



BECOMING A REFLEXIVE PRACTITIONER



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The "Evaluate" and "Reflect" in Effective Goal Setting:
BECOMING A REFLEXIVE PRACTITIONER

Learning to Learn: Important Tenets

1. Learning is not instinctive: the development of solid understanding is not an instinctive process. Knowledge does not fall into your head without any effort. Everyone who teaches you has at some time had to go through the process of learning; there is no short-cut.
2. Knowing something.....is not the same as knowing the **name** of something. To *know* something takes time, real physical effort, and a period of assimilation and reflection. To *know* something you must develop a whole host of techniques; even if you have coped easily so far there will come a stage where the rate at which you are required to obtain knowledge and understanding will tax any informal techniques that you have to their limit. And, perhaps, beyond – to the point where you start to give up or to lose interest.
3. *Knowing* something takes time; do not be tempted to short-cut this time. At first you will feel that everything takes too much time, but do not worry. You are increasing your learning efficiency without realising it, and the more you learn the easier it becomes to learn more. Your learning will become much faster and less effort, I promise you.

Key Points:

1. Create a community of learning and resourceful coaches
2. Emphasize the "who they are" in the learning process
3. Engage with the final evaluation (standards of competency) as a process (opportunity for) of learning, not simply an end in itself
4. Time for reflection (and tools aimed at accessing appropriate reflection) are essential ingredients

Creating/Being "Reflective Practitioners"

STEPS OF FACILITATION:

It is the intention for Tennis Canada Course Facilitators to move from being the "deliverers" of content to "facilitators" who create experiences and activities to help candidates (learn to learn) and (learn to be)...coaches. A facilitator in this sense goes through a systematic process to **maximize** the learning of the candidates.

1. Find Candidate's Starting Points

- **BEING NON-OBVIOUS:** By letting candidates try an activity without telling them the content (Useful approach, for example, when time is not an issue since it takes time to organize everyone to have a turn. Good to create an "ah ha" experience) .
- **BEING OBVIOUS:** By giving candidates the content up front and using a process of learner-centred questioning to guide learning (Useful approach, for example, when time is an issue and/or when the content is specific to learning a "process" of delivery or unfolding).

2. Begin With the End in Mind

The Course Facilitator must have a clear picture of the goal of each activity before the activity begins in order to shape it appropriately. The end goal includes, but is not limited to these objectives:

- Candidates must improve content knowledge
- Candidates must improve ability to know and use materials (DVD's, manuals, etc.)
- Candidates must become more aware of how they learn

3. Set-up a Practical Learning Activity (PLA)

Set-up the roles each candidate has in the activity (e.g. Mock Coach, Observer, Mock Student). **As each role contributes to the learning process**, each participant needs to know how they will gather feedback to pass along to the Mock Coach. For example:

- The **Mock Coach** must know they will be receiving feedback from the others
- The **Observer** must know what they are specifically looking for (content knowledge, processes, etc.). It is more effective if the feedback is recorded on paper.
- The **Mock Student** must know what areas they will be asked to comment on. They need to know whether they will be a challenging student (with errors "planted" by the CF or, if they are to be a "good" student (e.g., working on improving their own demonstration skills). The experience of being a Mock Student is invaluable to help candidates better understand the Coach role and should not be underestimated.

4. Seal the Learning (REFLECTIVE PRACTICE)

The Course Facilitator must "summarize" the learning that occurred in the activity by ensuring the candidates put it in a form that they will retain. Sealing activities include:

- "Start, Stop, Continue" reflection work
- Each person in a role (e.g. observer), presenting their findings to the individual mock coach
- Each person in a role grouped together to present observations to the rest of the group (e.g. observers group reflects as a group, Mock coaches reflect as a group, Mock students reflect as a group)
- CF corrects "feedback and observations" against standard of competency
- CF presents group findings so knowledge is shared across many groups
- CF presents final skill or model as a baseline for reflection

Conclusion

By progressing through these steps, a Course Facilitator shifts the attention from themselves as a "lecturer" doling out the information or an "expert" who has information to be acquired by a group of learners (i.e., the course candidates) and assuming they are the sole source of knowledge, to each other to experience a learning process.

