

Professionalism, Golf Coaching and a Master of Science Degree:

A Commentary

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INTRODUCTION

I am going to focus on a single theme in this commentary. It stems from the central thesis of Jenkins' paper, which is that a Master of Science degree would facilitate the development of 'professionalism' in golf coaches (p. 693). Importantly, I want to offer an alternative, additional perspective on what a Master's degree might do for golf coaches, by considering a further notion; Professionality. In an internet search, using the search term 'extended professionalism' will ensure access to many of these older sources. This is not because I agree - nor disagree - with Jenkins' central idea, it's just that another perspective might catalyse thinking about delivery, as opposed to content. To my mind, it makes sense to keep putting delivery style front-and-centre in all planning (and reviewing) activities, to ensure a good 'fit' to the learning preferences and dispositions of recruits.

PROFESSIONALITY

As a concept, Professionality has a long history, emerging first out of the work of an Education professor at the University of Bristol, Eric Hoyle [1]. This work has recently been revisited by academics in Leeds (e.g., [2]), which gives nice symmetry to my account, since I've worked at the University of Bristol (and knew Eric Hoyle) and I now work in Leeds, where I work with Simon Jenkins. In Hoyle's writing, Professionality describes the way in which any individual approaches working in a profession and how they go about practicing that profession. Professionality, therefore, can be seen as a half-sister to professionalism. It certainly subsumes a host of the other key terms that Jenkins uses to summarise his account. It is also important to recognise that Hoyle's notions of Professionality, while heuristic when he was writing about them, have subsequently been shown to have real relevance to teachers. For that reason, I'd suggest they have a similar standing among coaches - whose work is also centred on learning - and to those designing courses that purport to generate learning.

With two main forms - restricted and extended - Professionality can be conceptualised as existing on a continuum. In the context of the current account, it could be used to locate different golf coaches; some coaches lean more toward a restricted approach while others favour the extended form. Any individuals' position on the continuum identifies their 'Professionality orientation' [2]. Therefore, it does not represent a fixed perspective on their character or personality, but shows how they approach professional life. This extends to their learning life too.

EXTENDED PROFESSIONALITY

Individuals with an extended professionalism often delve deeply into the nuances of theory, epistemology, ontology and axiology. It is easy to see that these individuals willingly embed themselves in the debates of the day (but do not assume that they are willing to talk about their thinking), to learn about underlying concepts and philosophies. They take an intellectual approach to their work so they will be equally interested in delivery that improves not only what they know but also how they came to know it. These individuals may prefer 'knowing that' over 'knowing how', leaving them, potentially, less motivated by practically-based learning.

RESTRICTED PROFESSIONALITY

In contrast, individuals with a restricted professionalism favour learning from experience and day-to-day realities. Relying on 'book learning' doesn't really float their boat, whereas learning how to do things better in their immediate working spaces will. They respond to activities that centre on the 'doing' of daily life; they want practical experiences that link to, and that can enhance, their daily professional practice so the people they work with do better in those instances. Much of their learning challenge is to realise that what they've learned may not be the best way to help their clients; unlearning of longstanding habits is tough. It's no accident that the old adage is 'old habits die hard'!

CONCLUSION

Even allowing for its shortcomings, such as not depicting the intensity of commitment that any individual demonstrates within their orientation, Professionalism allows us to think about recruits in ways that we might not using other approaches. Just as each of these sets of recruits come with their own preferences for learning, they will experience the same challenges as any who are asked/required to learn in ways that cycle and recycle between familiar and unfamiliar. Sustaining the learning of individuals occupying different positions on the Restricted-Extended Professionalism continuum shows all degree design teams that there is much to both learn and to unlearn. After all, just as there will be variation in the 'Professionalism orientation' of students, the planners will include people on different points on the continuum too.

REFERENCES

1. Hoyle, E., Professionalism, Professionalism and Control in Teaching, in: Houghton, V. et al., eds., *Management in Education: the Management of Organisations and Individuals*, Ward Lock Educational in association with Open University Press, London, 1975.
2. Evans L., *Reflective Practice in Educational Research: Developing Advanced Skills* Continuum, London, 2002.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Jim McKenna is Professor of Physical Activity and Health and head of the Active Lifestyles research centre in the Carnegie Faculty at Leeds Beckett University (soon to be renamed Leeds Beckett University). Jim came from University of Bristol, where he completed both M. Phil. and Ph. D. degrees; he ended his 20 years of service as Head of the Department of Exercise and Health Sciences. He has an extensive portfolio of peer-reviewed publications and grants focused on behaviour change, all delivered and assessed on a range of scales. One intensive intervention addresses outcomes of staged recovery intervention targeted on wounded injured and sick service personnel, based on inclusive sport and adventure

education. A larger project quantitatively evaluated the outcomes of health promotion campaigns delivered through 16 professional English football clubs to hard-to-reach men. He reviews extensively both for peer-reviewed journals and for respected funding agencies. He has also won an array of prizes for high quality teaching and research and his current workload involves teaching both PG supervisors and Ph.D. students; he is Director of Studies for a range of funded Ph.D. students.