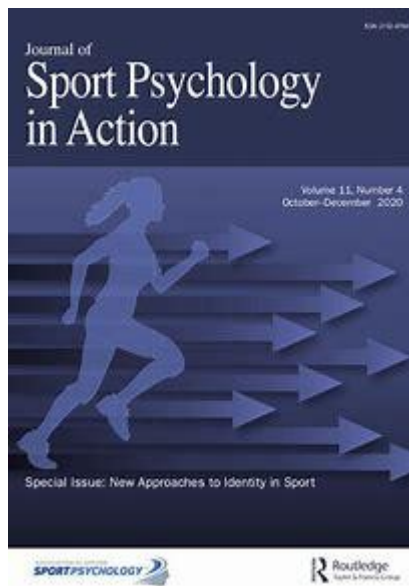


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## **Promoting the Leadership of Team Captains in Sports Contexts**

### **The Pro●Captains Program**

#### **Abstract**

Athlete leadership is crucial for optimizing the functioning of sports teams. In order to do so, athletes need to be provided with opportunities to develop their leadership skills, particularly team captains. This paper proposes the Pro●Captains Program based on the Leadership Efficacy Model (Gomes, 2020). The program includes six stages: (1) pre-intervention evaluation; (2) selecting team captains; (3) challenges of team captains; (4) behaviors of team captains; (5) leadership plan of team captains; and (6) post-intervention evaluation. The Pro●Captains Program can be tested in terms of efficacy and offers a practical framework for stakeholders interested in developing the leadership of team captains.

*Keywords:* Leadership Intervention; Leadership Efficacy Model; Leadership Efficacy; Pro●Captains Program; Team captains.

## **Promoting the Leadership of Team Captains in Sports Contexts: The Pro•Captains Program**

Studies of leadership in sports that have included the team captain (e.g., Butalia et al., 2020; Newman et al., 2019) have characterized this role as “an athlete who holds a formal or informal position within a team and who influences a group of team members to achieve a common goal” (Loughead et al., 2006, p. 144). The literature on athlete leadership suggests that athlete leaders can positively influence team cohesion, resilience, confidence, and satisfaction of their teammates (Butalia et al., 2020). Alternatively, if these leaders do not demonstrate confidence in their teammates' abilities, the influence of their leadership can have detrimental effects on the teams' confidence and performance (Fransen et al., 2015). Despite these interesting results, there is still a long way to go, especially in terms of what is known about the skills that an athlete needs to possess in order to assume a leadership role and also how to maximize the development of these and future leaders (Cotterill et al., 2022). In line with this idea, there are some intervention programs designed to stimulate leadership skills in athletes, as described below.

The program Developing Sports Team Captains as Formal Leaders (Newman et al., 2019) was developed due to gaps in what is known about the role of team captains, presenting five processes for selecting and developing athletes as formal leaders: (1) fostering a culture of leadership in the team; (2) determining the functions/roles of team captains; (3) identifying and selecting team captains; (4) developing and supporting the team captains; and, finally, (5) evaluating and reinforcing the team captains. The authors reinforce that the program stimulates leadership skills of team captains and allows team captains to transfer the leadership skills to other facets of their lives (Newman et al., 2019).

The 5R Shared Leadership Program-5RS by Fransen et al. (2020) is an adaptation of the 5R Program, developed for leaders in organizations, to the sports context. While maintaining the original objective of helping to improve leadership skills, this program also highlights the benefits of using shared leadership, involving two stages: (1) implementing a shared leadership structure and mapping this type of leadership by identifying the best leaders in the team, and (2) developing the participants' leadership potential by running three workshops delivered by team captains for their colleagues (Cotterill et al., 2022; Fransen et al., 2020).

The MHSAA Captains Leadership Training Program is the result of a partnership between the Institute for the Study of Youth Sports and the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA), with the objective of teaching current and future captains how to be effective leaders in sports and thus improve the overall quality of school sports. This program aims for the transfer of leadership skills acquired in the program to other contexts in athletes' lives, and consists of two stages: (1) a one-day face-to-face "clinic", which describes the program's objectives and expectations and focuses on the importance of leadership as well as the idea that leadership skills can be learned, and (2) the captains' self-study guide, a complement to the face-to-face activities; this guide consists of six chapters, each of which discusses a specific leadership area (e.g., motivation or communication) with practical examples from athletes, coaches, and statespersons and a

series of exercises for athletes to carry out during the “clinic” or on their own (Gould & Voelker, 2010).

### **Pro●Captains Program**

The Pro●Captains Program is based on the Leadership Efficacy Model (LEM; Gomes, 2020) that congregates three factors that contribute to explain leadership efficacy: leadership cycles, leadership styles, and antecedent factors of leadership. The model was developed by considering major contributions from literature related to coaching philosophy (e.g., Gould et al., 2017; Lyle & Cushion, 2017), leadership behaviors (e.g., Antonakis, 2012; Sosik & Jung, 2018), and the characteristics of leaders, team members, and context where leadership occurs (e.g., Northouse, 2021). Specifically, it is proposed in the LEM that leadership cycles, leadership styles, and antecedent factors of leadership act in an interchangeable way to explain the leadership efficacy. It should be clarified that “leadership efficacy” relates to multiple impacts and consequences produced by leadership that can occur at both subjective and objective domains (Gomes, 2020), and should not be confused with the well-known concept of personal self-efficacy. In simple terms, leadership efficacy represents the consequences produced by leadership. Due to the importance of these three factors in the Pro●Captains Program, it is important to explain the way they influence the leadership efficacy.

Leadership cycles is the first and main factor of the LEM representing the beliefs of coaches about their leadership (conceptual cycle) and what coaches tend to do when leading athletes and teams (practical cycles) (Gomes, 2020). Both cycles include three dimensions (a) leadership philosophy: values, beliefs, assumptions, attitudes, principles, and priorities assumed by the leader which influence both practice and criteria of leadership; (b) leadership practice: specific behaviors assumed by the leader to fulfil their coaching philosophy; and (c) leadership criteria: personal and professional indicators that help the leaders to monitor whether they are meeting the tenets of their philosophy and the practice of leadership. According to the LEM, leaders can maximize their leadership impact if they craft a linear relationship between leadership philosophy, practice, and criteria. This linear relationship is obtained when the conceptual cycle of leadership, i.e., how leaders think to exercise leadership, is aligned with the practical cycle of leadership, i.e., how leaders actually exercise leadership in a specific situation. In simple words, leaders can increase their impact when they achieve congruence between what they think they should do (conceptual cycle of leadership) and what they really do (practical cycle of leadership) when leading others (congruence of leadership cycles). This implies that leaders should have a mental representation of what they value and intend to do (conceptual cycle) but they also should act in accordance to the established representations (practical cycle).

The second factor of the model tries to explain how leaders implement the leadership cycles, i.e., how do they proceed to explain the conceptual cycle of leadership and behave when assuming the practical cycle of leadership. In this case, it is necessary to consider the leadership styles and subsequent behaviors (Gomes & Resende, 2014). Leadership styles refer to specific set of behaviors used by leaders to achieve a certain goal and can be divided into transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and

decision-making leadership. Transformational leadership refers to the influence produced by the leaders in followers' attitudes, beliefs, and values in order to stimulate commitment and sacrifice regarding the established positive vision, achieving outstanding results above those expected under normal circumstances. Transactional leadership refers to the influence produced by the leaders based on an exchange relation between the leader that sets the tasks and goals to achieve, and the followers that agree to accept the leaders' authority and do the tasks in exchange of some material or psychological compensation. Decision-making leadership refers to how power and authority are managed by the leaders, reflected by how important decisions are assumed. The power and authority of leaders can be assumed in a more active way by centralizing decisions on the leader (when leaders persuade others for a certain decision) or decentralizing decisions on the athletes (when leaders negotiate distinct courses of actions), or in a passive way by avoiding or delaying responsibility for decision-making when it is necessary to solve important problems (Gomes & Resende, 2014). The LEM includes these three styles of leadership, constituted by nine leadership behaviors organized by transformational leadership (vision, inspiration, instruction, individualization, and support), transactional leadership (positive feedback and negative feedback), and decision-making leadership (active management and passive management). These nine behaviors can be organized in two profiles of leadership behaviors: the optimal and the suboptimal (Gomes, 2020). The optimal profile is established by higher use of the five transformational leadership behaviors, higher use of positive feedback and lower use of negative feedback from transactional leadership, and higher use of active management and lower use of passive management from decision-making leadership. On the other hand, the suboptimal profile of leadership is represented by lower use of the five transformational leadership behaviors, lower use of positive feedback and higher use of negative feedback from transactional leadership, and lower use of active management and higher use of passive management from decision-making leadership. Considering these two leadership behaviors profiles, it is suggested in the LEM that when leaders assume an optimal profile of leadership as opposed of assuming a suboptimal leadership profile there is a maximization of the effects produced by the congruence of leadership cycles on consequences produced by leadership, increasing leadership efficacy (Gomes, 2020). In simple terms, leaders can augment their efficacy if they develop and apply the leadership cycles by using the optimal profile of leadership. Thus, the impacts produced by leadership increase when leaders assume positive behaviors, originating the optimal leadership profile (Gomes, 2020).

The third and last factor of the model is antecedent factors of leadership, which include three dimensions: (a) personal and professional characteristics of the leader, (b) personal and professional characteristics of team members, and (c) situational characteristics where leadership occurs. Specifically, leader and team members' characteristics include personal factors (e.g., gender, age), stable mental factors (e.g., personality, personal beliefs), and dynamic mental factors (e.g., tolerance for adversity, coping with problems). Situational characteristics refers to specific conditions provided by the organization under which the leader is working, including the responsibility attributed to the leader, the type of organization in which the leadership occurs, and the

external environment around where the leader exerts activity (Gomes, 2020). It is proposed in the LEM that leadership efficacy increases when antecedent factors of leadership operate as facilitators of leaders' actions or when the leader has antecedent factors that operate as inhibitors of their actions but adopts strategies to minimize its impact (Gomes, 2020). In the same way as profiles of leadership, there is a maximization of the effects produced by the congruence of leadership cycles on the leadership efficacy when leaders have antecedent factors of leadership that operate as facilitators of their activity (leadership favorability). In simple terms, leaders should consider the antecedent factors of leadership when they formulate the leadership cycles, meaning that they can increase the leadership efficacy if they adjust the leadership cycles to their own personal characteristics, the characteristics of team members, and characteristics of the situation where leadership occurs. The conjunction of these three factors explains leadership efficacy, whether at a subjective domain (e.g., athlete satisfaction with leadership) or at an objective domain (e.g., athlete and team performance) (Gomes, 2020).

Taking into account the three factors of the LEM, leaders increase their leadership efficacy if they establish conceptual and practical cycles of leadership that are congruent with each other, which means that leaders should not "only" define conceptually their leadership but they should also act in accordance to the defined leadership. Moreover, leaders should establish the congruence of leadership by using the optimal profile of leadership and by stimulating the favorability of leadership, meaning that the leadership cycles congruence, the optimal profile of leadership, and the leadership favorability work in an integrated way to augment the impacts of leadership (i.e., leadership efficacy).

In sum, there are three key implications of the LEM for the Pro●Captains that team captains should be aware of (a) how antecedent factors of leadership may influence their activity, and consequently develop strategies that increase their leadership favorability; (b) how leadership styles may influence their activity, aiming to develop an optimal profile of leadership; and (c) how leadership cycles may influence their activity, establishing congruent conceptual and practical cycles of leadership.

Considering these contributions from the literature, and particularly the ones provided by the LEM, this paper proposes an intervention program called the Pro●Captains Program. The program has four major contributions: (a) it is theoretically based, which allows for testing the impact of the three leadership factors in the way team captains exert their influence in teammates; (b) it allows for intervention in three main theoretical constructs related to the leadership efficacy, namely the leadership cycles, the leadership styles, and the antecedent factors of leadership; (c) it is a team-based intervention, including not only the team captains but also allows the rest of the team to be part of the intervention program; and (d) it is a multidisciplinary intervention, by including several professionals and resources from each sport organization.

### **Purpose and Stages**

The main objective of the Pro●Captains Program is to promote leadership skills in the athletes who assume the role of captain in sports contexts. More specifically, this proposal aims to provide a training model for coaches to select and develop athletes' ability to be team captains. In fact, although many coaches want to develop the leadership

of their athletes and captains, many of them lack the knowledge and skills to do so efficiently (Newman et al., 2019). Thus, this paper tries to overcome this challenge by proposing a step-by-step intervention that can help athletes to develop leadership skills when they assume the role of team captain. The major need for those interested in using the Pro●Captains Program is to be aware of the leadership topic, in terms of theories and major applications. As said, this program is based in the LEM that includes several contributions from the literature (for a review see Antonakis, 2012; Gomes, 2020; Gould et al., 2017; Northouse, 2021).

The Pro●Captains Program consists of six stages: (1) pre-intervention evaluation; (2) selecting team captains (2 sessions; 1 hour per session; 2 hours in total); (3) challenges of team captains, corresponding to the antecedent factors of leadership of the LEM (3 sessions; 1 hour per session; 3 hours in total); (4) behaviors of team captains, corresponding to the leadership styles of the LEM (3 sessions; 2 hours per session; 6 hours in total); (5) leadership plan of team captains, corresponding to the leadership cycles of the LEM (3 sessions; 3 hours per session; 6 hours in total); and (6) post-intervention evaluation<sup>1</sup>.

## **Resources**

In terms of human resources, the Pro●Captains Program includes coaches, athletes, sport managers, former athletes, and a sport psychology professional. The inclusion of the sport psychology professional can improve the program implementation in distinct ways: (a) it is a professional that typically has educational and scientific knowledge about the leadership topic; (b) it is a professional that has training and is certified to do the psychological evaluation of potential team captains; and (c) it is a professional that typically has educational and professional training to manage groups, meaning that they can improve the quality of the training provided by team captains in several sessions of this program. In terms of material and technological resources, a writing board, a computer and multimedia projector, as well as printing material provided by this program are needed.

## **Pre-Intervention Evaluation (Stage 1)**

Evaluating the efficacy of intervention programs represents a key factor to determine the value of strategies used in sports to promote a certain aspect of athletes' functioning. For the Pro●Captains Program, the leadership efficacy achieved by team captains can be evaluated implicitly and explicitly, corresponding to five facets of analysis: psychological, relational, social, related behavior, and potentially related behavior. The direct relation between the intervention program and these five facets of analysis can change according to the selected measures, being some of them typically more related to potential effects of the intervention program (e.g., communication patterns among athletes), while others can also depend on other external factors (e.g., athletes' performance). Thus, it is important that the selected measures can capture the distinct impacts produced by team captains' leadership. These impacts can be implicit or

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<sup>1</sup> The general organization of the Pro●Captains Program is included in the supplementary material section.

explicit. Specifically, for the Pro●Captains Program the implicit impact of leadership refers subjective consequences produced by the team captains on others (typically on team members) and that can be evaluated in three domains: (a) psychological domain: measures of leadership can be used to evaluate athletes' opinion about the leadership of team captains (e.g., Multidimensional Scale of Leadership - Version for sports; Gomes et al., 2021); (b) relational domain: measures of communication can be collected to evaluate athletes' opinion about the relational behaviors of team captains during training sessions and competitions (e.g., Communication Behaviors Questionnaire; Gomes et al., 2020); (c) social domain: measures of teamwork can be collected to evaluate athletes' opinion about the contributes of team captains to increase cohesion among athletes (e.g., Group Environment Questionnaire; Carron et al., 1985). The explicit impact of leadership refers to objective consequences produced by the team captains on others (typically on team members) and that can be evaluated in two domains: (a) behavioral (related) domain: collecting measures to evaluate objective changes of behaviors related to the team captains' leadership, as is the case of cooperation behaviors among athletes during trainings and competitions; and (b) behavioral (potentially related) domain: collecting measures to evaluate changes of behaviors that can have some relation to the team captains' leadership, as is the case of the performance achieved by the team in competitions (e.g., objective performance of athletes and teams). Potentially related behavioral measures should be used carefully to evaluate the impact of team captains because many other factors contribute to objective performance of athletes and teams beyond the team captains' leadership. The measures to evaluate the efficacy of the Pro●Captains Program can be changed according to the specific interests of the professionals involved in the intervention. These measures should be collected before the first session of the program (pre-intervention evaluation) and after the last session of the program (post-intervention evaluation).

### **Selecting Team Captains (Stage 2)**

The first and last stages of the program concern the evaluation of athletes who are or are candidates to be team captains. For this purpose, two sessions of 1 hour each are proposed to determine the characteristics of team captains (first session) and to select the athletes in best position to be team captains (second session).<sup>2</sup>

### **Challenges of Team Captains (Stage 3)**

The Pro●Captains Program includes three sessions for this part of the program, each with a different aim: (1) to analyze the culture and conditions of the sport organization; (2) to analyze coaches' expectations and philosophy; and (3) to analyze the expectations, roles, and responsibilities of the team captain. The main purpose of this part of the program is to give team captains a better idea of factors that can facilitate or inhibit their actions and what kind of adjustments they should do when defining their leadership plan. In fact, and according to the LEM, antecedent factors of leadership can operate as facilitators or inhibitors of leaders' activity (Gomes, 2020), meaning that leaders should

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<sup>2</sup> The general organization of the Pro●Captains Program is included in the supplementary material section.

be aware of how to intervene to transform antecedent factors as allies of their leadership. It is worth noting that some antecedent factors may be more structural and stable (e.g., gender, age, personality, personal beliefs, type of organization where leadership occurs) while others may seem more processual and dynamic (e.g., tolerance for adversity, coping with problems, power attributed to the leader). Thus, Pro●Captains Program includes team captains' training to adjust their leadership according to stable and dynamic factors related to the culture and conditions of the sport organization, coaches' expectations and philosophy, and even the requirements to be a team captain in terms of expectations, roles, and responsibilities.<sup>3</sup>

#### **Behaviors of Team Captains (Stage 4)**

The training of leadership behaviors of team captains is fundamental to increase their ability to assume the role of leaders and also to set and implement the leadership plan in next part of the program. The Pro●Captains Program includes three sessions directed for the three leadership styles of the LEM: transformational leadership (first session), transactional leadership (second session), and decision-making leadership (third session). Thus, participants are encouraged to formulate a leadership discourse of eight leadership behaviors (the passive management behavior is not trained due to the negative effects produced in leadership efficacy; see, for example, Skogstad et al., 2007). Although negative feedback of transactional leadership is also a behavior to avoid by leaders (see, for example, Niemann et al., 2014; Yuan et al., 2000) it is trained in the Pro●Captains Program by assuming a "positive" form: athletes are alerted that they should use this behavior in very specific situations, such as when teammates do not behave according to established rules and responsibilities defined for the team, and they should objectively direct negative feedback to unacceptable behaviors of teammates, avoiding to make any negative comment about personality or values of them.

The role-play used in all the session can be set by establishing three roles: (a) the role of leaders, assumed by team captains that train the leadership behaviors; (b) the role of interlocutors, assumed by the other athletes that interact and evaluate the team captains; and (c) the role of monitor, assumed by the sport psychology professional that observes and models the desired behaviors in the team captains.<sup>4</sup>

#### **Leadership Plan of Team Captains (Stage 5)**

The elaboration of a leadership plan is the central component of the Pro●Captains Program, including three training sessions. The first session is dedicated to the elaboration of the leadership philosophy; the second session is dedicated to the elaboration of the leadership practice; and the third session is dedicated to the elaboration of the leadership criteria and adjustment of the plan to the antecedent factors of leadership (characteristics of coach, team members, and situation) as well as selection of final behaviors to establish the leadership plan. Specifically, team captains start the sessions by defining their

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<sup>3</sup> The general organization of the Pro●Captains Program is included in the supplementary material section.

<sup>4</sup> The general organization of the Pro●Captains Program is included in the supplementary material section.

leadership in terms of philosophy, practice, and criteria, and then enter in roleplay situations to present and train their leadership with other teammates.

The role-play used in all sessions can be set by establishing three roles: (a) the role of leaders, assumed by team captains that train the leadership plan; (b) the role of interlocutors, assumed by the other athletes that interact and evaluate the team captains; and (c) the role of monitor, assumed by the sport psychology professional that observes and models the leadership plan of team captains.<sup>5</sup>

### **Post-Intervention Evaluation (Stage 6)**

The same measures of the pre-intervention evaluation can be applied in this final phase to evaluate the efficacy of the intervention program. Thus, measures of intervention efficacy should be collected after the last session of the program (post-intervention evaluation). This can give a broad perspective of impacts produced by the actions of team captains, becoming evident areas where the influence is positive and areas that should be improved in the near future. The procedure analysis should be decided by each researcher, but the main purpose is to compare the values obtained before and after intervention by using “paired sample t test”, depending, of course, on the number of participants in the intervention other statistical tests can be used. For example, if the same measures are collected for control groups, then “Mixed ANOVA” may be a valid option of data analysis.

### **Conclusion**

Athlete leadership is a crucial element in optimizing the functioning of sports team. However, as research on this topic has already shown, a holistic understanding of leadership in the context of the team encompassing the coach, coach assistants, formal and informal leaders is essential, and a sharing of leadership by the various athletes, most notably the team captains, can indeed improve sports activity. In this sense, and although the main objective of the program is to provide leadership training to team captains, the program also involved the stakeholders of the sport organization. Besides, by anchoring the Pro●Captains Program in a theoretical model, this paper clarifies the mechanisms that can explain the team captains’ leadership and allows researchers to test how the program can improve several dimensions of psychological and social functioning and performance of athletes and teams. In fact, the program is now ready and free to be used by professionals interested in stimulating the leadership of athletes. This will reinforce existing knowledge about the program as it has been applied in sports organizations by the authors of this paper but studies with data on its effectiveness have not yet been published. From a practical point of view, the Pro●Captains Program includes several factors that align with daily experiences that emerge in many sport organizations, as is the culture and values of teams, the philosophy of coaches, the expectations and needs of team members, and the responsibilities that team captains are supposed to fulfill. The Pro●Captains Program recognizes all these factors and propose specific strategies that can strength the influence produced by team captains.

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<sup>5</sup> The general organization of the Pro●Captains Program is included in the supplementary material section.

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## **Supplementary material**

**Table 1***Pro●Captains Program: Organization and Areas of Training*

| <b>Leadership Efficacy Model</b>                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>Pro●Captains Program</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <b>1. Selecting team captains</b><br><b>Goals</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determining the characteristics of potential team captains</li> <li>• Selecting the team captains</li> </ul> <b>Duration</b><br>✓ 2 sessions; 1 hour per session (2 hours)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Antecedent factors of leadership</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leader characteristics</li> <li>• Team members characteristics</li> <li>• Situational characteristics</li> </ul> | <b>2. Challenges of team captains</b><br><b>Goal</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowing the expectations, roles, and responsibilities of the team captain</li> <li>• Defining the responsibilities of team captains</li> </ul> <b>Duration</b><br>✓ 3 sessions; 1 hour per session (3 hours)                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Leadership styles</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transformational leadership</li> <li>• Transactional leadership</li> <li>• Decision-making leadership</li> </ul>                | <b>3. Behaviors of team captains</b><br><b>Goal</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning and demonstrating positive leadership behaviors (e.g., transformational, transactional, and decision-making)</li> </ul> <b>Duration</b><br>✓ 3 sessions; 2 hours per session (6 hours)                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Leadership cycles</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leadership philosophy</li> <li>• Leadership practice</li> <li>• Leadership criteria</li> </ul>                                  | <b>4. Leadership of team captains</b><br><b>Goals</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defining the leadership plan, according to the philosophy, practice, and criteria of team captains</li> <li>• Adjusting the leadership plan to the characteristics of the coach, team members, and situation</li> <li>• Selecting the leadership behaviors for the leadership plan (e.g., transformational, transactional, and decision-making)</li> </ul> <b>Duration</b><br>✓ 3 sessions; 2 hours per session (6 hours) |
| <b>Total</b>                                                                                                                                                                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sessions: 11</li> <li>• Duration: 17 hours</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

**Table 2***Pro●Captains Program: Selecting the Team Captains*

|                     | <b>1st Session</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>2nd Session</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Goals</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Determining the characteristics of team captains</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Selecting the team captains</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Topics</b>       | Team captains profile                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Team captains election                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Duration</b>     | 1 hour per session (2 hours)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Participants</b> | Coach<br>Athletes<br>Sport psychologist                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Coach<br>Athletes<br>Sport psychologist                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Materials</b>    | Writing board<br>Computer and Projector<br>Psychological tools (if determined)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Procedure</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coach and sport psychology professional present the formal duties of team captains</li> <li>Athletes meet together in small groups to discuss their ideas of a team captain and who is interested to assume the role of team captain</li> <li>Group reflection about the conclusions of small group meetings</li> <li>Athletes fulfill psychological tools after the session (if determined)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sport psychology professional uses data from the psychological assessment to discuss the psychological characteristics of sport captains (if determined)</li> <li>Coach and athletes establish the athletes with the role of sport captains</li> <li>If there is no agreement between everyone involved, other forms of decision may be adopted (e.g., voting, coaches' decision)</li> </ul> |

**Table 3***Pro●Captains Program: Training the Challenges of Team Captains*

|                     | 3rd Session                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 4th Session                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 5th Session                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Goals</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Knowing the expectations, roles, and responsibilities of the team captain</li> <li>Defining the responsibilities of team captains</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Topics</b>       | Culture and conditions of the sport organization                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Coaches' expectations and philosophy                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Expectations, roles, and responsibilities of the team captains                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Duration</b>     | 1 hour per session (3 hours)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Participants</b> | Managers<br>Coaches<br>Sport psychologist<br>Former athletes<br>Team captains<br>Athletes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Coach<br>Sport psychologist<br>Team captains<br>Athletes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Coach<br>Sport psychologist<br>Team captains<br>Athletes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Materials</b>    | Writing board<br>Computer and Projector<br>Team captains' contract of responsibilities                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Procedure</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Presentations about the sport organization by stakeholders (managers, coaches or former athletes of the team)</li> <li>○ Athletes meet together in small groups (one team captain and a few number of athletes) to reflect about the implications for team captains and conclusions are presented for the entire group by one element</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The coach shares and defines the leadership philosophy and what expects from the team captains and from all the athletes</li> <li>○ Athletes meet together in small groups (one team captain and a few number of athletes) to reflect about the implications for team captains and conclusions are presented for the entire group by one element</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Athletes meet together in small groups (one team captain and a few number of athletes) to define the responsibilities of team captains and conclusions are presented for the entire group by one element</li> <li>○ Coach and team captains sign a document where are established the responsibilities of team captains</li> </ul> |

**Table 4****Pro●Captains Program: Training the Team Captains Behaviors**

|                     | <b>6th Session</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>7th Session</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>8th Session</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Goals</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning and demonstrating positive leadership behaviors (e.g., transformational, transactional, and decision-making)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Topics</b>       | Transformational leadership                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Transactional leadership                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Decision-making leadership                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Duration</b>     | 2 hours per session (6 hours)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Participants</b> | Sport psychologist<br>Team captains<br>Athletes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Materials</b>    | Guidelines of Team Captains Behaviors Roleplay                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roleplay with team captains and athletes in order to provide team captains the opportunity to assume transformational behaviors (vision, inspiration, instruction, individualization, and support)</li> </ul>                                                                                                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roleplay with team captains and athletes in order to provide team captains the opportunity to assume transactional behaviors (positive feedback)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roleplay with team captains and athletes in order to provide team captains the opportunity to assume decision-making behaviors (active management)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Procedure</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The sport psychology professional observes and models the desired behaviors</li> <li>Athletes provide two types of feedback to team captains about the assumed behaviors: qualitative feedback (general opinion) and quantitative feedback (1 = It can be improved; 2 = Good; 3 = Very good; 4 = Excellent)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The sport psychology professional observes and models the desired behaviors</li> <li>Athletes provide two types of feedback to team captains about the assumed behaviors: qualitative feedback (general opinion) and quantitative feedback (1 = It can be improved; 2 = Good; 3 = Very good; 4 = Excellent)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The sport psychology professional observes and models the desired behaviors</li> <li>Athletes provide two types of feedback to team captains about the assumed behaviors: qualitative feedback (general opinion) and quantitative feedback (1 = It can be improved; 2 = Good; 3 = Very good; 4 = Excellent)</li> </ul> |

**Figure 1**

Pro●Captains Program: Guidelines of Team Captains Behaviors Roleplay

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Transformational leadership</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Influence produced by the team captains in teammates' attitudes, beliefs, and values in order to stimulate commitment and sacrifice to the established positive vision, achieving outstanding results above those expected under normal circumstances.</li></ul>                                                                                                                                               |
| <p>(a) <b>Vision:</b> team captains' tendency to present an enthusiastic and optimistic vision of their teammates' future.</p> <p><b>Question</b></p> <p>Think about some ideas and principles you want to transmit as team captain to your teammates (e.g., importance of team work, importance of team goals. importance of personal compromise in training and competitions, etc.). Elaborate below a leadership discourse directed to your teammates by using the vision behavior.</p> <hr/> |
| <p>(b) <b>Inspiration:</b> team captains' positive expectations and behaviors directed towards promoting the success and continuous efforts of their teammates.</p> <p><b>Question</b></p> <p>Think about a motivational speech you want to use as team captain to stimulate maximum efforts of your teammates. Elaborate below a leadership discourse directed to your teammates by using the inspiration behavior.</p> <hr/>                                                                   |
| <p>(c) <b>Instruction:</b> team captains' actions focused on teaching positively technical skills to the teammates.</p> <p><b>Question</b></p> <p>Think about a technical feedback you want to give as team captain to stimulate progression of your teammates. Elaborate below a leadership discourse directed to your teammates by using the instruction behavior.</p> <hr/>                                                                                                                   |
| <p>(d) <b>Individualization:</b> team captains' tendency to consider the personal needs and expectations of teammates.</p> <p><b>Question</b></p> <p>Think about a specific feedback you want to give as team captain to stimulate the personal value of your teammates to the team. Elaborate below a leadership discourse directed to your teammates by using the individualization behavior.</p> <hr/>                                                                                        |
| <p>(e) <b>Support:</b> team captains' personal concern regarding their teammates' well-being and interest in building positive relationships based on mutual confidence.</p> <p><b>Question</b></p> <p>Think about a personal feedback you want to give as team captain to stimulate the mutual identification and interpersonal trust between you and your teammates. Elaborate below a leadership discourse directed to your teammates by using the support behavior.</p> <hr/>                |

**Figure 1 (cont.)**

**Pro●Captains Program: Guidelines of Team Captains Behaviors Roleplay**

**Transactional leadership**

- Influence produced by the team captains is based on an exchange relation between the team captains that sets the tasks and goals to achieve, and the teammates that agree to accept the team captains' authority and do the tasks in exchange of some material or psychological compensation.

(f) **Positive feedback:** team captains' reinforcement and recognition of good performance and effort of teammates.

**Question**

Think about a reinforcement speech you want to use as team captain to congratulate the efforts of your teammates. Elaborate below a leadership discourse directed to your teammates by using the positive feedback behavior.

---

(g) **Negative feedback:** punishment behaviors applied by team captains with the intention to manage teammates' inadequate behaviors and performance.

**Question**

Think about a corrective speech you want to use as team captain to change some negative behavior of your teammates. Please direct your discourse to specific negative behaviors of your teammates that are not according established rules and responsibilities defined for the team AND avoid to make any negative comment about personality or values of your teammates. Elaborate below a leadership discourse directed to your teammates by using the negative feedback behavior.

---

**Decision-making leadership**

- Influence produced by the team captains is based on how power and authority are managed, reflected by how important decisions are assumed. The power and authority of team captains can be assumed in a more or less active way (decision-making centralized on the team captains or decentralized decision-making involving the teammates) or in a passive way (avoiding or delaying responsibility for decision-making when it is necessary to solve important problems).

(h) **Active management:** team captains' behaviors of power management, by assuming the decisions in a more decentralized (involving the teammates) or in a more centralized process (assuming the decisions alone).

**Question**

Think about a specific topic you want to discuss with your teammates, considering that you want to start by listening all the opinions (decentralized active management) and then you have to decide what to do in the situation (centralized active management). Elaborate below your strategy to use in a meeting with your teammates (e.g., decide the topic of discussion; elaborate activities to guarantee that you listen all the opinions; and elaborate activities to guarantee that you make the best decision after hearing all the opinions).

---

(i) **Passive management:** team captains' avoidance or delay in taking responsibility for decision-making when this is necessary to solve important problems.

Note: due negative effects of this behavior in leadership efficacy, it is not included in the Pro●Captains Program.

**Table 5****Pro●Captains Program: Training the Leadership Plan**

|                     | <b>9th Session</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | <b>10th Session</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <b>11th Session</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Goals</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defining the leadership plan, according to the philosophy, practice, and criteria of team captains</li> <li>Adjusting the leadership plan to the characteristics of the coach, team members, and situation</li> <li>Selecting the leadership behaviors for the leadership plan (e.g., transformational, transactional, and decision-making)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Topics</b>       | Leadership philosophy                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Leadership practice                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Leadership criteria                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Duration</b>     | 2 hours per session (6 hours)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Participants</b> | Sport psychologist<br>Team captains<br>Athletes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Materials</b>    | Team Captains Leadership Plan<br>Writing board                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Procedure</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Athletes meet together in small groups (one team captain and a few number of athletes) to define the leadership philosophy</li> <li>Roleplay with team captains and athletes in order to provide team captains the opportunity to assume the leadership philosophy</li> <li>The sport psychology professional observes and models the desired leadership philosophy</li> <li>Athletes provide two types of feedback to team captains about the leadership philosophy: qualitative feedback (general opinion) and quantitative feedback (1 = It can be improved; 2 = Good; 3 = Very good; 4 = Excellent)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Athletes meet together in small groups (one team captain and a few number of athletes) to define the leadership practice</li> <li>Roleplay with team captains and athletes in order to provide team captains the opportunity to assume the leadership practice</li> <li>The sport psychology professional observes and models the desired leadership practice</li> <li>Athletes provide two types of feedback to team captains about the leadership practice: qualitative feedback (general opinion) and quantitative feedback (1 = It can be improved; 2 = Good; 3 = Very good; 4 = Excellent)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Athletes meet together in small groups (one team captain and a few number of athletes) to define the leadership criteria</li> <li>Roleplay with team captains and athletes in order to provide team captains the opportunity to assume the decision making leadership</li> <li>The sport psychology professional observes and models the desired leadership criteria</li> <li>Athletes provide two types of feedback to team captains about the leadership criteria: qualitative feedback (general opinion) and quantitative feedback (1 = It can be improved; 2 = Good; 3 = Very good; 4 = Excellent)</li> <li>Team captains elaborate the final version of the leadership plan</li> </ul> |

**Figure 2**

Pro●Captains Program: *Elaboration of Team Captains Leadership Plan*

| Team Captains Leadership Plan                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                   |                                      |                                      |                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Section 1: Leadership philosophy                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                   |                                      |                                      |                    |
| (Values, beliefs, assumptions, attitudes, principles, and priorities assumed by team captains which influence both practice and criteria of leadership)                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                   |                                      |                                      |                    |
| <b>Questions</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                   |                                      |                                      |                    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What is your leadership philosophy as team captain?</li> <li>○ What are your most important ideas? What are your goals?</li> <li>○ Are your ideas and goals important to your team? How?</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                         |                   |                                      |                                      |                    |
| Leadership plan                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                   |                                      |                                      |                    |
| ?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                   |                                      |                                      |                    |
| Section 2: Leadership practice                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                   |                                      |                                      |                    |
| (Specific behaviors assumed by team captains to fulfil their coaching philosophy)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                   |                                      |                                      |                    |
| <b>Questions</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                   |                                      |                                      |                    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What is your leadership practice as team captain?</li> <li>○ What actions should be assumed to implement the leadership philosophy?</li> <li>○ Are your actions important to your team? How?</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                     |                   |                                      |                                      |                    |
| Leadership plan                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                   |                                      |                                      |                    |
| ?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                   |                                      |                                      |                    |
| Section 3: Leadership criteria                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                   |                                      |                                      |                    |
| (Personal and sport indicators that help team captains monitor whether they are meeting the tenets of their philosophy and the practice of leadership)                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                   |                                      |                                      |                    |
| <b>Questions</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                   |                                      |                                      |                    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ What is your leadership criteria as team captain?</li> <li>○ What indicators are you going to assume to monitor the application of the leadership philosophy and criteria?</li> <li>○ Are your criteria important to your team? How?</li> </ul>                                                                                             |                   |                                      |                                      |                    |
| Leadership plan                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                   |                                      |                                      |                    |
| ?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                   |                                      |                                      |                    |
| Section 4: Challenges of team captains                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                   |                                      |                                      |                    |
| (Characteristics and expectations of team members, coaches, and sport organization that can influence the leadership of team captains)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                   |                                      |                                      |                    |
| <b>Questions</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                   |                                      |                                      |                    |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Is your leadership plan according the expectations of your sport organization?</li> <li>○ Is your leadership plan according the expectations of your coach?</li> <li>○ Is your leadership plan according the expectations of your teammates?</li> <li>○ Is your leadership plan according your responsibilities as team captain?</li> </ul> |                   |                                      |                                      |                    |
| Leadership plan                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                   |                                      |                                      |                    |
| ?                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                   |                                      |                                      |                    |
| Leadership behaviors                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                   |                                      |                                      |                    |
| (Select the behaviors needed for implementing the leadership plan)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                   |                                      |                                      |                    |
| Transformational                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                   |                                      |                                      |                    |
| Vision                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Inspiration       | Instruction                          | Individualization                    | Support            |
| Transactional                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                   | Decision making                      |                                      |                    |
| Positive feedback                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Negative feedback | Active management<br>(decentralized) | Active management<br>(decentralized) | Passive management |