature
628 on trust—which has shown little consideration for the leader trusting their followers³²—by
629 suggesting that athletes need to feel that trust is reciprocated in order for trust to be formed.
630 Thus, this theory identifies ways coaches demonstrate trust in athletes (ie, providing choice
631 and autonomy, and encouraging responsibility and leadership).

632 The findings of this study also add to theory regarding the role of trust in leader
633 effectiveness. Generally trust is proposed to mediate between leader behaviours and follower
634 outcomes.³³ This study suggests that the relationship between trust and leadership is more
635 dynamic, with participants in this study indicating that without trust coaches would be unable
636 to inspire athletes. This would appear to be in line with the conceptualisation of trust as “the
637 willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the
638 expectation that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor”^{34(p712)}.
639 Consequently, the present findings suggest that trust may moderate the impact of leadership
640 on followers. Specifically, leader behaviours and interactions with their athlete over time
641 have the potential to establish trust, which, in turn, leaves an athlete more open to being
642 inspired by their coach.

643 As well as the importance of developing trust, in line with other theories of leadership
644 (eg, multidimensional model of leadership)¹⁶, the proposed grounded theory suggests that
645 contextual factors (relating to the athlete, the coach, and performance-level) impact on the
646 process of inspirational coach-leadership. Taking these in turn, athletes who had a desire to
647 improve were deemed to be more open to being inspired. This supports previous research that
648 has shown intrinsic motivation to moderate the extent to which an individual experiences
649 inspiration.² In addition, athlete’s experience and level of self-awareness was proposed to
650 influence the extent to which they could be inspired, with experienced athletes proposed to be
651 more difficult to inspire. This may be because their awareness of their actual- or best-self
652 hinders the appreciation of a potential future-self.³⁵ Specifically, experienced athletes’
653 knowledge of their limitations may hinder their appreciation of a better future-self because it
654 is inconsistent with the limits of their previous best-self.³⁵ Coach experience and level of
655 motivation was also posited to impact upon the process of inspiring athletes by impacting

656 upon a coach's confidence, decision making, and their ability to establish trust and respect.
657 This finding aligns with research into coaching practice which has shown that a coach's
658 previous experience and motivation can impact upon their behaviour and subsequently
659 athlete's perceptions of the coach.³⁶ With regards to performance level, it was proposed that
660 greater levels of contact time allow for increased interaction between the coach and athlete,
661 which enhanced the level of trust between coaches and athletes (eg, suggesting that coaches
662 were dedicating increased time to athletes). Indeed, this supports Shamir's³⁷ proposition that
663 "it takes time for the majority of leadership inputs to produce the outcomes and the likelihood
664 that the inputs, the outcomes, and relationships between them may change over time" (p.
665 307). Therefore, the theory suggests that coaches need to consider contextual factors when
666 considering how to inspire athletes.

667 **4.1 Applied implications**

668 The proposed grounded theory provides several applied suggestions for coaches and
669 practitioners working with coaches. First, this grounded theory suggests situations in which
670 coaches might be able to inspire athletes (eg, following poor performance). Second, the
671 grounded theory highlights how coaches might inspire athletes (eg, by outlining an athlete's
672 long-term potential). In addition, the grounded theory suggests that coaches need to be
673 cognisant of contextual factors that might impact on whether coaches can inspire. For
674 example, the findings suggest that athletes' experience, level of self-awareness, and the
675 performance-level at which they compete, impact upon the process (eg, what an athlete can
676 be inspired by, the level of trust and respect between coaches and athletes). Crucially, it
677 appears that athletes are only inspired if they trust the coach on both a personal and
678 professional level. Thus, coaches and practitioners are encouraged to target the antecedents of

679 trust identified within the grounded theory to enhance a coach's ability to inspire athletes in
680 suitable conditions.

681 **4.2 Strengths, limitations and future research directions**

682 Considering the limitations of previous literature outlined in the introduction, this study has
683 several strengths. First, this study provides the first theory of inspirational coach-leadership
684 derived specifically in the sporting context. Second, this study outlines several mechanisms
685 that may explain the inspirational influence of the inspiring behaviours identified. Third, our
686 findings go some way to addressing criticisms of previous leadership theory and research
687 which fail to take into account factors that may impact on leaders' decision making.³⁸ Indeed,
688 this study outlines not only *what* leaders do to inspire, but also outlines *when* and *why* leaders
689 might engage in behaviours proposed to inspire athletes. Finally, this study has been
690 conducted in a rigorous manner using a range of methods to enhance methodological
691 coherence and rigour (writing memos, and theoretical sampling) which is in line with Weed's
692 suggestions of what is considered quality grounded theory.

693 While this study provides a framework to guide coaches' attempts to inspire athletes,
694 the application of the proposed theory needs to be considered in light of the study's
695 limitations. For instance, the current study relied on retrospective accounts of participants'
696 experiences. Thus, the current findings may be limited by hindsight biases. However, it is
697 important to consider that inspiration is not something that you can necessarily observe as it
698 happens in the "natural context of everyday life" and is usually "not the result of deliberate
699 effort of one party . . . to inspire another";^{1(p506)} indeed, coaches in this study suggested that
700 they did not intentionally aim to inspire. That is not to say that observational methods would
701 not be useful to enhance our understanding of this process, rather that they could compliment
702 other qualitative methods. Thus, future research may use observational methods to enhance

703 our understanding of coaches' (identified as inspirational by athletes) practices that may
704 inspire athletes. In addition, exploring experiences of high-profile coaches identified as
705 inspiring may be fruitful. However, as access to such coaches is limited, using available
706 media sources (eg, autobiographies)—as used in previous sport-leadership research (eg,
707 Smith, Arnold, & Thelwell)³⁹—may be useful in extending our understanding of inspirational
708 leadership. Such methods work to refine and extend our understanding of this process.

709 In addition, while this is a useful first step to developing a theory of inspirational
710 leadership in sport, to extend our understanding, it may be beneficial to explore how others in
711 leadership positions (both formal and informal) inspire athletes and peers. Further, this study
712 relied on experiences of participants from western (primarily British) cultures. Thus,
713 exploring experiences of participants from other cultures is important, and could enable
714 researchers to develop a formal theory of inspirational coach-leadership in sport.¹⁸ Further,
715 this study could provide the foundation for research exploring how leaders inspire followers
716 in other contexts (eg, in educational, organisational, and healthcare contexts). Finally, future
717 research could explore the feasibility and efficacy of leadership development programs based
718 upon these findings. To do so, an action-research approach—successfully adopted by
719 researchers who have developed programs based upon the proposals of grounded theory
720 studies (eg, Thrower, Harwood, & Spray)⁴⁰—could be used. Such an approach would also
721 provide the opportunity for the central proposals of the theory to be refined and, thus, further
722 our understanding of the process of inspirational coach-leadership.

723 **5. Perspectives**

724 This study offers a substantive grounded theory of the process of inspirational coach-
725 leadership in sport, and highlights the complex and nuanced process the coach engages with
726 in order to inspire athletes. As well as behaving in a manner to change athletes' awareness,

727 when athletes are lacking in knowledge or having a crisis in confidence, the developed theory
728 highlights that athletes' level of trust and respect for the coach has the potential to make or
729 break the potential for a coach to inspire athletes. Thus, in order to have an inspirational
730 influence coaches should engage in practices aimed at establishing trust and respect with their
731 athletes. Moreover, this theory provides coaches and coach developers with
732 recommendations on which to develop their own or others' ability to inspire. Given that this
733 is the first sport-specific theory of the process of inspirational coach-leadership, these results
734 offer an important theoretical foundation for future research and a theoretical framework on
735 which applied practice can be based.

736 **6. References**

- 737 1. Thrash TM, Moldovan EG, Oleynick VC, Maruskin LA. The Psychology of
738 Inspiration. *Social and Personality Psychology Compass*. 2014;8(9):495-510.
- 739 2. Thrash TM, Elliot AJ. Inspiration as a psychological construct. *J Pers Soc Psychol*.
740 2003;84(4):871-889.
- 741 3. Thrash TM, Maruskin LA, Cassidy SE, Fryer JW, Ryan RM. Mediating Between the
742 Muse and the Masses: Inspiration and the Actualization of Creative Ideas. *J Pers Soc*
743 *Psychol*. 2010;98(3):469-487.
- 744 4. Thrash TM, Elliot AJ, Maruskin LA, Cassidy SE. Inspiration and the Promotion of
745 Well-Being: Tests of Causality and Mediation. *J Pers Soc Psychol*. 2010;98(3):488-
746 506.
- 747 5. Arthur CA, Hardy L, Woodman T. Realising the Olympic dream: vision, support and
748 challenge. *Reflective Practice*. 2012;13(3):399-406.

- 749 6. Gonzalez SP, Metzler JN, Newton M. The Influence of a Simulated 'Pep Talk' on
750 Athlete Inspiration, Situational Motivation, and Emotion. *International Journal of*
751 *Sports Science & Coaching*. 2011;6(3):445-459.
- 752 7. Gucciardi DF, Jackson B, Hanton S, Reid M. Motivational correlates of mentally
753 tough behaviours in tennis. *Journal of Science and Medicine in Sport*. 2015;18(1):67-
754 71.
- 755 8. Bass BM. *Leadership and performance beyond expectations*. New York: Free Press;
756 1985.
- 757 9. Turnnidge J, Côté J. Applying transformational leadership theory to coaching
758 research in youth sport: A systematic literature review. *International Journal of Sport*
759 *and Exercise Psychology*. 2018;16(3):327-342.
- 760 10. Turnnidge J, Côté J. Transformational Coaching Workshop: Applying a Person-
761 Centred Approach to Coach Development Programs. *International Sport Coaching*
762 *Journal*. 2017;4(3):314-325.
- 763 11. van Knippenberg D, Sitkin SB. A Critical Assessment of Charismatic—
764 Transformational Leadership Research: Back to the Drawing Board? *The Academy of*
765 *Management Annals*. 2013;7(1):1-60.
- 766 12. Arthur CA, Bastardo N, Eklund R. Transformational leadership in sport: current
767 status and future directions. *Current Opinion in Psychology*. 2017;16:78-83.
- 768 13. Searle GD, Hanrahan SJ. Leading to inspire others: charismatic influence or hard
769 work? *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*. 2011;32(7):736-754.
- 770 14. Figgins SG, Smith MJ, Sellars CN, Greenlees IA, Knight CJ. “You really could be
771 something quite special”: A qualitative exploration of athletes' experiences of being
772 inspired in sport. *Psychol Sport Exerc*. 2016;24:82-91.

- 773 15. Smith MJ, Figgins SG, Jewiss M, Kearney PE. Investigating inspirational leader
774 communication in an elite team sport context. *International Journal of Sports Science*
775 *& Coaching*. 2018;13(2):213-224.
- 776 16. Chelladurai P. Leadership in sports. In: Tenenbaum G, Eklund RC, eds. *Handbook of*
777 *Sport Psychology*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.; 2007:113-135.
- 778 17. Holt NL, Tamminen KA. Improving grounded theory research in sport and exercise
779 psychology: Further reflections as a response to Mike Weed. *Psychol Sport Exerc*.
780 2010;11(6):405-413.
- 781 18. Weed M. Capturing the essence of grounded theory: the importance of understanding
782 commonalities and variants. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*.
783 2017;9(1):149-156.
- 784 19. Corbin J, Strauss A. *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for*
785 *developing grounded theory*. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage; 2008.
- 786 20. Dewey J. *Human nature in conduct*. New York: Henry Holt; 1922.
- 787 21. Morgan DL. Pragmatism as a Paradigm for Social Research. *Qualitative Inquiry*.
788 2014;20(8):1045-1053.
- 789 22. Knight CJ, Holt NL. Parenting in youth tennis: Understanding and enhancing
790 children's experiences. *Psychol Sport Exerc*. 2014;15(2):155-164.
- 791 23. Holt NL. Doing grounded theory in sport and exercise. In: Smith B, Sparkes A, eds.
792 *Routledge handbook of qualitative research in sport and exercise*. 2016:24-36.
- 793 24. Smith B, McGannon KR. Developing rigor in qualitative research: problems and
794 opportunities within sport and exercise psychology. *International Review of Sport and*
795 *Exercise Psychology*. 2017:1-21.

- 796 25. Slater MJ, Coffee P, Barker JB, Evans AL. Promoting shared meanings in group
797 memberships: a social identity approach to leadership in sport. *Reflective Practice*.
798 2014;15(5):672-685.
- 799 26. Deci EL, Ryan RM. The general causality orientations scale: Self-determination in
800 personality. *Journal of Research in Personality*. 1985;19(2):109-134.
- 801 27. Duda JL. The conceptual and empirical foundations of Empowering Coaching™:
802 Setting the stage for the PAPA project. *International Journal of Sport and Exercise*
803 *Psychology*. 2013;11(4):311-318.
- 804 28. Choi Y, Mai-Dalton RR. On the leadership function of self-sacrifice. *The Leadership*
805 *Quarterly*. 1998;9(4):475-501.
- 806 29. Greenleaf RK. *Servant Leadership*. New York: Paulist Press; 1977.
- 807 30. Antonakis J, Bastardo N, Jacquart P, Shamir B. Charisma: An Ill-Defined and Ill-
808 Measured Gift. *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational*
809 *Behavior*. 2016;3(1):293-319.
- 810 31. Baer MD, Colquitt JA. Moving toward a more comprehensive consideration of the
811 antecedents of trust. In: Searle RH, Nienabar AI, Sitkin SB, eds. *The Routledge*
812 *Companion to Trust*. Oxon: Routledge; 2018:163-182.
- 813 32. Unsworth KL, Kragt D, Johnston-Billings A. Am I a leader or a friend? How leaders
814 deal with pre-existing friendships. *The Leadership Quarterly*. 2018.
- 815 33. Dirks KT, Ferrin DL. Trust in leadership: Meta-analytic findings and implications for
816 research and practice. *J Appl Psychol*. 2002;87(4):611-628.
- 817 34. Mayer RC, Davis JH, Schoorman FD. An Integrative Model Of Organizational Trust.
818 *Acad Manage Rev*. 1995;20(3):709-734.

- 819 35. Lockwood P, Kunda Z. Increasing the salience of one's best selves can undermine
820 inspiration by outstanding role models. *J Pers Soc Psychol.* 1999;76(2):214-228.
- 821 36. Boardley ID. Coaching efficacy research: learning from the past and looking to the
822 future. *International Review of Sport and Exercise Psychology.* 2018;11(1):214-237.
- 823 37. Shamir B. Leadership takes time: Some implications of (not) taking time seriously in
824 leadership research. *The Leadership Quarterly.* 2011;22(2):307-315.
- 825 38. Cruickshank A, Collins D. Advancing Leadership in Sport: Time to Take Off the
826 Blinkers? *Sports Medicine.* 2016;46(9):1199-1204.
- 827 39. Slater MJ, Barker JB, Coffee P, Jones MV. Leading for gold: social identity
828 leadership processes at the London 2012 Olympic Games. *Qualitative Research in*
829 *Sport, Exercise and Health.* 2014:1-18.
- 830 40. Smith MJ, Arnold R, Thelwell RC. "There's No Place to Hide": Exploring the
831 Stressors Encountered by Elite Cricket Captains. *J Appl Sport Psychol.*
832 2018;30(2):150-170.
- 833 41. Thrower SN, Harwood CG, Spray CM. Educating and supporting tennis parents: an
834 action research study. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health.*
835 2017;9(5):600-618.