

L3 Lead Examiner Report 2001

January 2020

**BTEC Level 3 Nationals in Sport and
Exercise Science**

**Unit 3: Applied Sport and Exercise
Psychology (31815H)**

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January 2020

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A grade boundary is where we set the level of achievement required to obtain a certain grade for the externally assessed unit. We set grade boundaries for each grade, at Distinction, Merit and Pass.

Setting grade boundaries

When we set grade boundaries, we look at the performance of every learner who took the external assessment. When we can see the full picture of performance, our experts are then able to decide where best to place the grade boundaries – this means that they decide what the lowest possible mark is for a particular grade.

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Variations in external assessments

Each external assessment we set asks different questions and may assess different parts of the unit content outlined in the specification. It would be unfair to learners if we set the same grade boundaries for each assessment, because then it would not take accessibility into account.

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Unit 3: Applied Sport and Exercise Psychology

Grade	Unclassified	Level 3			
		N	P	M	D
Boundary Mark	0	9	18	30	43

Introduction

This was the sixth series of the new specification, and therefore, the sixth time that this unit has been externally assessed via a task rather than centre based internal assessment. As a result, centres had additional resources, such as retired tests and accompanying Lead Examiner's reports to help prepare their learners for this third series.

The question paper has a revamped format from the first three series as the case study is now unseen and consists of only one part. However, the structure is fairly similar in that the subject of the case study experiences an event that changes their relationship to their activity. The format of the assessment is the same with three activities based on the case study. Each activity is marked using a levels-based approach, where the overall quality of the response is considered rather than identifying individual marking points. While the case study was different the three activities remained the same.

The case study looked at group dynamics, team cohesion and leadership. In particular the impact of the leader making the decision to bring in six new players into an existing team to help improve its performance. The coach, Eamon, aims to improve cohesion by integrating the players in training and organising social activities. However, an autocratic leadership decision made by Eamon to appoint one of the new players as captain has a devastating affect on team cohesion as the team splits into two groups comprised of the original players and the newly introduced players. This impacts on team cohesion as the existing players try not to pass to the new players and social cohesion as they eat separately and warm up and cool down in separate areas.

The changes in team membership also bring about a change in group dynamics as the team need to go through four of the stages of group development. Forming occurs when Eamon brings the two groups of players together and then gets them to work in smaller groups and uses social activities to facilitate the bonding process. The storming stage occurs when Jason is appointed as the new captain and the disagreements it causes. It is continued throughout the case study as arguments break out about how the team is selected and its leadership. The outcome of the storming process is that three players leave and this allows the norming proves to commence.

There are also elements of social loafing in that some players are not putting in as much effort as other players and extrinsic motivation as Eamon uses rewards, such

as awarding trophies to the man of the match and paying for the best player to go out for a meal.

Introduction to the Overall Performance of the Unit

As this was the sixth time that learners had undertaken this type of assessment it was expected that learners would perform as well as in previous series. However, learners performed significantly worse in this paper than the 1906 and 1901 papers. Performance was comparable to the 1806 paper that covered similar parts of the unit specification.

Learners seem to be very comfortable when covering content from some areas of the specification but not others. For example, they are very familiar with writing about motivation, stress, arousal and anxiety, growth and fixed mindsets, aggression and to a certain extent, confidence. However, identifying and then explaining theories about and interventions for group dynamics and team cohesion proved to be much more challenging to them.

The challenges were amplified in pass learners who were less familiar with this content and struggled to identify the relevant factors. Learners who achieved around the distinction boundary were much more adept at identifying and then expanding on these factors.

In this paper learners struggled with Activity 2 as they seemed less familiar with the theories associated with the factors of cohesion, group development and leadership. That said, these are fairly complex theories in comparison to theories associated with factors such as arousal and aggression. Applying theories to practical scenarios is still a skill that learners find challenging.

Learners performed as well in Activity 3 as in previous series and they seem to be devoting more time and energy to this activity that carries twice as many marks as the other two activities. Learners have become better at explaining the interventions and how and when they are implemented.

Individual Questions

The following section considers each question on the paper, providing examples of learner responses and a brief commentary of why the responses gained the marks they did. This section should be considered with the live external assessment and corresponding mark scheme.

Activity 1

In this activity learners had to describe how psychological factors were impacting on Eamon's team in the case study. To do this activity well, learners had to read and analyse the case thoroughly to enable them to draw out the relevant information and produce an extended answer.

This involved three stages which made up the three traits of the levels based mark scheme. Firstly, they had to identify specific psychological factors that were impacting on Eamon's team; secondly, with reference to the content of the case study show the impact/effect each factor was having, and thirdly describe the impact of each factor on performance as being positive or negative. Credit was also awarded for defining or explaining each factor that was selected.

Good responses made significant and continual references back to the case and showed the examiner that they were clear about whether each factor was having a positive or negative impact on Eamon's team. In this case study the psychological factors that had most relevance were as follows:

Group dynamics

Cohesion

Leadership

Extrinsic motivation

Social loafing

It is really important for learners to identify the key issues specific to the case study. For example, in this case study group dynamics, cohesion and leadership were the key factors with extrinsic motivation and social loafing also being present. Learners will only receive full credit for selecting these specific factors rather than generic psychological factors.

In particular, some learners focused on stress and anxiety and aggression which has very limited relevance to this case study and as a result will receive very limited credit. When a factor is present in a case study there will be very explicit references to it, such as 'he also organises social activities to help the bonding process' is an explicit reference

to social cohesion. If anxiety was present as a factor the case study would say something like 'she feels butterflies in her stomach before the match starts'.

There is a maximum amount of credit that can be awarded to each factor so there is no need to write everything you know about each factor. You will receive credit for identifying a factor, defining it or explaining it, showing where it is present/impacting in the case study (most important) and whether the impact is positive, negative or both. Credit can be awarded to each factor that the learner writes about.

Learners will benefit from spending time reading and rereading the case to accurately identify which factors are most important and relevant in this case study rather than trying to fit their knowledge to case studies.

Learners should aim to cover at least 4 factors to ensure they have enough breadth to their answer.

Learner's responses were marked by gaining a mark in one of three grade bands:

Grade band 1: 1-5 marks

Grade band 2: 6-10 marks

Grade band 3: 11-15 marks

This response was placed in Band 3: and gained 15 marks out of 15

Activity 1

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Describe the psychological **factors** that impact on Eamon's team in the case study.

Your answer should focus on the:

- (a) key psychological factors
- (b) impact of the factors
- (c) effect of the factors on the team's performance.

4/5 intro
conclusion

(15) Act1

There are many psychological factors within this case study, positive and negative, which affect the individuals as well as the team as a whole and their performance in sport situation. In this case study, the main factors involved are leadership, cohesion, motivation, group dynamics and self confidence.

Leadership is when a person has enough influence over another person's behaviour to motivate them to achieve and succeed. There are different types of leaders, emergent, which come from within the group and can be effective as they already have a relationship with players and prescribed which come from from an external source and are sometimes not as effective as they don't already know the team as well. In this case study, Eamon the ~~the~~ coach ~~decides~~ decides he wants to "improve the quality of the team". It is also evident that he wants to "improve the team's performance". This is a positive aspect towards the team and is showing signs that Eamon possesses

characteristics of being an autocratic leader in terms of wanting his team to succeed. This may have not such a positive impact on the individuals belonging as the coach might be more focused on their performance rather than their needs. This is significant because if the coach is not ~~too~~ democratic enough this could cause the individual to become stressed and anxious which could cause the teams overall performance to decrease.

Another psychological factor related to this case study is team cohesion. This is the togetherness of a group to achieve and be successful and it is the motivation of a group that attracts individuals to their team. Task cohesion is whether the team share similar goals and interests with one another and social cohesion is the relationship team members hold with one another and how well they get along. In this case study, the team had a positive and high team cohesion and it is evident the coach makes sure they "set to know each other" and "build relationships". This has a positive effect on the team as it could bring them closer together and eventually increase their performance. However, the coach brings in ~~at~~ another player which has a negative impact on the rest of the team and causes the team to be less cohesive. This is shown when it says the decision is not "popular to the

other players". In the case study a split also develops in the team showing that when a team becomes less cohesive, this could decrease and affect their performance negatively because they team no longer have a bond.

Motivation is another psychological factor, relevant to this case study. Motivation is the internal mechanisms and external stimuli which arouse and direct our behaviour. There are two types of motivation; intrinsic is the internal drive to perform well and involves accomplishment, stimulation and knowledge. An example of this is the enjoyment of the sport you do. Extrinsic is the other type of motivation which is the external drive to perform well and examples of these are winning medals or trophies. Extrinsic motivation involves tangible and intangible rewards so intangible would be not physical such as praise or fame and tangible is physical such as money. If a player is not motivated, they have a motivation which ~~may~~ means they have a lack of motivation and this involves a lack of competence, negative self perception and low value to the athlete or activity. In the case study the coach is aware that "motivation is important to the team" and tries to increase it. Having high motivation is positive to the team and can increase their psychological wellbeing as well as performance however the motivation that

drives this team to succeed is not so positive. Their motivation is extrinsic as they received a "money". This can be negative as if this is what the team use to motivate them to win they can lose enjoyment and forget about the value of the sport they are doing. Also, the coach gives them money if they do well after a game to "go out for a meal". This can have a negative impact on the individual because if the player does not receive the reward they are hoping for, this could decrease their self confidence as they might believe they are not good enough which could then cause the teams performance to decrease if certain individuals don't have enough self efficacy. Overall motivation is good unless the team relies too much on extrinsic motivation which could affect their performance negatively in the future.

Group dynamics is another factor within this case study. Group dynamics are the processes within a group and teams can be interactive or co-interactive. An interactive team is a team that socialise and interact with each other to succeed during sports such as a football team however a co-interactive team is one that don't interact during the sports situation such as a gymnastic team. Groups have to go through a development process of forming,

storming, norming and performing and this team is currently in the storming stage because conflict is developing, shown when players "leave angrily" due to a new player becoming captain. This has a negative impact on the individual as his self-esteem might decrease once someone else takes his place as captain. This is significant because if someone who is a leader has this feeling, this can impact the rest of the team's self-confidence and motivation and if these decrease, their performance can also decrease drastically. This team is an interactive team as they want to succeed and show and do this by interacting with one another during the sport.

Self confidence is another major factor in this case study. This is the belief an individual has to succeed in sports. Self efficacy is also an individual's perception of their ability to succeed in specific^a sporting situation. Self confidence can have an affect on performance and participation. If someone has high self confidence, this will increase their self confidence and if they have low self confidence, this will decrease their self confidence. If someone has high confidence, this will increase their participation and their participation can decrease if their self confidence does. At the

Start, the team have good self efficacy even if they were at the bottom of the league as they motivated themselves to increase performance. By the end, they had low self efficacy when they also had "low levels of self confidence". This can be negative to the individual and on their wellbeing and could cause stress and anxiety. Having self confidence is significant because if the whole team has low levels of it, this will eventually, decrease the performance.

Overall, there are many psychological factors that affect the individual and their performance positively and negatively and these are the most significant aspects of this from within the case study. (*2)

(*1) The team become less cohesive towards the end of the case study when it is shown that the team have different areas in the changing rooms, "players ~~are~~ leave angrily" and players say they'll never play again. This will impact the individuals as they will no longer be motivated for their team to achieve which could cause the team's whole performance to decrease so this is a negative aspect for the team as their cohesion is decreasing.

(Total for Activity 1 = 15 marks) Act1_Tor

This answer is done very well with the learner covering five factors, leadership, motivation/extrinsic motivation, cohesion, group dynamics and self-confidence in depth. They have given a clear definition or explanation of each factor and then made clear and accurate references to the case study to show where and how this factor is impacting and then discusses whether the impact is positive or negative. This is an example of covering factors in depth to achieve maximum credit. They would have gained full credit with covering 3 factors in this level of depth. Alternately they could have covered 4-5 factors in less depth to achieve the same outcome.

This response was placed in Band 1: and gained 4 marks out of 15

Activity 1

There are many psychological factors evident in the case study. The main psychological factors are cohesion, leadership, Aggression and the influence of environment on motivation

One psychological factor that is evident in the case study is the influence of environment on the team's motivation. This involves the importance of family and peers, personality factors, environment and the coach or trainer to motivation. Due to the lack of cohesiveness within the team, there is very little support to be received or given between the players, therefore the influence of peers may result in negative outcomes, as players will often rely on each other to seek evaluative comments, social support and to build relationships, but with this team they do not cooperate as one unit, therefore they may struggle when achieving to work towards a goal or when requiring resilience such as an injury within the team.

The coach's practice techniques can also make an effect on the team. By scoring them after their performance, it may increase or decrease their self-confidence, depending on how they performed and how critical the coach is on them.

The coach can work along one of two orientations, task or outcome. Task orientation means that there is more emphasis on performing, rather than the outcome, using the TARGET technique.

Those that have a task orientation compare their current performance to their previous performances to see how they can improve next time. An outcome orientated goal means that the team work towards creating the best final result, no matter how poorly they play, as it is the final score that matters. However, it is beneficial for the team in this case study to be working on a task orientated basis, as it means that they can focus on performing their best and improve,

although it does mean that the individual players may not have the same goals, therefore working individually towards what they personally want to achieve and what they view a success could be detrimental to the final score of a match.

Another psychological factor that is evident in this case study is cohesion. As so many players are unhappy in their position, both task cohesion and social cohesion is low. Effective task cohesion is when all of the players work together to achieve a common goal. Effective social cohesion is where players like the company of their team mates and it is evaluated how well they cooperate and get along. This is evidently low given how badly the team get along, and how poor their current success rate is, and causing a negative effect on the players, as they may feel dissatisfied with the team and their success.

Another psychological factor that can be identified from this case study is Leadership. As a leader, it is evident to see that the leadership style Eamon has adopted is democratic. This means that he is very conscious of the needs and beliefs of the team, and is willing to negotiate the different available options with the team. This is important as better communication increases the satisfaction of the players and they can also form a coach/ player relationship. This is beneficial to both the players and the coach so that they can have a better understanding of how to cooperate and can have a better idea of the individuals when deciding who is best to take on certain roles, for example, taking Jason into consideration for captain.

However, his evaluation of situation is poor, as he evidently cannot identify how his team is motivated. He is using extrinsic motivation strategies such as trophies and a free meal to maximise effort, which is evidently ineffective.

One psychological factor that is evident in this case study is aggression. aggression is defined as the intent to harm outside of the rules of the game. There are four types: Hostile, Instrumental (or channelled), Assertive and Relational. In this case study, it is apparent that relational aggression is occurring between the players that played last season, and the new players. Relational aggression is a type of aggression that does not involve physical violence, but instead can cause psychological or emotional harm. It can happen through the formation of cliques, excluding certain players or bullying. This can further result in poor mental state, low motivation, decreased team cohesion and therefore poor overall performance. This is evident in the case study when Eamon notices that the players are keeping separate, in changing rooms, meals and during team activities, therefore contributing to the low success rate of the team.

Firstly, this is a poorly organised response as each factor is not dealt with individually rather than the response jumps from factor to factor. On the positive side the learner identified three relevant factors present in the case study – cohesion, leadership and confidence. However, only cohesion has relevant additional credit worthy content.

The learner correctly identifies leadership but the leadership style is incorrectly identified and references to the case study do not match the content of the case study. The content on influence of the environment is not relevant and there is nothing in the case study to support the learner’s content on aggression.

This is an example of a response where a learner does not fully analyse the case study and develops their own material to support their content.

Activity 2

In this activity learners had to explain psychological theories that account for Eamon's team's experiences in the case study. To do this activity well learners had to do three things: i) identify correct theories that are linked to the factors described in Activity 1; ii) explain the key principles of each theory and ii) contextualise the theory to show how it accounts for the experiences of Eamon's team in the case study.

Ideally a learner would cover at least three theories that are clearly linked to the factors that they identified in Activity 1. It is expected that there is detailed coverage of at least two theories and less detailed coverage of other theories with clear and coherent links to the case study and how it could explain Eamon's team's experiences. Credit can be received for all theories that are covered so a learner can receive credit for depth and breadth of knowledge.

In this case study the theories with most relevance were as follows:

Tuckman's stages of group development

Carron's model of group development

Ringelman effect

Chelladurai's MDM of leadership

Motivation theories (need achievement theory, achievement goal theory) were poor choices of theory as there is no explicit evidence in the case study to support their relevance. Thus, they attracted limited credit. Theories of aggression were also poor choices as there is little explicit evidence of aggressive behaviour in the case study.

Learner responses were marked by gaining a mark in one of three grade bands:

Grade band 1: 1-5 marks

Grade band 2: 6-10 marks

Grade band 3: 11-15 marks

This response was placed in Band 3: and gained 14 marks out of 15

There are many psychological theories that link to the case study. These are; Carrons model of cohesion, Tuckman's group processing, The Need Achievement theory and Vealy's model of sport confidence.

Carron's model of cohesion states that there is 4 main factors that determine how good or bad the cohesion of the group is. It states that the 4 factors are; team factors, leadership factors, personal factors and environmental factors. In the case study it is clear that there's an issue with the cohesion of the group. The biggest ~~that~~ cause of the cohesion issue is because of the "six new players!" Carron states that factors such as how long a team has been together, whether they've experienced wins and losses and how they get on socially all effects the group cohesion. As the ~~the~~ new team with the additional six players hasn't been together for very long, this is negatively impacting the groups cohesion. So far, the team has "lost the first

four matches" showing they're only experienced losses together. Furthermore, the new players were only introduced during pre-season training, "Eamon uses pre-season training to introduce the new players" which shows they ~~haven't~~ haven't been together for a long time either. Finally they "eat part-meat meals at different tables" showing that each part of the team factor in Cannon's model of cohesion is not being followed ultimately showing a clear reason why their cohesion as a team is suffering. This also shows why there's such a negative impact on the team's performance, because they are not cohesive as a team due to team factors.

Another psychological theory that can be linked to the case study is Tuckman's 4 stage group processing model. Tuckman's theory states there's 4 stages to group development, forming, storming, norming and performing. Forming is where the group first comes together and see what each other are like, storming is when an altercation / argument occurs, ~~and~~ norming is where group leaders are developed and the team settles and then performing is when the group starts to come together and perform well. In the case study, the football team are at the storming stage of forming group

dynamics as they are arguing and disagreeing with each other. They "argue about tactics, selection and leadership" showing they do not have the same views and aren't all feeling the same way. Despite the fact Jason was made captain he is a prescribed leader and it hasn't been done in the 'norming' stage or come about naturally, he was selected by the coach. If the team followed Tuckman's theory it would mean they would be in the 'norming' phase next and lead to 'performing' which would positively impact them as they'd start performing well.

The need achievement theory is a motivation theory that states there's two types of athletes. These are need to achieve athletes and need to avoid failure athletes. Need achievement athletes look for a challenge and want to win against harder opponents where as need to avoid failure athletes avoid hard opponents and look for the easy option to ensure they don't lose. In the case study, "results are still poor" so by motivating the athletes and encouraging them to be NACH athletes they will be more motivated to play the matches knowing they're hard opponents but wanting to win. Furthermore, there are

players that are "not putting in as much effort" which shows that they are acting more like a NAF (need to avoid failure) athlete as they no longer care about being the best and winning as their motivation levels aren't high enough.

Another psychological theory that applies to the case study is Vealey's model of sport confidence. It talks about the constructs of sport confidence, the consequences of sport confidence, influencing factors of sport confidence and sources of sport confidence. In the case study it's clear that the team has low self confidence, "confidence in the team is low" and as Vealey states in the 'consequences of sport confidence' a consequence of having low self confidence is that the athlete will not perform as well as they could because they don't believe they can do it so they go in with the wrong mindset. Furthermore, the fact the team has lost their first four games is one of the 'influencing factors' of sport confidence and explains why their confidence levels are low.

This response sits at the top of Band 3. The learner has chosen four theories and covered them in detail.

Two of the theories are fully relevant to the case study (Carron's conceptual model of cohesion, Tuckman's stages of group development) and two have partial relevance to the case study. They have covered all four theories in detail but because there is not enough content in the case study to support the need achievement and Vealey's self-confidence theories to attract full credit, they have not achieved full marks.

For each theory they have received credit for identifying the theory, explain the theory and showing how it explains the experience of Eamon's team in the case study. This example shows both depth and breadth.

This response was placed in Band 1: and gained 5 marks out of 15

Activity 2

In the text there are many theories that can explain how Eamons team are doing and how well they are working as a team. Some theories such as Carrons conceptual model of cohesion, tukmans group processes and achivment goal theory.

Carons theory can be aplied in the case study because the teams cohesion is not the best throughout the text, the theory suggests that social cohesion is not good within the team 'they eat post-match meals at different tables' this shows a divistion within the team, because they do not like one another and how they work. 'A split develops in the team' this is shwoing that the teams cohesion is getting worse and worse ecause they cannot work well with eachother. When looking at cohesion it shows and says team members who share the same goal and reward are working together in cohesion. Social cohesion is how close the athetes are outside of training and they are friends or not, being; Carron thought that the closer the team the better outcome they will get, looking at the text I think this is true because in the text the team are not close and are mostly fighting and loosing matches because they are not close with one another and dont know how eachother plays.

As well as this I think that Tukmans group processes is a big part of the team getting to know one another, Tukman thinks that introducing new team members should be broke down into different stages; Forming, Norming and storming this is so that the group members can understand and get know one another better and easier. In the text I do not think these steps were used and gone through thourly because the team is still in a split and do not like eachother, even though Eamon did go through a couple of group dynamic bonding activites, 'players can get to know eacother and

build relationships'. I think that group processes is important for team bonding because it allows people to get to one another better and in more depth so that when they are in a match they can judge what their team mates are going to do and how they play like. Statements like 'who played last season do not pass to the new players' shows us that Tukmans group stages were not put in place and the team building that was done was not done properly.

Motivation is big part that can also be seen beng used in the case study, the acivment goal theory suggests that havng somehting to work towards motivates the preformer to try even harder because they want to win and get the reward at then end of the task. In the case study Eamon puts a physical reward to win, so that his athletes will try harder in their preformance and overall put the team in a better position. This is motivation for the athletes and will push them to go further. As well as this Dwecks Mindset teory suggests that if you have a growth mindset then you are willing to achive and move on rather than having a fixed minset which is not looking to improve is just wanting to get praise and for people to see them preform. In the case you can see that Eamon has got a fxed mindset after he says 'he decides they would benefit from the support of a sport psychologist' this shows that the cach wants to move on and pass this minor phase.

This response sits in Band 1 because although the learner has selected two relevant theories the response is poorly organised. While the learner has attempted to apply Carron's theory to the case study, they have not explained the basic principles of the theory. There is some relevant content on Tuckman's theory but it is incompletely covered.

No credit can be awarded to the work on achievement goal theory as the learner has not presented any accurate material and Dweck's mindset theory has no relevance to this case study.

Activity 3

In Activity 3 learners had to focus on interventions that would help Eamon's team to improve team cohesion and develop positive group dynamics. Interventions to increase arousal levels and reduce social loafing were also valid as were general interventions to improve individual and team performance.

The interventions that were most relevant to the case study were as follows:

Goal setting to achieve group goals

Performance profiling

Methods to enhance cohesion

Imagery for mental rehearsal and confidence

Self-talk to address confidence

Pep talks

Listening to music as an energising technique

Credit would not be awarded to interventions that lower arousal levels as these are not appropriate for individuals and teams who seem to be suffering from low arousal levels.

To gain credit in this activity learners need to do five things: i) identify 4 or more correct interventions specific to Eamon's team's needs; ii) give a brief description of the intervention; iii) justify why each intervention is needed with reference to Eamon's team's experiences in the case study; iv) explain the principles behind each psychological intervention by giving sufficient detail for the intervention to be replicated; v) describe how and when the intervention can be implemented in relation to Eamon's team's training i.e. when would it be practiced and when would it be used. Learners can receive credit for all the relevant interventions that they cover.

There has become a tendency for learners to not fully describe some of the interventions and make a comment such as 'they are available on YouTube or the internet'. This approach would not attract any credit. Learners often don't justify why they have selected certain interventions and thus lose out on credit that could be gained relatively easily.

Due to the high weighting of this activity within the paper, it accounts for 50% of the marks, it was expected that learners would cover at least four interventions and provide detailed information on at least three interventions.

Learner responses were marked by gaining a mark in one of five grade bands:

Grade band 1: 1-6 marks

Grade band 2: 7-12 marks

Grade band 3: 13-18 marks

Grade band 4: 19-24 marks

Grade band 5: 25-30 marks

This response was placed at the top end of Band 4: and gained 26 marks out of 30

Q3 There are several psychological interventions which will help improve the teams Group dynamics (leadership, cohesion, group process), mindset and motivation. These are Imagery, goal setting, performance profiling and self-talk. Imagery is the most important psychological factor as it will help improve the teams poor group dynamics (leadership, cohesion, group processes), poor mindset, and poor motivation. Imagery is where the athlete will visualise a sporting action instead of completing the physical movement. Some of the positive effect's imagery can have on an athlete are increased self-confidence, better mindset as they can see themselves doing the skill they thought they couldn't and better motivation etc. In this case study, Eamon's team are lacking cohesion, leadership, group processes, and mindset (the biggest affecting factors). Imagery will help them to work on these factors as they will be able to visualise themselves working well together and believing they can achieve their goals by working together which is what they need. The case study supports this as it states, 'Eamon is very worried about the dynamics of the group'. To complete imagery the athletes will use Visual, audio and kinaesthetic imagery. They will also use the 5 senses to accompany this (smell, hear, taste, see, feel). There are two types of imagery; external – where the athlete visualises them watching themselves achieve the skill, technique or game, and internal – where the athlete will visualise themselves physically doing the skill, technique or game. The type I recommend is external imagery it is more effective to see themselves doing it. The athletes will do this on their own so that they can concentrate and get the full benefit of this intervention. An example of this for the athletes in the case study will be:

As you walk onto the pitch watch yourself smell the fresh air as you are running across the football pitch. Next you see yourself listening to the sound of your teammates calling your name. Then you See yourself taste the sweat on your lips from you working so hard with your team. After you watch your eyes glance to your teammates in a position ready for you to pass to them and score. Finally you see yourself feel the touch of the ball as it releases from your foot to your teammate successfully.

This is an example of visual imagery as you are watching yourself complete the action. The script above includes all of the five senses to make the situation more realistic. It is also tailored specifically to help improve group cohesion, leadership, group process, it can also help their motivation as they remember how fun it is to succeed as a team and be supported by one another. This is successful as the body uses muscle memory to remember the feeling of what you visualised using the five senses. It sends an impulse from the brain to the muscles. This helps the athletes like Luke to feel like they have already accomplished this task so gives them a more positive, growth mindset when going to play physically. This must be completed in a quiet area to allow the athlete to use their full concentration for example at home in their bedroom. It should be completed around 4 – 5 times a week as it is a relatively short process. It can be completed before a match, before they have left their house, before bed, after a match, after training and before training. This will take around 5-6 minutes in order for it to be effective.

The second most effective intervention for Eamon's team is goal setting. This can help improve the teams group dynamics, mindset and motivation. Goal setting is when an athlete chooses specific goals to meet in a specific time. In order to complete goal setting effectively the athlete must choose a Short term goal – this must be completed within 1 week – 1 month. A medium term goal – this must be completed within 1 month – 6 months. A long term goal – this must be completed within 6 months +. These goals can come under any of these three types of goals; performance goals (focused on the performance and how well they play), process goals (focused on the process of improving) or outcome goals (focused on the end result. E.g. winning). When setting these goals they must follow the SMARTS principles, these are; Specific – state exactly what needs to be achieved, measurable – how a way of tracking the progress, Achievable – within the athletes capability, realistic – they must have the facilities to do so, Time bound – They must have a time scale of when they want to achieve the goal, and self-determination – they must have the drive and motivation to want to achieve the goal.

An example of goal setting for Eamon's team players is a process goal – so they can learn how to progress slowly by working together. Their short term goal is (specific) for all players to turn up to every training session so they have the chance to improve. (measurable) The coach will complete a register every session. (achievable) They all have the ability to do this. (realistic) they all have

the facilities to do at the local club they play for. (time-bound) they will need to achieve this within the first week of this being set. (self-determined) they must be willing to come to every session.

Their medium term goal is a performance goal – so they can improve their performance gradually. The goal is to (specific) complete a team drill with successful communication every session. This will help their communication in a game. (measurable) The coach (Eamon) will make a note of the times they achieve this and the times they fail to do this. (achievable) they all have the capability to do this if they try hard. (realistic) they have the facilities to do this if they try hard. (time bound) they should complete this within 1 month. (self-determination) they must want to get better at this.

Their long term goal is an outcome goal – so they can have achieved something by the end of their training. This goal is to be able (specific) to have won at least 2 matches – this will show that there has been some progress. (measurable) the coach will make a note of this after each match to keep track of their scores. (achievable) the athletes all have the capability to do this if they work hard. (realistic) if they come to the match, all facilities will be provided by either the opposition or their local football club. (time-bound) they should complete this within the end of the playing season. (self-determination) they need to want to win in order to achieve this. This will help them long term as it will give them something to focus on and work towards so they can eventually play better as a team overall long term. Goal setting should be reviewed every couple of weeks to ensure progress in being met. It should take around 15 minutes maximum each time to set new goals. The long term goal is broken down into many smaller ones so they can work up to achieve the long term one. This can be completed anywhere quiet.

Performance profiling is another important intervention which can help improve the athlete's motivation and group dynamics which are key issues throughout the case study. This is where the athlete's strengths and weaknesses are assessed so they can then use goal setting to improve their weaknesses. This is related to the case study as the athletes are not being cooperative when their coach tries to discuss their areas of weakness with them. The case study states, 'the players argue about tactics, selection and leadership'. This shows they are not willing to accept things they need to work

on. To complete goal setting effectively a wheel (see figure 1). On this wheel, the athlete and the coach will both select some factors which are relevant to their sport for example (football – tackle skills, pain tolerance, cohesion) etc... The coach and the athlete will both mark their rating, between 1- being the lowest and 10 – being the best, to state how good they are at that specific factor. Then the coach and athlete will discuss their marks if there are any large differences to work out why the scores are so different. After this they will then discuss some goals for the athlete to achieve and how they can improve those specific areas. Next then athlete will go away and try to improve these weaknesses to help enhance their performance or whatever their difficulty is (in this case study, it is cohesion). The performance profiling will be completed every 2 weeks to see if any improvements have been made. If there have then this may give the athlete some motivation as they can see they are getting better. This will take around 1 hour, this is why it is only done every 2 weeks and to allow time for progression. Some of the weaknesses for the athletes in the case study are cohesion, leadership, group processes, mindset and motivation. Performance profiling will help them to see their weakness on a real scale.

The final intervention which can be used to help the athletes of the team is self-talk. This will help increase their motivation help them to achieve more of a growth mindset. Self-talk can be positive or negative. Positive enhances performance whilst negative decreases performance. It is also where the athlete repeats positive messages to themselves either internally or externally. This will help distract them from their negative thoughts to try and make them they can do the things they believe they can't if they just have a better attitude and are willing to try new things. Self-talk should be completed around 6-7 times a week to get the athlete used to the idea of their positive thoughts. This will also help reduce their negative thoughts (this is called thought stopping). This intervention only takes a couple of seconds so can be completed anywhere as long as they are focused. This includes before a match and training, after a match and training, during a match and training, before and after a specific skill or even at home. Some positive phrases that they could say are 'you can do this' or 'you've got the ability' or 'just believe'. This may change their mindset. For the athletes in the case study they could say 'keep calm' or 'try and talk to the new guys', or 'we can work together to achieve success'. This will help their overall mindset and motivate them to want to

improve and be better. This is proven in the case study that this could help when they say, 'the new players aren't good enough'.

This response is in the middle of Band 5 and is a good example of a response that shows breadth and depth. The learner covers four interventions in total with all four of them having specific relevance to the case study.

The work on imagery and goal setting is covered in depth and the interventions are justified, the principles are fully explained and they have shown how they can be implemented. Performance profiling and self-talk are not covered in the same detail but there is still credit worthy content. If one of these was covered in the same detail as imagery and goal setting the learner would have achieved full credit. Alternately, full credit could have been gained by covering one more intervention in limited detail.

This response was placed in Band 2: and gained 10 marks out of 30

SMART targets can be used for helping the players reach their aspirational goal for the end of the season. Smart targets are more specific and detailed than goal setting. These targets need to be thought through by Eamon so they are realistic and reachable. Smart targets are set high so players are motivated to reach them and put in more effort. These can be applied to the team by getting into a certain ~~place~~ place in the table before a certain time. Also a ~~reward~~ reward can be set if the team reaches it.

Eamon could make a pre performance routine so all the team can get involved in a activity to build chemistry. A pre performance routine can be individual or group based so players have a time to do to get them ready to compete. This can be listen to some music, self talk or visualise what you want to do in that game. Eamon could play music in the changing room to either energise the players or relax them depending on the scenario.

This response covers three interventions which are specific to meet the needs of the case study. While there is some credit worthy content on each intervention the responses lack any depth. The content is fairly generic and does not to be tailored to the needs of Eamon's team and there is limited content on the principles of each intervention.

Summary

1. Read the case study several times, highlight the key content and identify which psychological factors are being covered. As you identify factors you might also think about which psychological theories are closely linked to these factors and which psychological interventions may be used to control these factors;
2. Each paper will cover different psychological factors and there will be specific content that has been worded so that it can clearly be linked to specific factors;
3. It is most important that you spend time to accurately identify which factors are being covered in the case study as if you select incorrect or less relevant factors it is likely that you will select less appropriate theories to explain the case study and psychological interventions to help the sports person
4. When answering questions refer to the content of the case study as much as possible and make sure that the content you refer to is actually in the case study
5. Once you have selected a factor or intervention then add in a short definition or description showing that you understand what it is as you will receive credit for this;
6. Credit will be awarded for breadth and/or depth of knowledge;
7. Be careful not to write everything that you know about a factor, theory or intervention as each one will have a limit to how much credit can be awarded. Once you have covered the detail that has been asked for in the guidance to the activity then move on to the next factor, theory or intervention;
8. You should be able to cover enough content on the pages provided to achieve the full marks for the activity without having to use additional pages. If you find you need to use more pages, then you are probably including irrelevant content or too much content;
9. Be selective about which theories and interventions you cover and make sure they are the most relevant for the answer;
10. If you cannot fully justify the inclusion of a factor, theory or intervention by using the content of the case study then don't use as it uses time that could be used to cover relevant material which will be awarded credit;

11. Use the marking grid for each activity to guide you and ensure you cover all the content needed for each activity;
12. Please click [here](#) for the specification and SAMS.

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