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Book Review

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Borggrefe, C. & Cachay, K. (2015). *Kommunikation als Herausforderung. Eine theoretisch-empirische Studie zur Trainer-Athlet-Kommunikation im Spitzensport.* Schorndorf: Hofmann-Verlag.

There is probably no role in high-performance sport which polarises to the same extent as the one of coaches: hyped and idolised in case of success, demonised and kicked to the curb when success is missing. If we regard success as the central quality feature of a coach's work, we should do so on the basis of a double non-linearity, i.e. a concept in which a first non-linearity refers to the implementation of athletic performance into competitive performance, and the second implying that success in competition may not directly be derived from a presented performance as competitions hold eventualities which should not be underestimated. This idea explicitly shows the real dilemma of a coach: while his or her routine mainly refers to developing athletic prowess and, to a small extent, to unfolding the athletes' or team's performance within a competition, he or she is exclusively judged by success – a problem which is especially difficult to handle in team sports which are characterised by instable systems and processes. All the more astonishing is the fact that the current status of research in sports science concerning the occupation of coaches still leaves much to be desired – an observation which can be applied especially to both the guidance of athletes and teams in exercise and competition and to the specific structures of communication and interaction within these settings.

This is the starting point from which Carmen Borggrefe (University of Stuttgart) and Klaus Cachay (University of Bielefeld) launch their theoretical and empirical study about the communicative demands for high-performance coaches, which are dealt with in nine chapters. The two initial chapters take a special position because the authors develop a theoretical framework on the basis of systems theory; this is followed by the presentation of the design of the study. Subsequently, Borggrefe and Cachay analyse six problematic issues in the athlete-coach-communication – not only on a theoretical level but also empirically. Hereby, the authors move from the basics of successful verbal communication and communication in specific situations of mental pressure to the importance of participation. The book is rounded off with a chapter on learning theory and didactics aiming at the acquisition of communicative competence.

When focusing on the authors' theoretical framework, one must not wonder that it is based on Luhmann's systems theory, an approach with which both Borggrefe and Cachay have a multitude of experience. This particularly applies to analyses of coaches' professional demands and tasks in high-performance sport, issues which

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