

The Art of Coaching Educators:

SHIFTS IN PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

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Irish playwright George Bernard Shaw (1903) once wrote: "He who can, does. He who cannot, teaches". Over the years this myth has expanded to include: He who cannot teach, teaches teachers, and failing that, writes textbooks about education. The implication being that anyone involved in teaching does so because they cannot make a success of actually "doing" the job – and in the case of tennis pros - of making a living as a professional player.

But does the ability to do something well mean that you can teach it? And

and their coaches – and then find crucial time for research on the science of coaching and the art of inspiring others to personal coaching greatness. In essence, they balance the full-time demands of our coaching certification system with the full-time demands of their "day jobs".

The proof of this dedication is in the recent commendation for best practice in learning facilitation development by the Coaching Association of Canada (CAC) and the International Tennis Federation. Our coaching educators have implemented and improved upon the CAC's latest initiative, Competency Based Education Training. This approach to the development of sport coaches involves a shift from an emphasis in simply accumulating coaching "knowledge" to a focus on the proven abilities to implement said acumen. Whereas the previous coach educator role in the delivery of certification courses, the course conductor, focused

positive reflection and action, allowing coaches to adopt new awareness while working on old habits.

In addition to this tremendous commitment to their facilitation practice, Canadian coach educators have also prioritized the focus of their talents on both Progressive Tennis and on developing the base of coaches who themselves work in the trenches of player development: our entry level coaches at the Instructor and Club Pro 1 levels. By placing our best educators with these vital coaches, Tennis Canada continues to take the lead towards producing more and better competitors.

So what of Shaw's condemnation?

Perhaps the danger to caution against is that one who does things well often assumes that others will benefit most from emulating them. A more useful approach is to examine why it works and focus on the determinants of their success, enabling others to adapt