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## The Leadership Behaviors of a Successful NCAA Division I Water Polo Coach: A Phenomenological Study

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The Leadership Behaviors of a Successful NCAA Division I Water Polo Coach: A  
Phenomenological Study

A Dissertation by  
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Brandman University  
Irvine, California  
School of Education

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

March 2017

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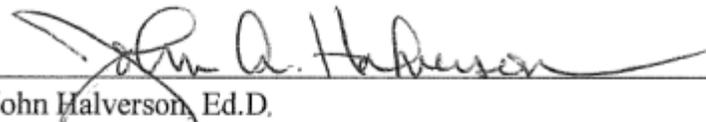
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March 2017

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Phenomenological Study

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## ABSTRACT

The Leadership Behaviors of a Successful NCAA Division I Water Polo Coach: A

Phenomenological Study

by Scott McCall

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to understand and describe the transformational leadership behaviors of a successful NCAA Division I water polo coach. This study examined the transformational leadership behaviors of a NCAA Division I coach who led a team to a national championship and who was a former Olympic athlete and national team coach. Data were collected from interviews of the head coach and participants who had direct lived experiences with the coach, as well as through observations of practices and games, and the collection of artifacts.

The findings from this research showed that the head coach demonstrated transformational leadership behaviors in all six domains examined: individual consideration, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, fostering acceptance of group goals, high performance expectations, and appropriate role modeling. Based on the literature and findings of this study, it was concluded that a successful NCAA Division I water polo coach must set a positive example both off and on the pool deck, create a practice culture that increases intensity and motivation, allow for creative freedom within an established structure, treat the team as a family, share stories to inspire and motivate, develop a vision, focus on building relationships, and establish core values.

It was recommended that coaches develop emotional intelligence, replicate gamelike scenarios in practice that foster teamwork in high-intensity situations, allow for athletes to solve problems in games and practice, share stories that focus on the team's

values and desired culture, spend time with athletes one-on-one, develop a positive mindset, and reflect after games and practices. In addition, athletic departments should provide a budget to allow for outside activities and for teams to work with a sport psychologist in creating a vision and establishing goals.

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## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

In today's world, exemplary leadership remains the driving force behind the most successful organizations. Exemplary leadership was found to drive success and be essential to solving many of the threats facing the world (Bennis, 2007; Ghasabeh, Reaiche, & Soosay, 2015). Every day, leaders are faced with critical decisions that could greatly impact the future of their organizations. For this reason, organizations are willing to spend the money to educate and develop leadership. Bersin by Deloitte (2014) estimated \$15 billion was spent on leadership development by organizations in 2013. Moreover, the significance of leadership was demonstrated in the world of business and in education (Allen, Grigsby, & Peters, 2015), the military (Laurence, 2011), and in sports (Vallée & Bloom, 2005). Effective leaders navigated complex environments using a variety of skills to solve problems and lead organizations to the top. Specifically, these skills were demonstrated by transformational leaders, which was shown to be an effective style of leadership in a variety of context (Northington, 2015; Wu & Wang, 2015).

Transformational leaders inspired followers to achieve results beyond what they thought were possible while also developing their leadership capabilities (B. M. Bass, 1999; B. M. Bass & Riggio, 2006). In the same way, teachers and coaches constantly motivated their students to perform their best while developing future leaders of the world. According to the research, teachers who exhibited transformational leadership behaviors were shown to increase student expectations beyond minimum standards (Beauchamp et al., 2014) and significantly increase student learning through motivation (Noland & Richards, 2014). Gomes (2014) presented an overview of the research that found transformational leaders demonstrated effectiveness in variety of contexts and led

organizations beyond expectations. Additionally, Arthur and Tomsett (2015) concluded that transformational leadership offered promise to understanding leadership in sports. Therefore, coaches who demonstrated transformational leadership behaviors could theoretically produce similar results in a sporting context.

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA; 2015) reported approximately 482,533 student-athletes participated in sports in 2014-15. Additionally, the number of high school students who participated in athletics in the United States in 2014-15 rose to 7,807,047 (NFSHA, 2015). As a result of increasing sports participation, now more than ever effective coaches are needed to successfully lead these student-athletes (McCann, Kohntopp, & Keeling, 2015). Exceptional coaches were shown to provide a critical link to athletes continued participation and positive experiences in sports (Garcia, 2015; Rottensteiner, Pihlaja, & Konttinen, 2013). In contrast, according to Garcia (2015), problems with coaches were more prevalent than injuries for reasons high school student-athletes withdrew from sports. It was vital that coaches be educated and develop personal skills to better understand the complexities of today's athletes (Rottensteiner et al., 2013). Transformational leadership could provide coaches the skills needed to develop successful athletes both academically and athletically.

According to Arthur and Tomsett (2015) and Gomes and Resende (2014), the little research completed exhibited positive benefits of transformational leadership in a sport coaching context. To elaborate, coaches who demonstrated transformational leadership behaviors were shown to increase athlete intrinsic motivation (Charbonneau, Barling, & Kelloway, 2001), athlete effort (Arthur, Woodman, Ong, Hardy, & Ntoumanis, 2011), and team cohesion (Callow, Smith, Hardy, Arthur, & Hardy, 2009) in

a sports setting. Transformational leadership has been studied in other sports such as, soccer (McCann, Kohntopp, & Keeling, 2015), cricket (Smith, Young, Figgins, & Arthur, 2016), and basketball (Bormann & Rowold, 2016).

Water polo was the first team sport introduced in the Olympic games in 1900 (Wigo, 1996) and colleges in the United States began forming teams as early as 1897 (Lambert & Gaughran, 1969). The sport combines elements of many different sports including basketball, hockey, and soccer (Dettamanti, 2008; Snyder, 2008) however, it is the only Olympic team sport that is played in the water making it completely unique from others (Dettamanti, 2008). Unlike basketball and soccer where a coach can walk over to an athlete to talk with them and demonstrate skills, water polo coaches and athletes are in two different environments with the coaches being on the pool deck and the athletes in the water. This creates challenges for coaches who often lack formal training in effective coaching (Dettamanti, 2008). According to Dettamanti (2008) there is a gap in teaching water polo coaches how to be effective and successful coaches.

The positive results demonstrated from transformational leadership research could help NCAA water polo coaches improve the success of their athletes and teams. Transformational leadership might also provide a critical link to how NCAA coaches lead their water polo teams and the success derived from them both academically and athletically. However, more research is needed to understand transformational leadership in coaching in different contexts, specifically in the sport of water polo at the NCAA Division I level (Beam, Serwatka, & Wilson, 2004; Gomes & Resende, 2014; Newland, Newton, Podlog, Legg, & Tanner, 2015).

## **Background**

Leadership took on many different definitions depending on the purpose and context in which it was used (B. M. Bass & R. Bass, 2008; Northouse, 2016). Subsequently, Northouse (2016) suggested four components of leadership: process, influence, groups, and common goals. Therefore, he used these four components to define leadership as, “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (Northouse, 2016, p. 6). B. M. Bass and R. Bass (2008) proposed effective leadership as “the interaction among members of a group that initiates and maintains improved expectations and the competence of the group to solve problems or to attain goals” (p. 26). Thus, researchers did not agree on an exact definition, but effective leadership remained a focus of organizations. These components of leadership were seen in organizations and sports, making it an ideal environment to study leadership. In recent years, transformational leadership in sports gained momentum (Arthur & Tomsett, 2015; Arthur et al., 2011; Gomes & Resende, 2014) because of the positive outcomes demonstrated in organizational leadership, including the ability to motivate others to achieve greater outcomes. However, further research is needed to better understand transformational leadership in coaching sports (Newland et al., 2015; Vallée & Bloom, 2005).

The role of a NCAA water polo coach encompassed more than the tactical components of the sport and included such tasks as recruiting, budgeting, and leading the team. Similarly, these were the responsibilities one would see in a leader in other industries where transformational leadership was found effective. For example, transformational leadership behaviors were successful in education (Noland & Richards,

2014), business (Mesu, Sanders, & Riemsdijk, 2015), and athletic administration (Northington, 2015). Therefore, NCAA water polo coaches who demonstrate transformational leadership behaviors could provide similar results in leading their student-athletes successfully.

### **Theories of Leadership**

Historically, different eras in time concentrated on specific theories that tried to explain the basic characteristics and potential concerns of leadership (B. M. Bass & R. Bass, 2008). For example, in the early part of the 20th century, research focused on trait theories and the idea that great leaders were born (B. M. Bass & Riggio, 2006; Northouse, 2016). As a result, researchers were dedicated to studying leaders and the individual traits that made them extraordinary (Antonakis, Cianciolo, & Sternberg, 2004; B. M. Bass & R. Bass, 2008). Whereas research from trait theory since declined, especially in the last decade (Gardner, Lowe, Moss, Mahoney, & Coglisier, 2010), the findings were significant and greatly impacted the study of leadership (B. M. Bass & R. Bass, 2008). Therefore, to better comprehend transformational leadership and its potential impact in coaching, one must understand the history of leadership. Thus, this section further describes leadership theories of recent interest in coaching sports (Arthur & Tomsett, 2015; Cummins & Spencer, 2015) and that were demonstrated by successful coaches throughout history. For example, John Wooden, one of the most successful coaches in NCAA history, was thought to exhibit some of the characteristics of servant leadership (Taylor, 2008).

**Servant leadership.** Robert Greenleaf (1977) first introduced and developed the theory of servant leadership after being inspired by the book *The Journey to the East*.

According to van Dierendonck (2011), servant leadership was described by six characteristics: empowering and developing people, humility, authenticity, interpersonal acceptance, providing direction, and stewardship. These characteristics ultimately described a leader who put the needs and concerns of followers first.

The description of servant leadership, along with its people-centered approach, made it a theory relevant to coaching sports (Burton & Peachey, 2014). For that reason, servant leadership was proposed as a leadership model that coaches should examine in sports (Burton & Peachey, 2014; Rieke, Hammermeister, & Chase, 2008). Additionally, Rieke et al. (2008) found in a study on high school basketball players that athletes preferred a servant leadership style. Although the research to date has been limited, it demonstrated the potential of servant leadership in sports (Cummins & Spencer, 2015). Similar, to servant leadership other models were suggested in coaching sports.

**Charismatic leadership.** Charisma was first introduced by Max Weber (1947) as leaders who possessed extraordinary gifts and were therefore treated as leaders (Aaltio-Marjosola & Takala, 2000; B. M. Bass & R. Bass, 2008). According to B. M. Bass and R. Bass (2008), “Charismatic leaders are highly expressive, articulate, and emotionally appealing. They are self-confident, determined, active, and energetic” (p. 50). As a result, charismatic leadership was researched along with sport coaching due to the dynamic personalities of coaches (Çelik & YalÇInkaya, 2015). Additionally, Çelik and YalÇInkaya (2015) studied the charismatic leadership characteristics of handball coaches and found that players viewed coaches with unusual appearance as more charismatic. Furthermore, it was suggested that unusual appearance may negatively affect trust with

players (Çelik & YalÇInkaya, 2015). Charismatic leadership was also associated with the study of transformational leadership.

One of the four components of transformational leadership, idealized influence, was originally derived from charisma (B. M. Bass, 1999). Moreover, charisma was an important part of transformational leadership and the two theories were often viewed as closely related (B. M. Bass & Riggio, 2006). In the same way as charisma, components of transactional leadership were seen in the full-range leadership model that included transformational leadership (B. M. Bass & Riggio, 2006).

**Transactional leadership.** Transactional leadership consisted of three types of behaviors: contingent reward, active management-by-exception, and passive management-by-exception (B. M. Bass & Riggio, 2006; Northouse, 2016). According to B. M. Bass and Riggio (2006) a transactional leader focused on the exchange and rewards or punishments based upon the follower's outcome. For example, transactional leadership often occurred in politics, classrooms, and sports (Northouse, 2016; Sinclair, Harper, & Segrave, 2014).

A transactional coach was described as one who “focuses on behaviors that teach specific skills and rewards certain behaviors, which help teams win games, which in turn offer a ‘cause and effect’ perspective” (Sinclair et al., 2014, p. 34). According to Carthen (2006) the transactional leadership model provided a cognitive framework into why athletes may subject themselves to pain. Therefore, transactional leadership offered an important component in coaching sports. However, in today's society, a transformational coach who engaged and created connections with its athletes provided a more effective style of leadership (Northouse, 2016).

**Transformational leadership.** Whereas transactional leaders focused on the exchange, transformational leaders motivated followers to go beyond what was thought imaginable (B. M. Bass & R. Bass, 2008). According to B. M. Bass and Riggio (2006), four main components encompassed the transformational leadership theory. The first component, idealized influence, suggested that leaders were trusted, respected, and served as role models. The second, inspirational motivation, implied that leaders inspired, motivated, and created an inspiring vision. The third was intellectual stimulation in which leaders established an environment that encouraged innovation and creativity to solve problems. The final component of transformational leadership was individual consideration. Leaders who demonstrated individual consideration were focused on the needs of the individuals for growth and accomplishment in the group (B. M. Bass & Riggio, 2006). Transformational leadership was shown to be effective in multiple contexts from leading students in physical activity (Beauchamp et al., 2014) to teaching in the classroom (Pounder, 2014), and most recently in sports (Cronin, Arthur, Hardy, & Callow, 2015).

In one of the first articles written on transformational leadership and coaching sports, Armstrong (2001) highlighted how coaches and athletes could benefit from a transformational coach. Furthermore, Chelladurai (2012) suggested it was important to identify the components of transformational leadership in a sports setting to further advance the field of coaching. Since Armstrong (2001), multiple studies explored the relationship and impact of transformational leadership and coaching sports (Cronin et al., 2015; Rowold, 2006; Stenling & Tafvelin, 2014). Callow et al. (2009) adapted the differentiated transformational leadership inventory for sports.

## **Differentiated Transformational Leadership Inventory**

A theoretical framework could establish a rationale for research and justify variables and design (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Moreover, the differentiated transformational leadership inventory (DTLI) was created to provide a framework for measuring transformational leadership (Hardy et al., 2010). The DTLI was derived from the multifactor leadership questionnaire (B. M. Bass & Avolio, 2000) and the transformational leadership inventory (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990). Additionally, Hardy et al. (2010) examined the effect of transformational leadership using the DTLI on military recruits and found that transformational leadership behaviors had a strong relationship with training outcomes. The DTLI includes six domains of transformational leadership behavior: individual consideration, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, fostering acceptance of group goals, high performance expectations, appropriate role modelling, and one transactional behavior contingent reward (Hardy et al., 2010). Subsequently, Callow et al. (2009) used the DTLI in sports setting to examine team cohesion and performance. Gomes (2014) recommended that future research on transformational leadership and coaching consider integrating more domains and adopting new measures. These domains provided a framework that could apply a deeper understanding of transformational leadership behaviors of successful NCAA men's water polo coaches. The six transformational leadership behaviors of the DTLI guided the research of this qualitative study.

## **Coaching**

In today's society, a coach's role goes beyond teaching sports and includes such tasks as recruiting, fundraising, teaching leadership, and building character (Bloom,

Falcão, & Caron, 2014; Gould, Collins, Lauer, & Chung, 2007). Research focused on coaches' roles beyond winning (Vallée & Bloom, 2005) and included teaching life skills and the positive, holistic growth of athletes (Camiré, Trudel, & Forneris, 2012; Gould et al., 2007). Côté and Gilbert (2009) recommended the development of athletes from effective coaches should result in the four C's of athlete outcomes: competence, confidence, connection, and character. Thus, coaches were in a unique environment to teach athletes skills that extend beyond sports and last a lifetime (Côté & Gilbert, 2009; Gould et al., 2007). Therefore, developing effective coaches that lead student-athletes successfully in athletics and life continued to be a prominent theme in research (Gilbert & Rangeon, 2011).

**Coaching effectiveness.** For years, researchers tried to define the components that derive an effective coach in sports. Based on the findings of Côté and Gilbert (2009), a widely accepted definition of coaching effectiveness was developed: “the consistent application of integrated professional, interpersonal, and intrapersonal knowledge to improve athletes' competence, confidence, connection, and character in specific coaching contexts” (p. 316).

Several studies used this definition of coaching effectiveness (Camiré et al., 2012; Vella & Gilbert, 2014) and it was commonly accepted in coaching literature (Bloom et al., 2014). The interpersonal knowledge component of the definition referred to the coach's ability to communicate effectively with a diverse population; whereas the intrapersonal knowledge referred to the coaches' ability to examine themselves and reflect on their practice (Côté & Gilbert, 2009). Taken together, these highlighted the

importance of a wide range of skills coaches must possess to effectively lead student-athletes.

**Coaching and leadership.** Leadership is fundamental to sports and the most successful coaches continually examining ways to effectively lead their athletes (McCann et al., 2015; Riemer & Harenberg, 2014). According to Riemer and Harenberg (2014) and Gilbert and Rangeon (2011), the study of leadership in coaching must include the pioneering works of Chelladurai. In one of the first studies on sports leadership, Chelladurai and Haggerty (1978) developed the multidimensional model of leadership to examine the effectiveness of coaching leadership behaviors. Likewise, Smoll, Smith, Burtis, and Hunt (1978) published another influential study that developed a leadership model for sports. In recent years due to the popularity of sports around the world, the study of leadership in coaching continued to see tremendous growth (Gilbert & Rangeon, 2011). Clear links between leadership and coaching were found, but research is still lacking in the newest developments, specifically, transformational leadership (Arthur & Tomsett, 2015; Gomes, 2014).

### **Transformational Leadership in Sports**

In a review of literature, Arthur and Tomsett (2015) found only 14 empirical studies on transformational leadership in a sport setting from 2001-2013. The benefits of transformational leadership in sports to date were positive and demonstrated a need for more research (Arthur & Tomsett, 2015; Gomes, 2014). In the sport of water polo, no studies conducted investigated the leadership of successful coaches. A study on transformational leadership in successful water polo coaches would provide valuable information to the current pool of research.

From a qualitative perspective, more research is need to establish what comprises transformational leadership in sport (Becker & Wrisberg, 2008; Newland et al., 2015; Pharion, 2014). Only a few studies examined transformational leadership in sports coaching from a qualitative research methodology, most notably Newland et al. (2015) and M. J. Smith et al. (2016). Further research needs to be completed to expand the current knowledge of transformational leadership in coaching at the NCAA Division I level (Arthur & Tomsett, 2015; Newland et al., 2015).

**What is known about transformational leadership and sports.** In one of the first studies on transformational leadership and sports, Zacharatos, Barling, and Kelloway (2000) found that adolescents adopted and demonstrated to their peers the transformational leader behaviors that their fathers displayed. These findings presented a potential significant impact for coaches who demonstrated a transformational leadership style in positively developing the future leaders of the sport. In a similar way, studies showed that transformational leadership behaviors of coaches improved task cohesion and team cohesion (Callow et al., 2009; Cronin et al., 2015; M. J. Smith et al., 2013). In addition, transformational leadership in coaching improved athlete effort, motivation, and overall well-being (Arthur et al., 2011; Rowold, 2006; Stenling & Tafvelin, 2014). However, there were conflicting results in the data in areas such as performance; Rowold (2006) found an improvement in athlete performance whereas Callow et al. (2009) found no improvement in performance.

The majority of the research was quantitative in nature; however, a few studies recently have examined transformational leadership from a qualitative framework (Newland et al., 2015; Pharion, 2014). Newland et al. (2015) and Pharion (2014)

examined coach behaviors using a qualitative methodology and found that transformational coaches were trusting, caring, and motivating. In addition M. J. Smith et al. (2016) also examined the transformational leadership behavior of elite cricket captains and managers. However, there is still much to be learned about transformational leadership in coaching in a sporting context (Becker & Wrisberg, 2008).

### **What is not known about transformational leadership and sports.**

Conversely, what remains to be known is what actually constitutes transformational leadership in coaching and what potential effects does it have on athletes experience and performance (Chelladurai, 2012; Gomes, 2014; Stenling & Tafvelin, 2014). More studies are needed in a variety of sports, at different levels, and with successful coaches (Hodge, Henry, & Smith, 2014; Pharion, 2014; Vella & Perlman, 2014). Based on the literature review, no studies could be found that examined leadership behaviors of NCAA Division I water polo coaches. Thus, transformational leadership behaviors of successful NCAA water polo coaches warrant further investigation and would add to the current knowledge of research.

### **Statement of the Research Problem**

Throughout history, successful coaches demonstrated the importance of quality leadership and its necessity in sport (Riemer & Harenberg, 2014). Complementary to the research was the number of leadership books written by successful coaches such as John Wooden (Wooden & Jamison, 2009), Mike Krzyzewski (Krzyzewski & Phillips, 2000), and Vince Lombardi (Lombardi Jr., 2001). Leadership was a foundation to the success of these coaches.

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA; 2015) reported approximately 482,533 student-athletes participated in sports in 2014-15. Additionally, the number of high school students who participated in athletics in the United States in 2014-15 rose to 7,807,047 (NFSHA, 2015). Thousands of coaches are interacting with these athletes everyday with little to no leadership education or training. Therefore, it would seem that sport coaching would be flooded with the most recent developments in leadership theories. However, the research on coaching leadership was deficient specifically in transformational leadership (Arthur & Tomsett, 2015; Gomes, 2014). According to Arthur and Tomsett (2015) only 14 empirical research studies were done between 2000 and 2013 on transformational leadership in sports. Therefore, much is yet to be learned about transformational leadership and successful coaches in sports.

Transformational leadership was shown to be effective in many different environments in today's world (B. M. Bass & Riggio, 2006). However, with the limited research in sports (Arthur & Tomsett, 2015) it leads to the question; how does transformational leadership translate into the field of coaching sports? Studies on transformational leadership in coaching demonstrated increased cohesiveness in teams, increased levels of intrinsic motivation, improved satisfaction with a coach, and increased well-being and need satisfaction (Callow et al., 2009; Charbonneau et al., 2001; Rowold, 2006; Stenling & Tafvelin, 2014). This positive relation of transformational leadership in sports warranted further investigation into coaching and leadership behaviors. Additionally, there were no qualitative studies found that examined successful NCAA coaches and transformational leadership behaviors.

According to Ehrmann (2011), “Outside of parenting there might not be a better platform than coaching to transform boys and girls into healthy and thriving men and women” (p. 8). This demonstrated the powerful impact a coach’s leadership could have on athletes. With 6.5 million youth sport coaches in the United States, one in five were not trained in motivation techniques or communicating with children (Aspen Institute, 2015). Therefore, some coaches were not equipped with the appropriate skills to effectively lead their teams. Furthermore, coaches’ roles expanded beyond just teaching sports and include the opportunity to introduce skills such as teamwork, leadership, and character building (Bloom et al., 2014; Gould et al., 2007; Vallée & Bloom, 2005). Thus, the importance of leadership in coaching was never more significant, even at the highest levels of sports including the NCAA.

The NCAA has 25 Division I men’s water polo teams and 566 athletes (NCAA, 2015; J. Smith, 2016). In the sport of water polo, there are no professional leagues in the United States so outside of winning an Olympic medal, winning a NCAA championship is the pinnacle of the sport. Since the first NCAA championship in 1969, the finals of the NCAA men’s water polo championships were dominated by only a few teams. Vallée and Bloom (2005) found that coaches who built successful basketball and volleyball university programs shared four characteristics similar to the four components of transformational leadership; inspirational motivation, idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (B. M. Bass, 1999). Therefore, it would be of interest for water polo coaches to understand transformational leadership behaviors. The question that arose from a leadership standpoint was, how are these top NCAA coaches leading their programs and staying successful year after year? Transformational

leadership behaviors could play a role in their success. There are 250,600 (USDL, 2015) coaches leading student-athletes in the youth programs, high school, NCAA, and professionally in the United States that have little to no education on leadership. A study examining the leadership behaviors of a successful NCAA men's water polo coach could provide answers.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to understand and describe the transformational leadership behaviors of a successful NCAA Division I championship water polo coach.

### **Research Questions**

This study was guided by a primary research question and six sub questions. The primary research question was: What transformational leadership behaviors does a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach demonstrate?

### **Sub-Questions**

1. What individual consideration behaviors does a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach demonstrate?
2. What inspirational motivation behaviors does a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach demonstrate?
3. What intellectual stimulation behaviors does a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach demonstrate?
4. What behaviors does a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach demonstrate to foster acceptance of group goals and promote team work?

5. What behaviors does a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach demonstrate to set high performance expectations?
6. What behaviors does a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach perform to demonstrate appropriate role modeling?

### **Significance of the Problem**

There are approximately 482,533 student-athletes in the NCAA and (NCAA, 2015) and 7,807,047 in high school student-athletes (NFSHA, 2015). These student-athletes spent a significant amount of time with coaches who influenced their lives. Furthermore, United States Water Polo (USWP) has 42,090 members (USWP, 2014) including coaches, supporters, and athletes. It is critical that coaches have the skills to successfully lead these athletes to improve the quality of their experiences (Newland et al., 2015). Transformational leaders motivate their followers to exceed performance expectations by motivating and inspiring followers with a clear vision and values (B. M. Bass, 1999). Therefore, educating coaches on transformational leadership could play an important impact on student-athletes and build the future leaders of the sport of water polo.

According to Wooden and Jamison (2009) "Character—doing the right thing—is fundamental to successful leadership" (p. 105). John Wooden understood what research confirmed, leadership is instrumental in building successful sports teams and developing lifelong skills in student-athletes (Camiré et al., 2012; Riemer & Harenberg, 2014). Furthermore, Bloom et al. (2014) and Gould et al. (2007) agreed that a coach's role went beyond teaching sport and included teaching life skills such as teamwork, leadership, and character building. In a study of successful Canadian University sports teams (Vallée &

Bloom, 2005) found four common variables—coaches' attributes, individual growth, organizational skills, and vision—that were similar to the four characteristics of transformational leadership. This suggested the important role transformational leadership skills could have in successful sports teams. In addition, transformational leadership behaviors appeared in a study on the coaches of the New Zealand All Blacks rugby team that won the 2011 World Cup (Hodge et al., 2014). Although more research emerged since, transformational leadership and coaching has yet to be examined among NCAA coaches and the sport of water polo.

There are currently only 25 NCAA Division I men's water polo teams, a decrease from 1988 when there were 35 (NCAA, 2015). Water polo has seen a decline in NCAA Division I teams since 1988. Therefore, it is critical that coaches at all levels are providing a positive experience for athletes to retain and increase participation. Moreover, educating water polo coaches on transformational leadership could provide a framework toward positive coaching developments (Price & Weiss, 2013; Vella, Oades, & Crowe, 2013b).

Over the past couple of years, research in transformational leadership and coaching gained momentum in soccer, softball, ice hockey, and basketball (Arthur & Tomsett, 2015; Stenling & Tafvelin, 2014). Coaches who demonstrated transformational leadership were shown to increase athlete intrinsic motivation (Charbonneau et al., 2001), team cohesion (Callow et al., 2009), and athlete effort (Arthur et al. 2011). In the same way, studies examined transformational leadership of NCAA athletic directors (Northington, 2015), teachers in the classroom (Pounder, 2014), and small businesses (Mesu et al., 2015). However, future research is needed to better understand the impact

transformational coaches have on their teams and athletes in different context (Gomes, 2014).

It was suggested that more studies were needed that observed successful coaches and their leadership behaviors (Becker & Wrisberg, 2008; Pharion, 2014; Stenling & Tafvelin, 2014). A study that examined a NCAA Division I men's water polo coach who's had a successful career coaching would provide valuable information that would help water polo coaches and potentially all college coaches. Equally important, understanding the leadership behaviors of successful NCAA men's water polo coaches could benefit the sport of water polo and the field of coaching. The positive impact of transformational leadership in coaching is promising; however, more can be known about transformational leadership and the behavior of successful coaches in sports.

This information could be used by United States Water Polo (USWP), Water Polo Coaches Association (WPCA), and World Water Polo Coaches Association (WWPCA) to develop and educate coaches on transformational leadership. To date, no studies were found that examined the leadership behaviors of successful water polo coaches. Thus, findings from this study added to coaching transformational leadership research and were the first about a successful water polo coach.

### **Definitions**

For the purposes of this study, the following terms were defined.

**Differentiated transformational leadership Inventory (DTLI).** The DTLI is a measure of transformational leadership developed by Hardy et al. (2010) derived from the works of B. M. Bass & Avolio (1995) and Podsakoff et al. (1990). Callow et al.

(2009) adapted the DTLI and used it in a sport setting to include the following six components of transformational leadership:

1. Inspirational motivation – The coach provides inspiration and incentive to motivate athletes.
2. Appropriate role model – The coach demonstrates positive behavior for the athletes to model.
3. Fosters acceptance of goals and teamwork – The coach encourages team play and gets athletes to work toward the same goal.
4. High performance expectations – The coach provides high standards and expects athletes to perform their best.
5. Intellectual stimulation – The coach challenges an athlete to think of things in a new way.
6. Individual consideration – The coach recognizes and understands the individual needs of each athlete.

**Division I.** In 1973, the NCAA developed three divisions to better align institutions in areas of philosophy, competition, and opportunity. Division I represents about 350 schools that typically have larger student populations and budgets, offer more scholarships, and maintain high academic standards (NCAA, n.d.-a).

**National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA).** The NCAA was formed in 1906 to regulate college athletics (Weight & Zullo, 2015). The NCAA is focused on the success of student-athletes and has grown to include 1,121 institutions and 460,000 students (NCAA, 2015).

**Success.** Success in this study is defined as an NCAA Division I men's water polo coach who has won a NCAA championship and has been the head coach of the United States men's national team.

### **Delimitations**

The limits or boundaries of a study are known as delimitations and are established by the researcher (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). This study was bound by the following: (a) NCAA Division I men's water polo coaches who have won a national championship, (b) coaches that have also been the head coach of the United States men's water polo national team. While some studies are also bound by geography and time, this study was open to any NCAA men's water polo program in the United States that met the criteria.

### **Organization of the Study**

The remainder of this study is presented in the next four chapters. Chapter II presents a detailed review of the literature beginning with leadership and establishing the importance of leadership in coaching sports. Chapter III provides an in-depth description of the methodology of the study. The study used a phenomenological framework to examine the transformational leadership behaviors of a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach. The chapter also provides a detailed overview of the steps that were taken to collect and analyze the data. Chapter IV presents the data and qualitative findings of the study from the interviews, observations, and artifacts collected. Finally, Chapter V discusses the results of the study and presents major findings and recommendations.

## CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

“To know where we are going with leadership research, we must know where we are, and where we have been—we must look backward and forward at the same time” (Hunt, 2000, p. 453). This review of literature provides a thorough background of the major variables in the study. The important concepts and theories of leadership are presented to gain a better understanding of the study. The chapter begins with an overview of the history and definition of leadership, followed by descriptions of popular leadership theories and models that led to the current state of leadership. The leadership section concludes with an introduction of transformational leadership and the differentiated model of transformational leadership inventory.

The review of literature then presents the research on coaching sports from a coaches’ role and how research defines effective coaching. Furthermore, the history of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) is presented, including a look at collegiate water polo over the years and successful water polo coaches.

Finally, the review of literature examines the research in leadership in sports coaching. After establishing the importance of leadership in sports, the current research on transformational leadership is described. The research found identifies the positive effects of transformational leadership in sports coaching and need for further qualitative research in transformational leadership and coaching.

### **Leadership**

“One of the most universal cravings of our time is a hunger for compelling and creative leadership” (Burns, 1978, p. 57). This hunger for leadership and desire for great leaders can be seen throughout history. Leadership can be traced back to hieroglyph

writings by ancient Egyptians and to stories in the bible about Moses, Abraham, and Jesus (B. M. Bass & R. Bass, 2008). For example, the book of Exodus in the Bible described how the Lord spoke to Moses to lead the people of Israel out of Egypt. According to Ben-Hur and Jonsen (2012), Moses was an innovative leader, servant, visionary, and teacher, all of which are components seen in modern leadership models. Examples of leadership can be seen in every culture throughout history from the ancient Chinese, to the Greeks, and to the establishment of the United States (B. M. Bass & R. Bass, 2008).

The history of leadership provided an essential foundation and critical components to the leaders of today. For instance, in Ancient China, Confucius was a teacher and philosopher from 551 B.C. to 479. B.C. Confucius' thoughts on leadership focused on an individual's character and self-cultivation over knowledge that set an example and made others want to follow (Fernandez, 2004; Shim, 2008). Another illustration was from the ancient Greece philosopher Plato, who wrote about the ideal state and ideal leader, and could be considered one of the most influential leadership thinkers in history (Takala, 1998). In examining Ancient Greek literature, Wilson (2013) found that Plato, Aristotle, and Xenophon commonly viewed leaders as wise, knowledgeable, and moral. All these cultures presented instances that resulted in individuals influencing a group of people toward common goals.

To fully understand leadership, one must possess knowledge of the history of the theoretical research and its evolution throughout the 20th century. Numerous research studies guided the development of leadership theories over the past one hundred years. B. M. Bass and R. Bass (2008) highlighted works such as the research of Weber on

charismatic leadership and Stodgill's 1948 review of leadership literature. Leadership became one of the most widely researched phenomena in the social sciences (D. V. Day & Antonakis, 2012; Yammarino, 2013). Recently, leadership saw tremendous growth in scholarly peer reviewed journal articles; from 2000 to 2009, *Leadership Quarterly* published 388 articles on leadership, an 87.8% increase from the previous decade (Gardner et al., 2010). This growth indicated the significance placed on leadership in society with more information available about the development and study of leadership (Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009). Additionally, Yammarino (2013) suggested its popularity in research was due to the fact that without leadership, nothing would get accomplished. This was undoubtedly true and its importance was established by the examples throughout history.

### **Defining Leadership**

The definition of leadership evolved throughout the 1900s and researchers described it differently over the past one hundred years. In 1991, Joseph Rost (as cited by Northouse, 2016) reviewed literature from 1900 to 1990 and found 221 definitions of leadership. B. M. Bass and R. Bass (2008) and Northouse (2016) presented a timeline of Rost's work and the evolution of leadership from the focus on leadership traits in the 1930s to leader influence on shared goals in the 1960s. Equally important was the work of Burns (1978) who defined leadership as "the reciprocal process of mobilizing, by persons with certain motive and values, various economic, political, and other resources, in a context of competition and conflict, in order to realize goals independently or mutually held by both leaders and followers" (p. 425). Burns (1978) was one of the first to describe leadership as a transformational process. Leadership, and the study of it,

evolved over history, but some components of leadership were consistently seen in research studies. For example, the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior (GLOBE) research project brought together 62 nations focusing on culture and leadership; they defined leadership as “the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organizations of which they are members” (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004, p. 56). The connection from Burns (1978) to House et al. (2004) showed in their definitions that leadership was a process, involved influence and groups, and included common goals. Thus, Northouse (2016) defined leadership as “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal” (p. 6). This definition, along with the concepts from Burns (1978) and House et al. (2004), provided a comprehensive definition of leadership that paralleled the role of a sports coach.

### **Leadership Theories**

The evolution of leadership netted multiple theories and approaches since the early part of the 20th century. According to B. M. Bass & R. Bass (2008), “theories of leadership attempt to explain its emergence or its nature and its consequences” (p. 46). The theories presented provided further understanding of the history of leadership and the evolution to current theories. These leadership theories brought forth new ideas and pushed the “boundaries of the leadership frontier” (Day, 2011, p. 3). An explanation and discussion of leadership theories is presented to create a foundation to further situate leadership in coaching sports.

**Trait theories.** In the mid to late 1800s, the study of leadership focused on the theory of the “great man.” Carlyle (as cited by B. M. Bass & R. Bass, 2008) wrote that

great leaders had specific qualities, or traits, that attracted the attention of people and believed the history of the world could be told by examining great men throughout time. It was through thoughts like these that arose the “great man” theory that leaders were born and not made. However, these early writings lacked empirical evidence that successful leaders were born into greatness (Khan, 2015). Burns (1978) later argued that history was not made from a “great man” but from the combined effort of “great people.” Burns (1978) concluded, “just as great men often stumble, so did the Great Man theory” (p. 11).

In the early 20th century, the scientific research on leadership shifted focus to traits that successful leaders possessed (D. V. Day, & Antonakis 2012; Northouse, 2016). Most research on leadership concentrated on these individual traits until the 1940s. Although trait research saw a decline in the past decade, it remains an important part in the study of leadership. Northouse (2016) concluded from reviewing research over the past century that some of the traits a person would possess to be perceived by others as a leader were: intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity, and sociability. In a review of trait leadership research from 1904 and 1947, Stodgill (1948) concluded that leaders did not become successful by their traits alone, but the situation must also be taken into consideration. Consequently, the results of Stodgill (1948) and other studies influenced leadership research in the 1960s to focus on behaviors of effective leaders in different situational aspects, which introduced the behavior approach to leadership theories.

**Behavioral approach.** After several reviews on trait leadership in the 1940s, the experts shifted focus to look at leaders while they were in action leading groups and

organizations. The behavioral theory approach took an expanded view on leaders and examined what they did, how they acted, and their effective behaviors in different situations (D. V. Day & Zaccaro, 2007). This pioneering research in behavioral leadership occurred at Ohio State University and the University of Michigan.

In the 1950s, Ohio State University researchers greatly influenced theory on effective leadership behavior. Hemphill and Coons (1957) developed a leadership behavior description questionnaire (LBDQ) with 150 questions that was given to people in education, industry, and military; the results of the questionnaires found that leader actions were centered around two different behaviors: initiating structure and consideration. Initiating structures were task behaviors that included coordinating activities, emphasizing deadlines, defining roles, and maintaining performance standards. Considerations were relationship behaviors that included: treating subordinates as equals, building respect and trust, being open to suggestions, being approachable, and listening to subordinates (Hemphill & Coons, as cited by Northouse, 2016, p. 72).

Similarly, Katz and Kahn (1951) and other researchers at the University of Michigan were studying the impact of leadership behavior in small groups. They found similar results as the Ohio State studies, but referred to them on opposite ends of a continuum. Product orientation describing task leadership behaviors that emphasized the production aspect of the job was on one end of the continuum, whereas the other end was employee orientation emphasizing concern for interpersonal relationships and the needs of followers (Katz & Khan, 1951).

Another essential study occurred in the early 1960s as Blake and Mouton (1967) created a managerial grid based upon leaders concerns for people and production. The

grid described similar leadership-task relationship behaviors that were found in the Ohio State and University of Michigan studies. The grid (Figure 1) presented five different leadership styles and Blake and Mouton (1967) found that managerial leaders who were oriented on the grid at “9,9 team management” had high concern for people and production, and were more likely to be successful.

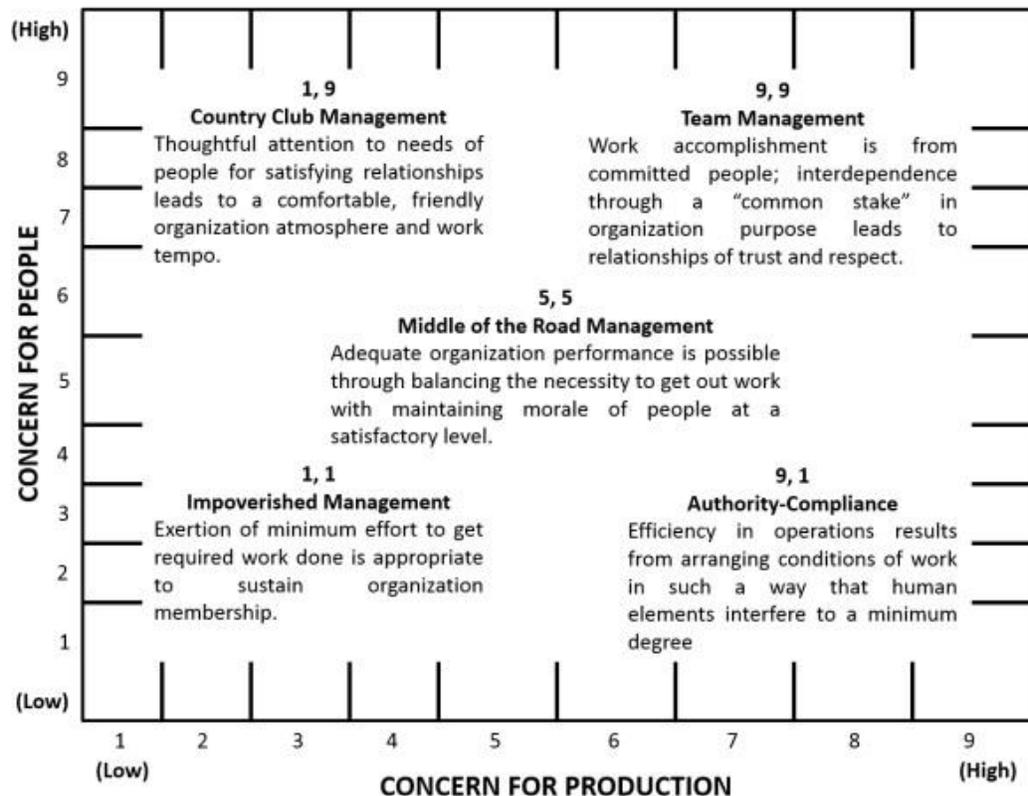


Figure 1. Managerial grid mapping concern for people with concern for production.

Source: Blake and Mouton (1967).

Findings from research on the behavioral approach were incorporated into other theories of leadership. However, the ideas and theories generated from the behavioral approach were “simple answers to complex questions” in leadership (Yukl, 2013, p. 57). They generated consistent behavior styles that did not account for diverse situations.

Therefore, research shifted again to contingency theories that focused on effective leadership behavior styles in a variety of situations.

**Contingency theories.** The situational approach took into consideration that different circumstances required different types of leadership to be effective (Yukl, 2013). It emphasized the importance of variables such as the environment, followers, type of organization, and work performed to explain the influence of a leader's behavior and performance. These approaches that described the relationships between leadership and different situations were called contingency theories. Yukl (2013) identified Fielder's contingency model, the normative decision theory, and the path-goal theory as the most researched contingency theories.

***Fielder's contingency model.*** Fielder (1967) was one of the first researchers to develop a model that explained the effectiveness of a leader's behaviors were contingent upon situational variables. In Fielder's (1967) model, a least-preferred coworker (LPC) scale was created where a leader described a person with whom they worked the least well. A leader with a high LPC score was considered more relationship oriented and one with a low LPC score was considered more task oriented. As a result, Fielder (1967) concluded that leaders should be placed in a situation that fit their style.

***Normative decision model.*** Vroom and Yetton (1973) developed the normative decision model based on five decision processes a leader could use to decide how much to involve subordinates in a decision-making process. Based on the model, a leader could choose between an autocratic decision, a consultation, or a group decision. Additionally, Vroom and Yetton (1973) developed a set of situational variables that guided a leader in the decision-making process using a set of flow charts. The model was updated and is

still used around the world to provide leaders with a set of decision rules and recommendations on how to become a more effective leader (Vroom & Jago, 2007).

***Path-goal theory.*** House (1971) contended a leader showed followers the best path to accomplish the goal. According to House (1971), a leader should create clear expectations and provide sufficient rewards when they were not adequately provided in the environment. Furthermore, a leader should choose the appropriate behavior for the situation based upon the needs of the followers. The theory claimed that the leadership style was contingent on task variables, environmental variables, and individual differences (House, 1971).

**Servant leadership.** In Herman Hesse's book *The Journey to the East* (as cited by Greenleaf, 1977), he described a servant who performed chores and sustained a group of travelers; when the servant disappeared, the group fell apart and it was discovered that the servant was ultimately the leader of the group. The basis of this book inspired the servant leadership theory; Greenleaf (1977) stated, "this story clearly says that the great leader is seen as a servant first" (p. 7). Greenleaf described servant leadership as:

It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first.

Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead... The difference manifests itself in the care taken by the servant-first to make sure that the other people's highest priority need are being served. The best test, and difficult to administer, is: Do those served grow as persons? (Greenleaf, 1977, p. 13)

Although this was one of the most widely used definitions, it presented a broad view of servant leadership. This description sent researchers searching for a more

specific definition; however, Parris and Peachey (2013) performed a review of literature on servant leadership and found no agreement on a central definition.

The Robert K. Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership (n.d.), founded in 1964, described servant leadership as “a philosophy and set of practices that enriches the lives of individuals, builds better organizations and ultimately creates a more just and caring world.” After examining Greenleaf’s works, Spears and Lawrence (2002) identified 10 characteristics of a servant leader: listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment, and building community. Based on this work, van Dierendonck (2011) examined the characteristics along with other approaches and developed a conceptual model of servant leadership that contained six characteristics: empowering and developing people, humility, authenticity, interpersonal acceptance, providing direction, and stewardship. Hence, van Dierendonck (2011) concluded that these six characteristics combined together to form a solid representation of servant leadership despite a deficiency of empirical evidence.

**Charismatic leadership.** Charisma was introduced by Weber (1947) into leadership to describe one who was gifted with extraordinary abilities and therefore treated as a leader. Charisma was previously only a theological notion used to describe one who had a divine gift. Weber (1947) used this concept to describe a leader who emerged during a social crisis and appealed to followers to gravitate toward a vision. In addition, Weber (1947) recognized the success of a charismatic leader was in how followers ultimately viewed their gifts.

House (1976) developed a theory on charismatic leadership that outlined characteristics, behaviors, and effects of followers. He hypothesized that a charismatic

leader could be characterized as dominant, self-confident, influential, and morally strong. Along with those characteristics, a charismatic leader articulated goals, built a personal image, served as a role model, displayed confidence, motivated others, and held high expectations for followers. Subsequently, he hypothesized that followers trusted and accepted the leader, and became loyal, obedient, and confident, which resulted in effective performance. House's (1976) theory laid the foundation for future studies on charismatic leadership, including examining the motivational effects and behavioral attributes of charismatic leaders (Conger & Kanungo, 1994; Shamir, House, & Arthur, 1993). B. M. Bass and R. Bass (2008) later contested that charisma was a component of transformational leadership known as idealized influence.

**Transactional leadership.** Transactional leadership represented a mid-point of a continuum between transformational and laissez-fair leadership in the full-range model (Avolio & Bass, 1991). Transactional leadership emphasized the exchange between a leader and follower. Burns (1978) provided a description of transactional leadership as:

When one person takes the initiative in making contact with others for the purpose of an exchanged of valued things. The exchange could be economic or political or psychological in nature: a swap of goods or of one good for money; a trading of votes between candidate and citizen or between legislators; hospitality to another person in exchange for willingness to listen to one's troubles. (p. 19)

Transactional leadership was separated into two different types of behaviors, contingent reward and management-by-exception (Avolio & Bass, 1991). The most effective transactional behavior was contingent reward in which the leader agreed on a

reward in exchange for the followers' effort on a task (Avolio & Bass, 1991). An example of contingent reward behavior would be a coach rewarding a water polo player with a starting position as a result of the effort put in during practice.

The second type of transactional behavior was management-by-exception where a leader made a corrective transaction or provided negative feedback (B. M. Bass & Riggio, 2006). Within management-by-exception, two types of behaviors were identified: active and passive. In active management-by-exception (MBE-A), a leader monitored a follower's tasks and made corrective actions based upon mistakes made. In passive management-by-exception (MBE-P), a leader waited for problems to arise, mistakes to be made, or standards not to be met before correcting the action. This was the least effective transactional behavior other than laissez-faire, which was taking no action at all (B. M. Bass & Riggio, 2006).

### **Transformational Leadership**

According to B. M. Bass and R. Bass (2008), transformational leadership was first introduced in 1978 by Downton, describing a model of leadership that included transactional, charismatic, and inspirational leadership. However, it was Burns (1978) who first theorized transformational leadership, saying:

Such leadership occurs when one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality. Their purposes, which might have started out as separate but related, as in the case of transactional leadership, become fused...But transforming leadership ultimately becomes moral in that it

raises the level of human conduct and ethical aspiration of both leader and led, and thus it has transforming effect on both. (p. 20)

According to Bass (1990), transformational leaders motivated followers to look beyond their self-interests and achieve what they never thought was possible. Transformational leaders brought awareness to and acceptance of the group's mission, shared vision, and goals while also developing follower's leadership abilities. Furthermore, Bass and Riggio (2006) described transformational leadership as an extension of transactional that raised leadership to another level. B. M. Bass and Avolio (1995) developed the full-range model of leadership that contains behaviors of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership. Four components of transformational leadership were included in the updated model that described transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (B. M. Bass & Riggio, 2006).

**Idealized influence.** The first component of transformational leadership, idealized influence, comprised of two properties: the leader's behavior and the attributions perceived by followers (B. M. Bass & Riggio, 2006). Transformational leaders were role models with high standards and moral behavior that influenced followers to want to emulate them. Leaders with idealized influence were respected, trusted, and took risks. Idealized influence was also referred to as charisma and, together with inspirational motivation, formed factors similar to charismatic leadership (B. M. Bass & Riggio, 2006).

**Inspirational motivation.** The second component, inspirational motivation, was the ability of leaders to inspire and challenge followers toward a shared vision (B. M.

Bass & Riggio, 2006). These leaders communicated high expectations and demonstrated enthusiasm to motivate follower's commitment to the organization. They promoted team spirit and displayed optimism to overcome obstacles (B. M. Bass & Riggio, 2006). Leaders with high inspirational motivation got followers to look beyond their self-interests and achieve more for the group (Northouse, 2016).

**Intellectual stimulation.** The third component of transformational leadership was intellectual stimulation. Leaders stimulated creativity and innovation with followers to create new ways to solve problems. Followers were not publicly criticized for new ideas, but rather were encouraged to innovate and develop new methodologies (B. M. Bass & Riggio, 2006).

**Individualized consideration.** The final component of transformational leadership was individual consideration, in which leaders provided support, coaching, and mentoring to followers (B. M. Bass & Riggio, 2006). Transformational leaders listened carefully and paid special attention to the needs of the followers to help them achieve their highest potential. The environment created was supportive of individual differences recognizing their desires through acceptance demonstrated by the leader (B. M. Bass & Riggio, 2006).

**Other models of transformational leadership.** Three other notable models contributed to the knowledge of transformational leadership. Bennis and Nanus (1985) identified four strategies used by transformational leaders to transform organizations: having a clear vision, being the social architects of their organizations, creating trust, and using creative deployment of self through positive self-regard. Kouzes and Posner (1987, 2012) interviewed middle and senior level managers to develop their model. They found

five fundamental practices that allowed leaders to achieve extraordinary things: model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart. Podsakoff et al. (1990) performed an extensive literature review and found six behaviors, similar to B. M. Bass (1985), associated with transformational leaders: identifying and articulating a vision, providing an appropriate model, fostering the acceptance of group goals, maintaining high performance expectations, providing individual support, and engaging intellectual stimulation. More recently, researchers examined different components of transformational leadership to develop models that apply in different contexts, including the military (Hardy et al., 2010) and sports (Callow et al., 2009).

**Differentiated transformational leadership inventory.** Antonakis, Avolio, and Sivasubramaniam (2003) recommended researchers adopt differentiated models to examine components of transformational leadership. Drawing on prior research on transformational leadership, Hardy et al. (2010) studied the effects of transformational leadership on military recruits and developed the differentiated transformational leadership skills inventory (DTLI). The DTLI included six dimensions of transformational leadership, two based on the work of B. M. Bass (1990; inspirational motivation and individual consideration) and four based on the work of Podsakoff et al. (1990; provides an appropriate role model, fosters acceptance of group goals and team work, sets high performance expectations, and intellectual stimulation). A description of the six dimensions is provided in Table 1.

Table 1

*Dimensions of the Differentiated Transformational Leadership Inventory*

Dimensions of Transformational Leadership	Description
Inspirational Motivation	Develops a vision of the future and inspires others
Appropriate Role Model	Sets an example based on values that are followed
Fosters Acceptance of Group Goals and Team Work	Promotes an environment of team work and getting others to work toward a common goal
High Performance Expectations	Demonstrates excellence by followers
Intellectual Stimulation	Challenges followers to think about how things are done and new ways of doing them
Individual Consideration	Shows respect and demonstrates concern for followers' needs

*Note.* Adapted from Hardy et al. (2010).

From their study, Hardy et al. (2010) found that different contexts supported the importance of different transformational leadership behaviors and they suggested additional research to examine the influence of transformational leadership in different contexts. One context in which to study transformation leadership was the field of coaching sports.

### **Coaching**

In addition to examining the role of leadership and specifically transformational leadership, it was important to examine the role of coaching, including the role of the coach and how coaching relates to leadership. This section begins with a brief history of coaching to provide context of the current state. This is followed by an examination of a coach's role, what makes an effective coach, and the relationship between coaching and leadership.

Coaching sports dates as far back as the twelfth century when individuals and groups participated in different activities and verbally passed on knowledge and expertise to others (D. Day, 2013). As sports continued to evolve, so did coaching. The development of rules and individuals' desire to gain advantages over their competitors increased the need for coaches (Jones & Kingston, 2013). Gambling also made a significant impact on the culture of competition and those involved were willing to pay for experts to provide advice and knowledge to individuals competing (D. Day, 2013). As a result, coaches were viewed as skilled laborers, passing on their knowledge to others. Subsequently, individuals relied on the coaches' experience and knowledge to develop their craft (D. Day, 2013). Coaching represented the way in which individuals improved their knowledge and skills.

The end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century saw the development of governing bodies in sports and growth of the Olympics, which made significant impacts on coaching (D. Day, 2011, 2013). Researchers in the 1920s performed empirical studies in sports, including examining physiology and citing a need for coaches to understand human anatomy (D. Day, 2011). These factors contributed to the current state of coaching where tacit knowledge combined with empirical data created multiple avenues for modern coaching (Abraham & Collins, 2011; Jones & Kingston, 2013; Nash & Collins, 2006). In addition, the commercialization and financial prosperity of college and professional sports drove a need for teams to hire successful coaches and pushed for an expanding role of coaches (Jones & Kingston, 2013).

## **Coaching Roles**

The role of coaches expanded over the years and redefined what it meant to be successful and effective. Winning was always a factor in sports and how society defined a successful coach (Becker & Solomon, 2009). However, defining a coach was complex and merited further investigation into the coach's role. The International Council for Coaching Excellence (ICCE; 2013) described the primary functions of a coach to (a) set the vision and strategy, (b) shape the environment, (c) build relationships, (d) conduct practices and prepare for and manage competitions, (e) read and react to the field, and (f) learn and reflect. Beyond these functions, typical coaching duties included teaching, leading, and holistically developing athletes (Bloom et al., 2014; Cassidy, Jones, & Potrac, 2016).

Great coaches such as Vince Lombardi, Mike Krzyzewski, and John Wooden taught tactics, technical skills, and life skills (Bloom et al., 2014; Gould et al., 2007). John Wooden, one of the most successful NCAA coaches of all time, was known for his coaching ability and as a master teacher; Tharp and Gallimore (1976) chose John Wooden to conduct a study on master teachers and described in-depth his teaching ability. Similarly, Green Bay Packer football coach Vince Lombardi and Duke University basketball coach Mike Krzyzewski both shared similar views on coaching, emphasizing the importance of teaching (Krzyzewski & Phillips, 2000; Lombardi Jr., 2001). It was apparent from the success of John Wooden, Vince Lombardi, Mike Krzyzewski, and stories from athletes that it was critical that a coach teach the skills needed to achieve goals in sports and life (Bloom et al., 2014).

Recent studies examined coaches from a broader perspective and emphasized teaching skills related to social, psychological, and academic outcomes, as well as leadership, teamwork, and character building (Bloom et al., 2014; Collins, Gould, Lauer, & Yongchul, 2009). These skills were found important to promote the development of athletes beyond sports and help them throughout their lives (Bloom et al., 2014; Camiré et al., 2012). To that end, coaching organizations placed emphasis on teaching life skills. The Positive Coaches Alliance (PCA) created a two prong model for coaches, referred to as “Double-Goal Coach,” that focused on winning and more importantly, life lessons (Thompson, 2003). This became a central component of the PCA and remains supported by many sports organizations, including USA Water Polo and Major League Baseball.

Sports coaching expanded beyond the early days of skilled laborers to a complex position with a multitude of roles. From the literature, it was concluded that a coach must take a holistic approach to improve performance of the team or individual, including examining the emotional, political, spiritual, and cultural dynamics of athletes (Cassidy, 2016). Equally important was the ability to teach, lead, and emphasize life skills that were prevalently taught in sports (Bloom et al., 2014; Camiré et al., 2012). However, holistic coaching did not always equate to successful coaching.

### **Coaching Effectiveness or Success**

Coaches wanted to be successful whether their focus was on winning or helping student-athletes achieve their goals in the classroom and life. Quality coaching was described using many different terms such as success, elite, expert, winning, championship, and effective (Gilbert, Nater, Siwik, & Gallimore, 2010). The oxford dictionary defined effectiveness as “the degree to which something is successful in

producing a desired result” (“Effectiveness,” 2016). Horn (2008) conducted a review of literature and defined effective coaching focused on athlete outcomes as:

That which results in either successful performance outcomes (measured either in terms of win-loss percentages, individual player development, or success at the national or international level) or positive psychological responses on the part of the athletes (e.g., high perceived ability, high self-esteem, intrinsic motivational orientation, or high levels of sport enjoyment and satisfaction). (p. 420)

In a more detailed approach, Côté and Gilbert (2009) provided the most widely accepted definition of coaching effectiveness: “The consistent application of integrated professional, interpersonal, and intrapersonal knowledge to improve athletes’ competence, confidence, connection, and character in specific coaching contexts” (p. 316). Côté and Gilbert (2009) further described effective coaching in terms of three components: (a) coaches’ knowledge, (b) athletes’ outcomes, and (c) coaching contexts.

**Coaches’ knowledge.** Coaches’ knowledge was separated into three areas, professional, interpersonal, and intrapersonal knowledge. Professional knowledge was sport-specific knowledge, including tactical and technical, that were critical to coaching any sport (Côté & Gilbert, 2009). Sport-specific knowledge was an essential component to effective coaching. Vallée and Bloom (2005) found that coaches’ commitment to learning was seen among successful coaches. Similarly, Abraham, Collins, and Martindale (2006) identified that excellent coaches required sport-specific knowledge and Frost (2009) included knowledge of sport as one of the five characteristics of successful coaches.

The second form of knowledge, interpersonal knowledge, was described as the ability to communicate effectively with players, coaches, and staff members (Côté & Gilbert, 2009). In observations of John Wooden (Tharp & Gallimore, 1976) and Pat Summit (Becker & Wrisberg, 2008), both coaches demonstrated their ability to communicate effectively with their athletes. In addition, Frost (2009) emphasized the importance of coaches and their ability to communicate, highlighting such interpersonal knowledge as a key factor among successful coaches.

The third form of knowledge, intrapersonal, referred to a coach's ability to reflect and examine his or her own self (Côté & Gilbert, 2009). Reflection was found to be an integral part of coaching and the ability to learn through experience (Gilbert & Trudel, 2001, 2005). When coaches reflected upon their practices, games, and interactions with athletes, learning and growing occurred.

**Athletes' outcomes.** The second component of the Côté and Gilbert's (2009) coaching effectiveness definition was athlete outcomes, which was divided into competence, confidence, connection, and character/caring. A measure of competence in sports was usually determined by the performance given by an athlete. A coach was often deemed effective if the athlete improved in sport-specific technical and tactical skills, and trained at a level that improved conditioning and future performance (Côté & Gilbert, 2009).

Confidence referred to athletes' beliefs in themselves and their abilities (Côté & Gilbert, 2009). A coach must create an environment that fosters self-confidence in athletes. Moreover, two successful coaches, Seattle Seahawks head football coach, Pete Carroll, and University of North Carolina women's soccer coach, Anson Dorrance, both

noted the importance of building athlete confidence (Voight & Carroll, 2006; Wang & Straub, 2012).

The third component of athlete outcomes was connection, or the relationships formed in sports (Côté & Gilbert, 2009). Tharp and Gallimore (1976) noted that John Wooden's off-the-court relationships with his players was indicated by how players responded to him on the court. Wooden said, "that next to my own flesh and blood, they are the closest to me" (Tharp & Gallimore, 1976, p. 77). In the same way, Pete Carroll mentioned in his philosophical model how important relationships were and how much he cared about his players (Voight & Carroll, 2006).

The final component of athlete outcomes was character and caring, which included such characteristics as integrity, empathy, and responsibility (Côté & Gilbert, 2009). These were characteristics that served athletes beyond their athletic years and throughout their entire lives. Martens (2012) also pointed out that a successful coach modeled and taught skills that helped an athlete be a positive and productive member of society. Additionally, these characteristics were seen in John Wooden's coaching and in his pyramid of success (Tharp & Gallimore, 1976; Wooden & Jamison, 2009). Likewise, caring, respect, and an emphasis on living life beyond soccer were all a part of Dorrance's core values (Wang & Straub, 2012). Although these components outlined characteristics of effective coaching, the context in which the coaching took place must also be examined.

**Coaching context.** When examining effective coaching, one must look at the environment or setting under which the coaching took place. Cruickshank (2015) described two different types of coaching, participation and performance. Participation

coaches emphasized a positive environment instead of performance, whereas a performance coach focused on competitive performance (Cruickshank, 2015). Côté and Gilbert (2009) provided objectives for developing the four athlete outcomes in contexts for participation coaches compared to performance coaches.

The definition presented by Côté and Gilbert (2009) gave a detailed overview of effective coaching and a holistic approach to athlete outcomes backed by research on successful coaches such as Wooden (Tharp & Gallimore, 1976), Dorrance (Wang & Straub, 2012), Carroll (Voight & Carroll, 2006), and Summitt (Becker & Wrisberg, 2008). In further examining the research on effective coaching, three other notable themes of success emerged: (a) teaching, (b) planning and organization, and (c) leadership (Becker & Wrisberg, 2008; Frost, 2009; Gallimore & Tharp, 2004; Gilbert et al., 2010; Tharp & Gallimore, 1976; Vallée & Bloom, 2005; Voight & Carroll, 2006).

According to Becker and Solomon (2009), great coaches engaged in teaching. Effective coaching was dependent upon the ability to successfully teach (Gilbert et al., 2010). Two seminal studies demonstrated the importance of teaching in successful coaches, Tharp and Gallimore (1976) in their examination of Wooden's teaching ability and Becker and Wrisberg (2008) in their study of Pat Summitt. Both studies found that more time was spent on instruction and teaching than in any other category.

In addition to their ability to teach, effective coaches were organized and spent a significant amount of time planning each season and practice. John Wooden spent two hours planning for practices that included detailed information and times for each drill (Gallimore & Tharp, 2004). In the same way, Pat Summitt was also noted for her intense practices using a running clock to track each drill (Becker & Wrisberg, 2008). Similarly,

Pete Carroll noted the importance of being prepared and developing a plan that best met the needs of each individual athlete (Voight & Carroll, 2006). It was clear that successful coaches spent time to plan and organize the details to best serve the needs of the athletes and team.

In addition to being organized, effective coaches successfully led their teams as demonstrated by the distinguished outcomes produced. Vallée and Bloom (2005) examined five expert university coaches and found they exhibited qualities and behaviors that allowed them to successfully lead their respective programs. Leadership was a central component of coaching in sports with a coach taking a group of individuals and leading them toward a common goal. Pete Carroll's philosophical model contained several attributes of successful leadership, including vision, trust, and relationships (Voight & Carroll, 2006). Furthermore, Wang and Straub (2012) described Anson Dorrance's effective leadership style as integral to his coaching success. Based on these findings, leadership and coaching deserve further investigation to better understand the relationship between the two, and collegiate athletics offer a promising context for those studies to be conducted.

### **National Collegiate Athletic Association**

The history of the NCAA offers important background into why the organization exists and its role in collegiate sports. This section provides a brief history on the NCAA and its progression through the past century. This section also includes an overview of the history of NCAA men's Division I water polo to better understand the current state of the sport.

## **History of the NCAA**

The beginning of collegiate athletics was a direct result of student organized activities on the campuses of universities looking for outlets away from the rigors of studying (J. R. Bass, Schaeperkoetter, & Bunds, 2015; Hums & MacLean, 2004; Weight & Zullo, 2015). In the early- to mid-1800s, college students led grassroots efforts to organize activities for students that eventually led to intercollegiate competition (Hums & MacLean, 2004; Weight & Zullo, 2015). In 1852, three teams from Yale and one from Harvard competed in the first ever intercollegiate sporting event, a rowing regatta on Lake Winnepesaukee; the event drew an estimated 1,000 spectators and paved the way for future intercollegiate competitions (Weight & Zullo, 2015). It did not take long for other intercollegiate activities to occur; in 1859, the first baseball game took place between Amherst College and Williams College and in 1869 the first intercollegiate football game took place between Rutgers and Princeton (Hums & MacLean, 2004). The increase in intercollegiate activities brought about concerns for safety, funding, eligibility, and the potential impact on the academic environment on university campuses (J. R. Bass et al., 2015). As a result, the NCAA was formed at a convention in 1906 marking the first major reform to regulate college athletics and the first statements on academic eligibility (Oriard, 2012; Weight & Zullo, 2015). In 1921, the NCAA hosted its first national championship in the sport of track and field (Hums & MacLean, 2004). Today, the NCAA hosts 90 national championships, including men's and women's water polo, and grew to include 1,121 colleges, 460,000 college athletes, and 24 sports (NCAA, 2015).

## **NCAA Water Polo**

Water polo was first introduced in the United States by John Robinson between 1888 (Wigo, 1996) and 1890 (Sullivan, 1919). Sullivan (1919) indicated the earliest intercollegiate water polo matches occurred before 1912, but exact dates were not mentioned. However, according to Lambert and Gaughran (1969), the University of Pennsylvania started its men's water polo program in 1897 and results and standings from 1912 to 1919 were provided between Princeton, Yale, Pennsylvania, Cornell, and Columbia. However, water polo was dropped from the Ivy league schools in 1937 (Snyder, 2008). However, today Princeton and Harvard still have NCAA Division I teams (Table 2). Although intercollegiate water polo began as early as 1897, the first NCAA men's championship game did not occur until 1969. The University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) defeated the University of California, Berkeley (Cal) to become the first NCAA men's water polo champions (NCAA, n.d.-b). Since that time, four teams dominated the national championships: Cal with 13 national titles, UCLA with 10, Stanford with 10, and the University of Southern California (USC) with 9 (NCAA, n.d.-b). As shown in Table 2, 25 universities have Division I water polo teams.

Table 2

*2016 NCAA Division I Men's Water Polo Programs*

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• Brown University	• St. Francis University
• Bucknell University	• Stanford University
• California State University, Long Beach	• United States Air Force Academy
• California State University, San Jose	• United States Naval Academy
• Fordham University	• University of California, Berkley
• George Washington University	• University of California, Davis
• Harvard University	• University of California, Irvine
• Iona College	• University of California, Los Angeles
• La Salle University	• University of California, Santa Barbara
• Loyola Marymount University	• University of Southern California
• Pepperdine University	• University of the Pacific
• Princeton University	• Wagner College
• Santa Clara University	

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*Note.* There were 22 Division I men's water polo programs in 2014 (NCAA, 2015). California State University, San Jose added a men's water polo team in the fall of 2015, La Salle University and Wagner College added in the fall of 2016 (J. Smith, 2016).

**Successful NCAA men's water polo coaches.** Since the first NCAA men's water polo championship in 1969, 15 coaches won a national championship (NCAA, n.d.-b). As shown in Table 3, three coaches stood out regarding the number of national championships won, Jovan Vavic, Dante Dettamanti, and Pete Cutino. In addition, there have been five who coached a men's water polo team to a NCAA national championship and the United States men's national team (Table 3).

Table 3

*NCAA Men's Water Polo Coaches Who Have Won National Championships*

Coach	School	Number of Championships	Head Coach of USA men's National team
Jovan Vavic	USC*	9	2013
Dante Dettamanti	Stanford University	8	
Pete Cutino	Cal	8	
Guy Baker	UCLA*	4	
Adam Krikorian	UCLA*	3	
Bob Horn	UCLA	3	
Ted Newland	UCI	3	
Steve Heaston	Cal	3	
Kirk Everist	Cal	3	
Adam Wright	UCLA	2	
John Vargas	Stanford	1	1997-2000
John Williams	USC*	1	
Terry Schroeder	Pepperdine	1	2006-2012
Pete Snyder	UCSB	1	
Art Lambert	Stanford	1	1968

*Note.* The table contains the coaches who won a NCAA men's water polo championship. \*Guy Baker and Adam Krikorian were co-head coaches in 1999 and 2000. \*John Williams and Jovan Vavic were co-head coaches in 1998 (NCAA, n.d.-b). Exact dates of Art Lambert's tenure as head coach were not found (USAWP, n.d.).

Cutino and Dettamanti set an impressive standard for coaching success in NCAA water polo. Pete Cutino coached at Cal for 26 years and won 519 games earning 4 NCAA coach of the year awards. Since 1999, the most prestigious individual award in water polo given to the top male and female NCAA water polo athletes was named after the legendary Cal water polo coach (Olympic Club, 2016). Dettamanti began his coaching career at UCLA as a graduate assistant under Bob Horn, who won the first national championship in 1969. At Stanford, Dettamanti won 570 games; that number increased to 666 games when including his years at Occidental and the University of California at Santa Barbara (Stanford University, 2013). In 25 years at Stanford, he won

8 national championships across four different decades spanning the 1970s through the 2000s (Dettamanti, 2008). The coach with the most wins in NCAA men's water polo history is former UCI head coach Ted Newland who won 714 games. Newland coached for 38 years at UCI, won 3 NCAA championships and was named NCAA coach of the year four times (NCAA, n.d.-b).

Five current coaches have won a men's NCAA water polo national championship: Kirk Everist at Cal, Adam Wright at UCLA, John Vargas at Stanford, Terry Schroeder at Pepperdine, and Jovan Vavic at USC. In addition to his nine men's NCAA championships, Vavic won five national championships with the women's team including the 2016 title, and was named national coach of the year 12 times, (Piellucci, 2015). Furthermore, USC made an appearance in the men's NCAA national championship game every year since 2005, including winning six national championships in a row from 2008–2013 (NCAA, n.d.-b). Moreover, Vavic was recently named the PAC-12 conference men's water polo coach of the century (Pac-12, 2015). Vavic took the reins from Cutino and Dettamanti and is making history in NCAA water polo.

Among the five current NCAA division I men's water polo coaches three have also spent time coaching the United States men's national team. John Vargas coached the national team from 1997 through the 2000 Olympic games (Stanford, n. d.). Jovan Vavic was interim head coach with the United States National team from 2012 to 2013 (USC, n.d.). However, Terry Schroeder is the only current NCAA division I men's water polo coach to have coached the United States national team to an Olympic medal (USAWP, n.d.).

## **Leadership and Coaching Sports**

According to Riemer and Harenberg (2014) “leadership is central to sport” (p. 151). Coaching legends Vince Lombardi of the Green Bay Packers, John Wooden of the UCLA Bruins, and National Basketball Association (NBA) champion coach Phil Jackson were known for winning championships and being great leaders of their teams. Leadership was instrumental in coaching, and the two often linked together. Chelladurai (as cited by Vella, Oades, & Crowe, 2010) proposed a commonly accepted definition of coach leadership as athlete performance and satisfaction influenced by a coach’s behavioral process. However, Vella et al. (2010) proposed that coaching context, coach knowledge and characteristics, and athlete characteristics should also be included in the definition. Researchers developed leadership models that identify important factors of coaching behavior and their effects on athlete performance and development (Vella et al., 2010). Cummins and Spencer (2015) grouped the models into four categories based upon their primary focus: relational, athlete-centered, group-centered, and coaching effectiveness.

### **Relational Models**

Relational models presented a framework of the coach-athlete relationship in (Cummins & Spencer, 2015; Vella et al., 2010). Three models were more widely described in the research: the motivational model, transactional leadership model, and altruistic model.

The motivational model proposed that a coach’s behaviors impacted an athlete’s need for autonomy, competence, relatedness, and intrinsic motivation (Vella & Perlman, 2014; Vella et al., 2010), and Cummins and Spencer (2015) identified a clear link with

transformational leadership in the areas of intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and idealized influence. The transactional leadership model, describe both in the leadership theories and as a relational model, placed emphasis on the exchange between a coach and athlete, such as the coach assigning a task and an athlete being rewarded upon completion of the task (B. M. Bass & R. Bass, 2008); Carthen (2006) indicated that an athlete's goals and motivations created acceptance or rejection of the contingent reward. Altruism was defined as a "motivational state with the ultimate goal of increasing another's welfare" (Batson & Shaw, 1991), thus the altruistic relational model aligned with servant leadership and themes identified with this model in coaching were: core values, interpersonal care, compassion, and awareness of what was important to the students (Miller & Carpenter, 2009).

### **Athlete-Centered Models**

Servant leadership was identified as one of two athlete-centered models. In a sporting context, the coach put the needs of the athletes first and served them to achieve their goals, hence the athlete-center approach. Rieke et al. (2008) found that athletes favored a servant leader coaching style and servant leadership resulted in higher intrinsic motivation in athletes and a more positive sporting experience (Gumm, 2015; Hammermeister, Burton, Pickering, Chase, Westre, & Baldwin, 2008; Rieke et al., 2008). The success of servant leadership in sports led Burton and Peachey (2013) to recommend NCAA athletic directors adopt a servant leadership style to better serve the needs of the student athletes, stating this would be preferred over transformational leadership, which would use the organizational objectives to lead such as the revenue driving intercollegiate athletics.

Servant leadership was shown to be a viable leadership model in a sports setting; however, the autonomy-supportive model of leadership showed positive results and provided another athlete-centered model. Whereas a servant leader focused on serving the athlete, the autonomy-supportive model created an environment that encouraged athletes to make choices, solve problems, and participate in decision-making (Vella & Perlman, 2014). When a coach promoted autonomy-supportive behaviors, it was shown to satisfy athletes psychological needs, develop positive relationships between teammates, and positively influence the quality of coaching (Coatsworth & Conroy, 2009; Cronin & Allen, 2015; Cummins & Spencer, 2015; Hodge & Lonsdale, 2011). Consequently, autonomy-supportive and transformational leadership demonstrated overlap in four areas; according to Vella and Perlman (2014) they both communicated high expectations, positive reinforcement, individualized attention, and autonomous forms of motivation.

### **Coaching Effectiveness Models**

The final category of coaching models was based on how effective coaches were at leading, typically measured by established outcomes (Cummins & Spencer, 2015). Four models were classified as coaching effectiveness: the multidimensional model, the cognitive-mediation model, authentic, leadership model, and transformational leadership model.

Chelladurai and Saleh published some of the most influential works in the field, such as their 1978 multidimensional model of leadership to provide a framework for effective leadership in sports. The model identified three types of leader behaviors: required behaviors (driven by situational characteristics), preferred behaviors (influenced

by athlete characteristics), and actual behaviors (influenced by leader characteristics as well as the preferred and required behaviors). This model led to individual satisfaction and team and individual performance (Chelladurai, 2012). In addition, the model also suggested that transformational leadership affected the characteristics of the leader (Chelladurai, 2012; Riemer & Harenberg, 2014). To test the multidimensional model, Chelladurai and Saleh (1980) developed the leadership scale for sports that measured training and instruction, democratic behavior, autocratic behavior, social support, and positive feedback. The multidimensional model of leadership and the leadership scale for sports were the most widely used in coaching (Cummins & Spencer, 2015; Riemer & Harenberg, 2014).

In the same way, Smoll et al. (1978) were instrumental and one of the first to propose a coaching and leadership model when they introduced the cognitive-mediation model. The basis was that coaches' behaviors, athletes' perceptions, and athletes' reactions were influenced by situational factors, coach characteristics, and player characteristics; thus, an athlete remembered a coach's behaviors to determine how they felt about the coach and experience (R. E. Smith & Smoll, 2011). Smith et al. (1978) created the Coaching Behavior Assessment System (CBAS) with twelve categories to observe coaches during practices and games.

Whereas the multidimensional model of leadership and the cognitive-mediation model of leadership were derived from sports, the final two took root in organizational leadership theory. Authentic leadership focused on whether leadership was real or genuine (Northouse, 2016). George (2003) described five characteristics of authentic leadership: heart, purpose, values, self-discipline, and relationships. Moreover,

Walumbwa, Avolio, Gardner, Wernsing, and Peterson (2008) found that self-awareness, internalized moral perspective, balanced processing, and relational transparency made up a foundation for authentic leadership. Few studies examined sports coaching and authentic leadership, but additional research was recommended based on its potential for sports coaching (Cummins & Spencer, 2015; Vella et al., 2010).

Transformational leadership was the final model under the effective coaching framework. As previously discussed, transformational leaders brought acceptance of a group mission through a shared vision motivating followers to look beyond their self-interests and achieve what they never thought possible (B. M. Bass, 1990; B. M. Bass & R. Bass, 2008). Transformational leadership was studied extensively in other fields including business, education, and the military (Allen et al., 2015; Laurence, 2011), and numerous studies revealed positive results such as improved team cohesiveness, improved coaching satisfaction, and increased intrinsic motivation (Callow et al., 2009; Charbonneau et al., 2001; Rowold, 2006; M. J. Smith et al., 2013). Therefore, transformational leadership and coaching merited a deeper dive into the literature.

### **Transformational Leadership and Coaching Sports**

Transformational leadership dates back to Downton (1973) and Burns (1978), but not until the turn of the century was it integrated into sports and coaching. One of the first empirical studies on transformational leadership in sports was by Zacharatos et al. (2000) on the influence of parental transformational leadership and the subsequent behaviors children displayed in sports; they found that children adopted transformational behaviors based upon the extent to which their parents interacted with them in this manner. Not long after, Armstrong (2001) wrote a non-empirical article on

transformational coaching in sports in which he provided suggestions for implementing a transformational leadership model in coaching that emphasized ethical behavior, sharing a vision and goals, improving performance through charismatic leadership, using encouragement and praise effectively, and leading by example. In a literature review of studies from 2000 to 2013, Arthur and Tomsett (2015) found only 14 empirical studies on transformational leadership and coaching. Since this time, transformational leadership and coaching sports increased in studies and interest.

Although only 14 empirical studies in transformational leadership and sports coaching were conducted as of 2013, the research demonstrated positive results. In studying university athletes, Charbonneau et al. (2001) determined that transformational leadership increased intrinsic motivation, therefore mediating the relationship between performance. In addition, transformational leadership was associated with greater satisfaction with coaching, reduced player aggression, increased effort, and increased team cohesiveness (Arthur et al., 2011; Callow et al., 2009; Rowold, 2006; M. J. Smith et al., 2013; Tucker, Turner, Barling, & McEvoy, 2010). More recently, Stenling and Tafvelin (2014) demonstrated a positive effect between transformational leadership and an athlete's well-being and need satisfaction. These positive results were in contrast to Bormann and Rowold (2016) who found fostering the acceptance of group goals was detrimental to an individual's performance. However, in the same study it was determined that articulating a vision was most important to an athlete's development of performance. The evidence presented in these studies clearly indicated the benefits of transformational leadership behaviors in coaching.

## **Transformational Leadership Coaching Behaviors**

Transformational leadership could provide a critical basis to enable the positive development of athletes (Vella, Oades, & Crowe, 2013a). Moreover, transformational leadership behaviors were shown to positively influence athlete outcomes (Vella et al., 2013b). Therefore, it is essential to understand what these transformational coaching behaviors were in a more practical sense. According to B. M. Bass and Riggio (2006), transformational leadership included four critical areas: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Vella and Perlman (2014) provided a description of the four areas as they related to coaching sports.

Idealized influence referred to a coach a positive behavioral role model and displayed positive characteristics. Inspirational motivation was how the coach motivated and inspired by providing meaning through optimism and enthusiasm. With intellectual stimulation, the coach encouraged creativity and problem-solving. Finally, individualized consideration was when a coach worked with the goals of the athlete to meet his or her needs of growth, development, and achievement (Vella & Perlman, 2014). In addition, Callow et al. (2009) proposed two additional transformational behaviors, high performance expectations and fostering acceptance of group goals, and one transactional behavior, contingent rewards.

Sinclair, Harper, and Segrave (2014) examined the prior work to develop a leadership model specific to college athletics that included a model of transformational leadership behaviors for coaches and administrators. The Collegiate Athletic Leadership Model (CALM) described how transformational and transactional behaviors could improve positive outcomes and provided coaches and administrators with leadership

guidelines. In addition, CALM provided a model of effective leadership behavior called the foundational, supporting, developmental (FSD) model that included high performance expectations, intellectual stimulation, individual consideration, contingent reward, articulating a vision, fostering acceptance of group goals, and providing an appropriate role model. Whereas Vella and Perlman (2014) described transformational leadership behavior in coaching, the CALM and FSD models provided a practical description for NCAA coaches.

### **Measuring Transformational Leadership in Coaching**

Studies in coaching and sports used a variety of instruments to measure transformational leadership. However, the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) (B. M. Bass & Avolio, 2000) and the DTLI (Callow et al., 2009) were the most popular. Several studies were conducted in sport using various versions of the MLQ model since 2000. For instance, Zacharatos et al. (2000) used the MLQ when examining the influence of parents transformational leadership behavior on children in sports, Charbonneau et al. (2001) used it in studying university athletes, and McCann et al. (2015) used the MLQ to study NCAA soccer coaches. However, limitations were noted with the MLQ not adapted to a sports context (Charbonneau et al., 2001; Price & Weiss, 2013).

As a result, researchers looked at developing an instrument to measure transformational leadership in a sports context. Specifically, Callow et al. (2009) adapted a version of the DTLI to develop a more accurate instrument for a sports context. Callow et al. (2009) used a seven-factor model to measure the following behaviors: individual consideration, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, fostering acceptance of

group goals and promoting team work, high performance expectations, appropriate role model, and contingent reward. The study found evidence that the DTLI was valid in a sports setting and that transformational leadership behaviors increased both team cohesion and performance (Callow et al., 2009). Whereas Callow et al. (2009) validated results with an adult sample, Vella et al. (2012) looked to examine the results in a youth sports setting. For the study, Vella et al. (2012) examined the DTLI, and specifically the high performance expectations factor, in youth sports and found a six factor scale was more appropriate. Subsequently, the six factor scale minus high performance expectations was deemed a valid instrument in a youth sports context (Vella et al., 2012). The majority of studies in transformational leadership and coaching were conducted using quantitative measures and the MLQ (Charbonneau et al., 2001; Lee, Kim, & Kang, 2013; McCann et al., 2015) or DTLI (Arthur et al., 2011; M. J. Smith et al., 2013; Vella et al., 2013b).

**Qualitative studies in transformational leadership and coaching.** Few studies used a qualitative framework to research transformational leadership in sports. According to M. J. Smith et al. (2016), only one study to date, Newland et al. (2015), overtly explored transformational leadership and coaching using a qualitative methodology. However, two other studies also used a qualitative methodology, case studies, to explore transformational leadership in coaching, although the main intent was to examine coach leadership behavior and leadership techniques of successful coaches (Mills, Boardley, Vella, & Voight, 2016; Pharion, 2014).

Additionally, two qualitative studies found transformational leadership in their results. Vallée and Bloom (2005) researched successful university programs and found

four variables that influenced success were related to transformational leadership. Similarly, Hodge et al. (2014) examined the motivational climate of the New Zealand All Blacks rugby team and discovered themes related to transformational leadership behaviors.

Pharion (2014) performed a single case study on a successful high school football coach. Interviews were conducted with parents, former and current players, and colleagues. Pharion (2014) identified eight themes: passion, humility, work ethic, positivity, integrity, presence, empowerment, and uniqueness from the interviews. It was determined that the coach was a transformational leader based upon his words and actions as described by the interviewees. In the same way, Mills et al. (2016) performed an intrinsic case study focused on interest in a case rather than trying to develop a theory. Three professional soccer coaches were interviewed with the focus of examining transformational leadership and integrity. The results indicated the coaches demonstrated inspirational motivation, empathy or individualized consideration, new training methods or intellectual stimulation, role modeling, and goal setting or high performance expectations (Mills et al., 2016).

Furthermore, Newland et al. (2015) noted the lack of qualitative research in transformational leadership and coaching and interviewed eleven female collegiate athletes from a variety of sports in a phenomenological study to gain lived experiences of their former high school, club, and college coaches. Four themes emerged from the data during the interviews: caring, motivating, teaching life lessons, and trusting. Newland et al. (2015) compared the themes to transformational leadership frameworks and found that caring was the most prevalent theme identified in the interviews and was similar to

individual consideration. In addition, Newland et al. (2015) noted specific elements of a sport environment affected transformational leadership including, group size, physical interactions between athlete and coach, and motivation for participation.

In the most recent study, M. J. Smith et al. (2016) interviewed nine professional cricket team players to examine the perceptions of transformational leadership behaviors of the captains and head coaches. They used the DTLI framework to present the data in the six areas. The study found that it was more important for coaches to communicate concisely rather than deliver motivational speeches. This was consistent with the research on John Wooden and how he communicated with athletes (Gallimore & Tharp, 2004). Additionally, a coach's interpersonal skills and appropriate social distance were mentioned as important factors of effective leadership (M. J. Smith et al., 2016). Further, coaches created a high-performance culture by "maintaining the vision in practice through coaches demonstrating exemplary time-keeping and standards of appearance, and captains' role-modelling effort expended in training and preparation" (Smith et al., 2016, p. 28). It was determined that coaches created a high-performance culture by challenging athletes and providing them with the appropriate support.

It was shown that qualitative methodology could provide rich data in a variety of sport contexts. However, the results were limited to a small number of studies on transformational leadership and coaching (Mills et al., 2016; Newland et al., 2015; Pharion, 2014; M. J. Smith et al., 2016).

### **Transformational Leadership and Successful NCAA Water Polo Coaches**

No studies were found that explored successful NCAA water polo coaches and leadership behaviors, and few articles were written on leadership and coaching water

polo. However, the importance of leadership and coaching was mentioned by multiple successful water polo coaches (Baker, 2015; Dettamanti, 2008; Schroeder, 2011).

According to Dettamanti (2008), “A successful coach has to be a good leader as well as a good teacher” (p. 16). In the same way, Schroeder (2011) described a coach as a leader, and leadership was a key component in the foundations of coaching presented by Baker (2015). The importance of leadership to NCAA water polo coaches was clear, but the impact of transformational leadership behaviors of coaches in successful NCAA programs remains to be seen.

According to Newland et al. (2015) and Mills et al. (2016), coaches influenced by transformational leadership demonstrated caring and empathy toward their athletes, indicating individual consideration. In further examining successful NCAA water polo coaches, caring was a common theme mentioned (Friends of Cal Aquatics, 2004; Mescall, 2010; Schroeder, 2011). Terry Schroeder (2011), the head coach of the men’s water polo team at Pepperdine University and the 2008 and 2012 United States Olympic coach, mentioned the importance of a coach caring for the players. In the same way, former athletes of UCI men’s water polo coach Ted Newland talked about how much he cared about them and that Newland would do anything for them (Mescall, 2010).

Additionally, Pete Cutino was remembered as making everyone feel a part of the team and treating everyone he coached as a member of his family (Friends of Cal Aquatics, 2004; Merione, 2004). It was clear that current and former successful NCAA men’s water polo coaches demonstrated individual consideration toward their athletes.

Evidence was also found that successful NCAA men’s water polo coaches demonstrated inspirational motivation (Dettamanti, 2008; Schroeder, 2011). Inspirational

motivation was when the coach motivated and inspired by providing meaning through optimism and enthusiasm (Vella & Perlman, 2014). Dettamanti (2008) created a list of what it took to be a successful coach, which included being positive and enthusiastic. Similarly, Schroeder (2011) mentioned the importance of being positive on his twelve keys to becoming a better leader and coach. Newland et al. (2015) found that a coach's high expectations was a clear factor in motivating the athletes. Likewise, Piellucci (2015) described situations while observing the USC men's water polo practice where Jovan Vavic also demanded hard work. The articles indicated that successful NCAA coaches' behavior could include the transformational leadership components.

Another common theme identified amongst successful NCAA men's water polo coaches was teaching life skills. Newland, Schroeder, and Dettamanti all won NCAA championships, but also made teaching life skills an integral part of their coaching (Dettamanti, 2008; Mescal, 2010; Schroeder, 2011). Newland et al. (2015) found that teaching life lessons related to the transformational leadership component idealized influence. Schroeder (2011) stressed the importance of relating the game to things that happened in life and emphasized that sports provided an environment to teach life lessons. In the same way, Newland and Vavic wanted to develop men and lead them on a path to be successful in life (Mescall, 2010; Piellucci, 2015), and Dettamanti (2008) felt that teaching life lessons was an integral part of a coaching philosophy. These coaches defined success by more than their wins and losses.

According to Vallée and Bloom (2005) a coach's vision was a critical component on how successful programs were built. In successful NCAA men's water polo programs, having a vision was mentioned as integral in guiding a team toward its goals

(Baker, 2015; Piellucci, 2015; Schroeder, 2011). Vavic emphasized that he must convince a team of his vision to prepare them for their components (Piellucci, 2015). Similarly, Schroeder (2011) recommended that every successful team have a vision for athletes to follow. Baker (2015) noted the importance of a leader defining the vision for their team. Across the board, a defined vision helped guide them toward the team's goals.

The evidence presented was gathered from interviews, articles, and books. No data or studies found examined transformational leadership and coaching water polo. However, it could be believed successful NCAA coaches demonstrated transformational leadership behaviors as described by Newland et al. (2015), Vella and Perlman (2014), and Vallée and Bloom (2005). The qualitative results of transformational leadership explored professional coaches, a high school coach, and athletes' views on former coaches (Newland et al., 2015; Pharion, 2014; M. J. Smith et al., 2016). There were studies on cricket coaches, soccer managers, and rugby coaches (Hodge et al., 2014; Mills et al., 2016; M. J. Smith et al., 2016). However, there was insufficient qualitative research on transformational leadership and coaching. Additionally, researchers recommended studying former athletes, using observations methods, and examining other sports (Hodge et al., 2014; Newland et al. 2015; Smith et al., 2016). Specifically, the transformational leadership behaviors of successful NCAA men's water polo coaches were yet to be studied.

### **Summary**

The sport of water polo had several successful NCAA water polo coaches such as Cutino, Newland, Dettamanti, and Vavic. However, no study has been conducted on

these successful coaches and the behaviors that made them successful. The research, especially qualitative research, was scarce in looking at transformational leadership in sports, despite the fact that leadership was indicated as a key foundational component of coaching (Baker, 2015; Dettamanti, 2008; Schroeder, 2011).

Studies from Hodge et al. (2014) and Vallée and Bloom (2005) examined successful sports programs and discovered that transformational leadership was apparent. Vallée and Bloom (2005) found that the four categories of successful university coaches were similar to the four categories of transformational leadership: individual consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence. Despite the limited research evidence, Hodge et al. (2014) and Reimer and Harenberg (2014) recommended coaches adopt a mindset of transformational leadership, whereas Arthur and Tomsett (2015) recommended additional research into transformational leadership and sports to better understand what makes coaches great and their impact on their followers.

The review of the literature suggested that studying transformational leadership in successful NCAA water polo coaches could provide insight into what behaviors made them successful. Whereas Newland et al. (2015) interviewed college athletes and M. J. Smith et al. (2016) interviewed coaches, the impact of transformational leadership on athletes' academic success was yet to be examined. Previously, transformational leadership was found to increase an athlete's well-being and level of intrinsic motivation, and result in more positive developmental outcomes (Charbonneau et al., 2001; Stenling & Tafvelin, 2014; Vella et al., 2013b). The current study sought to determine how transformational leadership affected the success of an exemplar coach.

As such, examining the transformational leadership behaviors of a coach who has lead a team to a men's NCAA water polo national championship and the United States men's national team to an Olympic medal is a phenomenon that merited research. The findings from this study added to the limited research on sports coaching and transformational leadership, especially in the NCAA and water polo. The findings could provide valuable insights to the NCAA, water polo, and the field of coaching in terms of how to achieve success for student athletes.

## CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

### **Overview**

Chapter III presents the methodology of this phenomenological study. The purpose of the study was to examine the transformational leadership behaviors of a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach using a qualitative methodology. This chapter presents the qualitative design used for this study, along with a description of the population and the sample, instruments used, validity, and reliability. Additionally, the data collection process is described to provide a detailed account of the actions performed in conducting the study. Further, the data analysis and the steps used to code the data are presented. Finally, the limitations of the study are examined, including how the researcher attempted to reduce their impact during data collection and analysis.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to understand and describe the transformational leadership behaviors of a successful NCAA Division I championship water polo coach.

### **Research Questions**

This study was guided by a primary research question and six sub questions. The primary research question was: What transformational leadership behaviors does a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach demonstrate?

### **Sub-Questions**

1. What individual consideration behaviors does a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach demonstrate?

2. What inspirational motivation behaviors does a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach demonstrate?
3. What intellectual stimulation behaviors does a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach demonstrate?
4. What behaviors does a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach demonstrate to foster acceptance of group goals and promote team work?
5. What behaviors does a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach demonstrate to set high performance expectations?
6. What behaviors does a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach perform to demonstrate appropriate role modeling?

### **Research Design**

The goal of this study was to describe transformational leadership behaviors of a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach. A qualitative methodology was deemed appropriate when the researcher tried to describe and interpret behaviors (Patton, 2015). Using a qualitative methodology provided a deeper understanding of transformational leadership and coaching, and added to the limited qualitative research. In contrast, quantitative methodologies were used to collect data to perform statistical analysis to measure relationships and causes of change (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010; Patten, 2014). In a qualitative study, the researcher had the ability to collect data in a natural setting directly from the source to gain a better understanding (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Thus, a qualitative framework was selected to provide an in-depth understanding of the behaviors of the coach by observing and interviewing those involved. Specifically, a phenomenological study was chosen to capture and describe

how those surrounding the successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach experienced the phenomenon (Patton, 2015), in this case, the phenomenon of training or working under a successful NCAA coach.

### **Qualitative Methodology**

A qualitative research study was defined as an inquiry based on assumptions using a theoretical framework to examine the meaning of individual or group behavior in a natural setting (Creswell, 2013). Qualitative research uses forms of data collection such as interviews, focus groups, observations, and artifact reviews to describe and interpret the topic of study (Patton, 2015). According to Creswell (2013), qualitative research was used when a problem needed to be explored, a detailed understanding was needed, the setting needed to be understood, follow-up on quantitative research was needed, and theories needed to be developed.

Few studies used qualitative methods to examine transformational leadership and coaching; M. J. Smith et al. (2016) conducted research on elite professional cricket coaches and Newland et al. (2015) interviewed 11 female collegiate athletes about their former coaches. This study intended to add to the research by exploring the transformational leadership behaviors of a successful NCAA Division I coach. The data collected through interviews, observations, and artifacts described and provided in-depth information to tell a story, the story of the coach.

### **Phenomenological Approach to Qualitative Research**

A phenomenological study looks to describe the experiences of people who were directly involved with the phenomenon (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). In this study, the researcher captured the lived experiences of those who surrounded a successful

NCAA Division I men's water polo coach and described their common experiences with the phenomenon. The researcher conducted interviews and observations, and collected artifacts, to garner the true essence of the leadership behaviors of the head coach. This study built off the work of Newland et al. (2015) who used a phenomenological framework and suggested that investigating athletes' experiences was vital to understanding transformational leadership in sports.

A phenomenon exists at Pepperdine with the NCAA Division I men's water polo coach. He is the only current men's water polo coach who successfully led a NCAA team to a national championship and the men's national team to an Olympic medal. To study this phenomenon, a phenomenological framework was regarded as most appropriate to gather the meaning and essence of the lived experiences to provide a deep understanding of the coach's leadership behaviors.

### **Population**

The population refers to the group of people who conform to specific criteria for which the study wishes to generalize its results (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). In this study, the population was the 15 coaches who led a NCAA Division I men's water polo team to a national championship, as well as all the student-athletes who played for these coaches and the assistant coaches who worked under these head coaches.

### **Target Population**

A target population is a smaller group within the population based on more specific criteria for whom the researcher wishes to study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). For this study, the target population had to meet additional criteria. First, they needed to be affiliated with a NCAA Division I school that won a water polo national

championship. The first NCAA men’s national championship was played in 1969 and since that time, seven different universities won the Division I men’s water polo national championship (Table 4). Second, the coach who had lead the team to a national championship needed to still be coaching for that team. This narrowed down the NCAA Division I programs to only five schools: Cal, Pepperdine, Stanford, UCLA, and USC. Finally, the head coach had to have spent time coaching the United States men’s water polo national team, leaving only three schools that met the criteria: Pepperdine, Stanford, and USC. The target population for this study was all the alumni, assistant coaches, and head coach of NCAA men’s water polo teams who won a national title and spent time as the head coach of the United States national team.

Table 4

*NCAA Men’s Water Polo Universities That Won National Championships*

University	Number	Year(s)
Cal	14	1973, 1974, 1975, 1977, 1983, 1984, 1987, 1988, 1990, 1991, 1992, 2006, 2007, 2016
Stanford	10	1976, 1978, 1980, 1981, 1985, 1986, 1993, 1994, 2001, 2002
UCLA	10	1969, 1971, 1972, 1995, 1996, 1999, 2000, 2004, 2014, 2015
USC	9	1998, 2003, 2005, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013
UCI	3	1970, 1982, 1989
UCSB	1	1979
Pepperdine	1	1997

*Note.* Source: NCAA, n.d.-b

**Sample**

The sample refers to the subjects of the target population from whom data were actually collected (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The sample for this study was

limited to the coaches, alumni, and assistant coaches that agreed to participate in the study. The researcher contacted all three coaches that met the criteria of the target population, but only one agreed to participate in the study. The data for this study were collected from subjects within the target population who had direct experiences with the Pepperdine men's water polo head coach (Figure 2). The sample included the head coach, assistant coaches, and alumni who directly experienced the phenomenon.

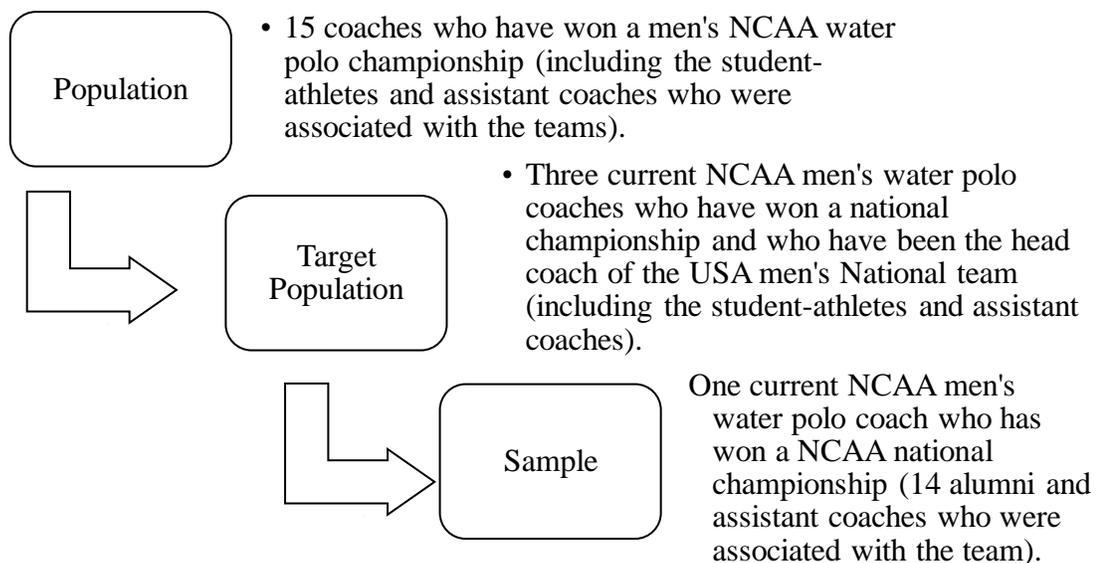


Figure 2. Population, target population, and sample for the study.

Purposeful sampling was a method used to identify information-rich cases who could provide in-depth details about their lived experiences with the phenomenon (Patton, 2015). The researcher met with the head coach to decide on the best way to recruit participants who could provide this information. An email was sent out to all alumni of the men's water polo program that explained the study and included an

attachment of the study flier (Appendix D). The participants had to meet two criteria to partake in the study. First, they had to have directly experienced the phenomenon, being part of the team as an athlete or assistant coach. Second, they had to be associated with the team from 1986 to 2005 or 2013 to 2016. The result was a list of participants who met the criteria, including the head coach, alumni, and assistant coaches. The sample included nine alumni, two alumni who had also been assistant coaches with the head coach, three current assistant coaches who were also alumni, and the head coach himself, who were associated with the Pepperdine men's water polo program between 1986 to 2005 or 2013 to 2016 (Table 5).

Table 5

*Study Sample, Number of Participants from Each Category*

Sample Category	Number of Participants
Head coach	1
Current assistant coaches who were also alumni	3
Alumni who also were also previously assistant coaches	2
Alumni	9

### **Instrumentation**

In qualitative research, the researcher is the key instrument who collects data, conducts the interviews and observations, and reviews all data categorizing it into themes (Creswell, 2013). Guiding the instrumentation process was the seven domains of the DTLI for sports (Callow et al., 2009), which was used to create open ended interview questions and an observation log. Three different sets of interview questions were created: one for the head coach (Appendix E), one for assistant coaches (Appendix F), and one for alumni (Appendix G). The researcher as an instrument presents natural bias,

including within the interview questions developed (Patton, 2015). Therefore, it was important to examine the researcher's expertise and measures taken to increase validity and reliability and reduce the potential for bias.

### **Researcher as the Instrument of the Study**

For this study, the researcher conducted interviews and observations, pointing to the concept that the researcher was the instrument of the study. Thus, it was important to examine the background of the researcher and his qualifications to conduct the study. In this case, the researcher had an extensive background in water polo, having played throughout high school and four years in college, including two years at the NCAA Division I level. From 2000 to 2002, the researcher coached age group and high school water polo in southern California. Since 2002, the researcher coached community college water polo and swimming.

In addition, the researcher taught full time as a college professor for the past 11 years. Equally important, the researcher recently studied two years of leadership in a doctoral program. Additionally, the research conducted a yearlong transformational change project in the doctoral program with a swimming club that included evaluations, a pilot study, strategic planning, and implementing the project. Furthermore, the researcher completed all coursework and requirements to advance to candidacy in the doctoral program.

### **Validity**

Validity in research refers to the ability of the instrument to measure what it was supposed to measure (Patton, 2015). In qualitative research, the researcher is the instrument; therefore, steps must be taken to validate the interview questions and

observation log to reduce researcher bias. Creswell (2013) recommended using multiple accepted strategies to ensure the accuracy of the study. This study used four strategies to increase validity: clarifying researcher bias, assessing content validity, obtaining an external audit of a pilot study, and using multiple data collection methods for triangulation.

**Researcher bias.** The researcher had no prior connection to the Pepperdine men's water polo coach or team, except through the solicitation to conduct the research study. However, because a qualitative researcher is involved in close contact with a program, a researcher can develop natural bias with the organization (Patton, 2015). Patton (2015) described empathic neutrality as the importance of a researcher to stay neutral while remaining understanding and authentic to build trust. To increase the validity of the findings, the researcher's background and personal potential for bias were disclosed to enable the reader to make personal decisions about the validity of the findings.

**Content validity.** Content validity was determined by a researcher evaluating the appropriateness of the content to assess what was intended to be measured (Patten, 2014). To improve the content validity and reduce the potential for researcher bias, an expert reviewed the interview questions before they were asked to the participants. In this study, two criteria were identified to establish an expert in the field to review the interview questions. The first criterion was that the expert held a doctoral degree in organizational leadership. Second, the reviewer needed experience in research and writing qualitative instruments. The identified expert reviewed the questions to ensure

they would be understood by the sample participants and would capture the data needed to address the research questions.

**Pilot study.** In addition to having an expert in the field of research review the questions, the researcher also conducted a pilot study. The researcher observed and interviewed coaches of a collegiate water polo team. The pilot study was done to validate the interview and observations skills of the researcher. The researcher used the same questions and observation log in the pilot study that were used in the research study. The results of the interview and observations were reviewed by the researcher and appropriate changes were made to the questions and observation log.

### **Reliability**

Reliability refers to the consistency of a measurement and can be improved in qualitative research by taking a few steps (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). For this study, multiple steps were taken to increase the reliability of the study. To address reliability during interviews and as recommended by Creswell (2013), the researcher took detailed field notes in addition to recording and transcribing the conversation. Multiple data collection methods were used, including interviews, observations, and artifact reviews. Additionally, the data were triangulated across multiple data sources (e.g., coaches, assistant coaches, former athletes) to strengthen the reliability of the study and test for consistency. Likewise, during the coding process, an expert was used to test for reliability of the themes developed and to establish inter-coder reliability.

**Internal reliability.** Internal reliability refers to how well different instruments measure the same items (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). The researcher conducted 15 interviews to collect stories on participants lived experiences with the Pepperdine head

coach. To increase the internal reliability of the study, different groups of people were interviewed, including assistant coaches, the head coach, and alumni. By interviewing different groups, the researcher increased the consistency of the measurements and triangulated data across the groups. According to Patton (2015), the purpose of triangulation was not having different methods yield the same result, but to use the different methods to test for consistency. Additionally, the researcher conducted observations and collected artifacts to corroborate the stories shared during the interviews.

**External reliability.** Similarly, external reliability or generalizability refers to the extent findings of a study can be applied to other situations (Merriam, 1995).

According to Leung (2015),

Most qualitative research studies, if not all, are meant to study a specific issue or phenomenon in a certain population or ethnic group, of a focused locality in a particular context, hence generalizability of qualitative research findings is usually not an expected attribute. (p. 326)

Therefore, one would not be able to replicate this exact study in the same context that it was conducted. The intent of this study was to describe the lived experiences of those who interacted with a successful water polo coach; their experiences may or may not be similar to those in other water polo programs at other universities.

**Inter-coder reliability.** To strengthen the reliability of the codes that emerged from the data, the researcher recruited a second coder to establish inter-coder reliability. Inter-coder reliability refers to the level of agreement in how often the codes were seen in the data across multiple coders (Creswell, 2013; Lombard, Snyder-Duch, & Bracken,

2002). Once the researcher analyzed the data and codes were established, the second researcher reviewed the data and counted the frequency of the codes. This process of inter-coder agreement helped achieve a deeper understanding of themes and provided an additional perspective to the meaning of the data (Creswell, 2013). According to Lombard et al. (2002), 10% of the data should be double coded shooting for 80% or greater agreement. The following steps were used to establish inter-coder reliability:

1. The primary researcher coded the data independently.
2. The primary researcher gave the codes and data to the second researcher.
3. The second researcher selected 10% of the transcribed interviews.
4. The second researcher then coded the 10% independently using the codes provided and adding codes as needed.
5. The second researcher also reviewed the data to validate the themes developed.
6. The coded data and reviewed feedback were then given back to the primary researcher to compare the two sets of coded data.
7. Analyses were conducted to determine the percentage of agreement in codes assigned to the data between the primary and second researcher.

### **Data Collection**

In this study, multiple methods and data sources were used to triangulate the data and strengthen the results by providing corroborating evidence (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2015). Triangulation of the data occurred during the coding process to increase the validity of the results (Creswell, 2013). The following describes the different types of data collected followed by the specific procedures used to collect the data.

## **Types of Data**

The data collected in this study were from interviews, observations of practices and games, and documents that supported the stories from interviews and observations. The interviews of subjects revealed their stories, opinions, feelings, and lived experiences of the phenomenon. The researcher also engaged in observations of the participants in a natural setting of their practice environment and games to capture personal interactions and behaviors. The observations were recorded through field notes and observation logs. The final type of data collected was from documents and other artifacts from the organization, coach, and athletes that corroborated the interviews and observations.

**Interviews.** In a phenomenological study, the researcher attempts to capture how those involved describe, experience, and perceive the phenomenon (Patton, 2015). The researcher used individual interviews to collect the data about lived experiences. Interviews were conducted with the head coach, assistant coaches, and alumni of the men's water polo program. The interviews were collected in three different settings; 11 were done in-person, 2 were done over the phone, and 2 were done using Skype. In addition, the interviews were structured with open-ended questions to elicit in-depth responses and gather the true experiences of the phenomenon (Patton, 2015).

**Observations.** Observations are important in qualitative research to provide rich, detailed information about the participants and their experiences (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2015). The purpose of observations is to see first-hand what occurred and describe it instead of making assumptions (Patton, 2015). Thus, observations of a sample of the Pepperdine men's water polo team practices and games were performed. The observations were done in a natural setting at the Raleigh Runnels Memorial pool located

on the Pepperdine University campus in Malibu, CA and at the Chris Kjeldsen Pool located on the University of the Pacific campus in Stockton, CA. The research questions guided the observations of participant behaviors and interactions with the head coach. The researcher conducted nonparticipant observations and took notes from a distance to not interfere with the team. An observation log was used that specifically corresponded to the variables in the research questions, and extensive field notes were taken to describe the behaviors and interactions. The detailed notes and observation log were coded for themes similar to the interview transcripts.

**Artifacts.** Artifacts can be written communications, social media posts, team handouts, photographs, and notes (Patton, 2015). Although interviews are the primary data for phenomenological studies, artifacts can add to the depth of the data (Creswell, 2013). Artifacts can support and corroborate the data collected from interviews and observations (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). As such, artifacts from the Pepperdine men's water polo program were also collected. The researcher collected artifacts that corroborated the stories from the interviews and observations. Some artifacts were provided directly by an assistant coach and others were obtained through other public domains.

### **Data Collection Procedures**

According to Creswell (2013), data collection is a “series of interrelated activities aimed at gathering good information to answer emerging research questions” (p. 146). The series of steps for research studies by Brandman students included efforts to protect the rights of human participants. The data collection instruments, consent forms, invitations to participate, and the application was sent to the Brandman University

Institutional Review Board (BUIRB) for approval on September 28, 2016. Once approved by BUIRB, data collection began.

**Preparation for data collection.** The following general steps were conducted before any data collection occurred:

1. Contact was established through an email to present information to the men's head water polo coach about the potential study of interest (Appendix B) and a second email was sent to arrange a phone conversation with the coach (Appendix C).
2. The researcher followed up with a phone conversation with the men's water polo head coach to provide additional details of the study and gain the coach's permission to conduct the study.
3. An application to conduct research was sent to the BUIRB for approval. BUIRB approval was granted on October 7, 2016.
4. The researcher then sent an email to arrange a face-to-face meeting with the coach to further discuss the study (Appendix C).
5. The coach invited the researcher to attend a water polo game followed by an alumni game and barbeque. The researcher was given permission to speak to all the alumni in attendance and hand out a recruitment flier (Appendix D).
4. A subsequent email was sent out by the head of the men's water polo alumni group with a recruitment flier to encourage alumni participation in the study.
5. The researcher then followed up with emails and phone calls to alumni to secure interviews.

**Interviews.** The researcher interviewed the head coach, assistant coaches, and alumni. All interviews were conducted one-on-one and the researcher tried to conduct as many interviews in-person as possible. However, two of the interviews were done via Skype and two were done over the phone to accommodate the respondent schedules. The process for setting up the interviews with the head coach, assistant coaches, and alumni varied and are further described below.

***Head coach interview.*** The following steps were taken to conduct the head coach interview:

1. An email was sent to the men's water polo head coach to set a date and time to conduct the one-hour interview (Appendix C).
2. A follow-up email was sent to confirm the meeting three days before the scheduled date.
3. The face-to-face meeting occurred with the head coach at the predetermined location.
4. Before the interview, the head coach was informed of his rights as a participant of the study via the Participant's Bill of Rights. Once the head coach understood his rights, he read and signed the informed consent form (Appendix A).
5. The head coach was notified and agreed to have the interview recorded by two devices, an iPhone and digital audio recorder.
6. The interview followed a set of open-ended, semi-structured questions designed by the researcher (Appendix E).

7. Upon conclusion of the interview, the head coach was thanked and a follow-up interview was discussed.
8. The follow-up interview took place on the campus of Pepperdine University after the conclusion of their season in December.
9. The interviews were transcribed and reviewed for stories and themes that answered the research questions.

***Assistant coaches and alumni individual interviews.*** The following steps were taken to conduct the individual interviews with the assistant coaches and alumni:

1. The researcher made initial contact with a group of alumni at an alumni event on the campus of Pepperdine University where the recruitment flier was handed out. In addition, the head of the alumni group offered to email the flier to all the alumni of the program.
2. An email was sent to the head of the men's water polo alumni group with a recruitment flier that was emailed out to an alumni email list. Purposeful sampling was used to create a list of potential interview participants. Participants had to meet two criteria: (a) they were associated with the Pepperdine men's water polo team and played for the current head coach, and (b) they directly experienced the phenomenon as an athlete or an assistant coach.
3. The researcher contacted the participants via texts, phone calls, and emails to arrange individual interview times and dates.
4. A subsequent email or text was sent to confirm the meeting three days before the scheduled date.

5. The face-to-face meeting occurred with the individual participant at a predetermined location, phone calls were arranged through text messages at a time that worked for the participant, and Skype calls were arranged through email.
6. Before the interview, the assistant coaches and alumni were informed of their rights as a participant of the study via the Participant's Bill of Rights. Once the participants understood their rights, they read and signed the informed consent form (Appendix A). Participants who were interviewed over the phone and through Skype were emailed electronic informed forms, signed them, and then emailed them back to the researcher.
7. Each participant was notified and agreed to have the interview recorded by two devices, an iPhone and digital audio recorder.
8. The interview followed a set of open-ended, semi-structured questions designed by the researcher (Appendix F for assistant coaches and G for alumni).
9. The interview was transcribed and reviewed for stories and themes that answered the research questions.

**Observations.** The researcher conducted site visits to observe the interactions of the Pepperdine men's water polo team and head coach in their natural setting. The observations were guided by the research questions and detailed notes were taken on an observation log (Appendix H). The following steps were taken to observe the Pepperdine men's water polo team:

1. An email was sent to the Pepperdine men's head coach confirming the days the researcher was granted access to observe the public practice.

2. The researcher observed three hours of the Pepperdine men's water polo practices at the Raleigh Runnels Memorial Pool on the Pepperdine campus. The researcher was a nonparticipant observer and was visible to the coaching staff and athletes, but did not interact with the participants.
4. Detailed notes were taken on an observation log (Appendix H) that was developed by the researcher based upon the DTLI for sports.
5. In addition to the three hours of practice observations, the researcher also observed three games using the same observation log.
6. The observations were reviewed and analyzed for themes that answered the research questions.

**Artifacts.** The researcher collected artifacts from the organization and participants to corroborate the stories and observations during data collection.

1. The researcher asked for any documents that could provide evidence of the coach's leadership based upon the interview that was conducted.
2. The researcher asked each participant who was interviewed if he had any documents that would support any of the stories shared.
3. In addition, the researcher performed an extensive search of social media, the Pepperdine men's water polo website, articles written by the coach on the internet, and print media.

The data collection process and data analysis were interrelated and occurred at the same time as recommended by Creswell (2013) and Patton (2015). Therefore, even during the interviews, observations, and artifact collection, the researcher began analyzing and taking notes on themes that emerged.

All data were locked in a secure place to ensure confidentiality. For this study, the recordings and transcripts were protected in a password protected file for which only the researcher could access. Additionally, all hard copy notes and artifacts were kept in a locked cabinet. Upon completion of the study, all data files were destroyed.

### **Data Analysis**

According to Patton (2015), there was no single process in transform qualitative data into findings. However, Patton (2015) and Creswell (2013) recommended guidelines for analyzing data typically collected in qualitative studies. Creswell (2013) described qualitative data analysis as a “process of moving in analytic circles rather than using a fixed linear approach” (p. 182). The researcher in this study followed the general guidelines for data analysis recommended by Creswell (2013). In the first part of the process, the researcher organized the data and transcribed the interviews into text that could be uploaded into NVivo software. Following the organization of the data, the researcher read over the transcripts multiple times and took extensive notes on key concepts. The data were then uploaded into NVivo for coding and analysis.

Additionally, the researcher followed Patton’s (2015) recommendations to produce a strong foundation for qualitative analysis. Patton (2015) suggested the importance of continually restating the purpose of the study to stay focused during data analysis. Throughout data collection and analysis, the researcher referred to the purpose statement and research questions to stay focused on finding the proper data.

Additionally, a notebook was used to document and journal during data collection and analysis to track thoughts and emergent ideas. The notebook was present during all interviews and observations. After each data collection session, the researcher reflected

and wrote down thoughts and themes as they were fresh rather than trying to recall relevant information later.

Creswell (2013) provided strategies specifically for a phenomenological analysis that also guided the researcher during data analysis. After organizing the data and inputting it into NVivo, the researcher developed a list of statements that reflected the participant experience with the leadership of the Pepperdine men's water polo head coach. The researcher then grouped the statements together in similar themes and wrote a description of what and how participants experienced the phenomenon. This process formed the codes essential to qualitative research.

### **Coding**

Coding is the process of reading through the transcripts and developing labels or codes for pieces of data (Creswell, 2013). Codes were put into larger groups of ideas that emerged called themes (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Similarly, Patton (2015) referred to the process as content analysis, which included, coding, categorizing, and labeling the data to identify what was significant. For this study, the researcher used NVivo to help organize and analyze the qualitative data. The frequency of the codes (i.e., how often they occurred) was monitored by the researcher. As the frequency of codes increased, themes appeared from the data. Most importantly, the researcher took the time to reflect on the data and themes during the analysis process. According to Patton (2015), the real work during data analysis took place in the researcher's head.

### **Analysis**

After the data were coded, the researcher analyzed the themes and frequencies to determine which transformational leadership behaviors the head coach used. The themes

were examined in relation to the research questions. The researcher analyzed the data by using the DTLI transformational leadership behaviors to make sense of the themes. The lived experiences and stories collected were compared to transformational leadership behaviors.

### **Limitations**

The nature of qualitative studies lent themselves to limitations, as was the case in this study. Four main limitations to this phenomenological study were recognized. First, using the researcher as an instrument presented limitations and potential bias that could affect the study. To address potential bias, the researcher presented his background and a description of any issues that could influence the data. The researcher also practiced empathetic neutrality to remain neutral while still understanding the participants. In addition, the researcher developed the questions using the six transformational leadership domains of the DTLI in sports as guidance. The researcher's biases provided subjectivity that could influence the questions and interviews in ways that could limit the study; the researcher asked open-ended questions during the interviews that did not lead the participants in any specific direction.

The second limitation was the use of only one head coach in the collection of the data. While other coaches were contacted, only one head coach agreed to be a part of the study. The results of this study were not intended to be generalizable, but to highlight the transformational leadership behavior of a successful NCAA division I men's water polo coach. This coach helped lead the United States men's national team as an athlete to an Olympic medal. As a coach, he led a NCAA division I men's water polo team to a national championship and the United States men's water polo team to an Olympic

medal. This study described the leadership behaviors of a phenomenon of a successful NCAA division I men's water polo coach who was also a former Olympic athlete and national team coach.

The third limitation of the study was the time spent with the alumni and head coach. The researcher was limited by the amount of time available to interview the participants. The observations occurred only during the end of the water polo season. Additionally, the researcher was only able to observe three hours of practice and three games. If the researcher observed the team during different points in the season, it could have produced further and different data. The researcher strengthened the study by triangulating the observations with the interviews and artifact collection.

The final limitation was the sample size of the study. The researcher interviewed 15 participants, including the head coach, assistant coaches, and alumni. However, the head coach had coached hundreds of athletes who could provide additional insights into the leadership behaviors of the coach. To address the issue of a small sample size, the researcher triangulated the data with the observations and artifacts; through this process, the researcher could gather data and check for consistency and themes throughout the study.

### **Summary**

Chapter III presented a detail account of the methodology used in this study. This study used a phenomenological framework to examine the lived experiences of those who surrounded the transformational leadership behaviors of the Pepperdine men's water polo head coach. The researcher outlined the process to determine the sample for the study as well as addressed reliability and validity. The data collection was presented in a detailed

format on how the researcher conducted the interviews, observations, and artifact examination. In addition, the process of data analysis was described including the use of NVivo and how the researcher developed the codes. Lastly, the researcher presented the limitations of the study that potentially impacted data collection and analysis.

## CHAPTER IV: RESEARCH, DATA COLLECTION, AND FINDINGS

### **Overview**

The purpose of the study was to examine the transformational leadership behaviors of a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach using a qualitative methodology. This chapter begins with a review of the purpose statement, research questions, research methodology, and data collection and analysis procedures. The data are then presented along with the findings for each research sub-question.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to understand and describe the transformational leadership behaviors of a successful NCAA Division I championship water polo coach.

### **Research Questions**

This study was guided by one primary research question and six sub questions. The primary research question was: What transformational leadership behaviors does a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach demonstrate?

### **Sub-Questions**

1. What individual consideration behaviors does a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach demonstrate?
2. What inspirational motivation behaviors does a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach demonstrate?
3. What intellectual stimulation behaviors does a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach demonstrate?

4. What behaviors does a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach demonstrate to foster acceptance of group goals and promote team work?
5. What behaviors does a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach demonstrate to set high performance expectations?
6. What behaviors does a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach perform to demonstrate appropriate role modeling?

### **Methodology**

The focus of this study was to describe the leadership behaviors of a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach. According to Patton (2015), a qualitative methodology was used when a researcher's goal was to describe behaviors of an individual or group. Therefore, a qualitative methodology was determined most appropriate to describe the leadership behaviors of a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach. The researcher used a phenomenological approach to capture the lived experiences of those who surrounded the head coach. A phenomenological study focuses on a phenomenon and those directly involved in it. For this study, a phenomenon exists at Pepperdine University with the NCAA Division I men's water polo head coach. He is the only current NCAA men's water polo coach who successfully led a NCAA team to a national championship and the men's national team to an Olympic medal.

The researcher used multiple methods to collect data to strengthen the results. The primary source for data collection was through interviews of the head coach, alumni, and assistant coaches. In addition, the research observed the head coach for three hours of water polo practices in a natural setting at Raleigh Runnels Memorial Pool on the Pepperdine University campus. Furthermore, observations of the head coach also

occurred during three different NCAA division I men's water polo matches. The researcher observed the behavior and interactions of the head coach and the athletes, officials, and assistant coaches. Finally, artifacts were collected that corroborated the stories of the participants and their lived experiences with the head coach. Artifacts included a team handbook for the water polo team, a book written about the head coach's life, and articles written by the head coach.

### **Population**

The population for this study was the 15 head coaches who won a NCAA Division I men's water polo national championship. This also included the student-athletes who played for the coaches and the assistant coaches who worked under them.

The target population for this study had to meet the following criteria:

- They were a player or coach from a NCAA Division I school that won a men's water polo national championship.
- The coach who led the team to a national championship needed to still be coaching for that team.
- The head coach had to have spent time coaching for the United States men's national water polo team.

This narrowed down the target population to three schools: Pepperdine, Stanford, and USC. Therefore, the target population for this study was all the alumni, assistant coaches, and head coach of NCAA men's water polo teams that won a national championship and the head coach spent time coaching the United States men's national water polo team.

## **Sample**

The sample for this study was limited to the coaches who agreed to participate in the study. The researcher attempted to contact all three coaches, but only coach agreed to participate in the study. The sample therefore was alumni and assistant coaches who had direct experience of the phenomenon with the men's water polo head coach at Pepperdine University. In addition, the men's water polo head coach at Pepperdine University was also interviewed. Purposeful sampling was used to identify subjects associated with the Pepperdine men's water polo team from 1986 to 2005 and 2013 to 2016. The sample included the head coach and 14 alumni and assistant coaches who were directly involved with the men's head water polo coach at Pepperdine University.

## **Presentation and Analysis of Data**

The findings in this chapter were collected primarily from interviews with participants who had direct experience with the head coach. The data were triangulated to strengthen the validity of the findings. The researcher conducted 15 interviews to collect stories about participants lived experiences with the Pepperdine head coach. To increase the internal reliability of the study, different groups of people were interviewed including assistant coaches, the head coach, and alumni. By interviewing different groups, the researcher increased the consistency of the measurements across the groups. Additionally, the researcher conducted observations and collected artifacts to corroborate the stories shared during the interviews. The researcher observed the coach on the pool deck during both practices and games.

The study used the DTLI and the six dimensions of transformational leadership, two based on the work of B. M. Bass (1990; inspirational motivation and individual

consideration) and four based on the work of Podsakoff et al. (1990; provides an appropriate role model, fosters acceptance of group goals and team work, sets high performance expectations, and intellectual stimulation). Following the data collection, themes were developed and NVivo was used to code the data. The result was a total of 21 findings that represented the 6 domains of transformational leadership in the DTLI (Table 6).

Table 6

*Findings that Emerged from the Interviews, Observations, and Artifacts*

DTLI	Theme	Sources	References
ARM	Leads by example in multiple aspects of life	19	63
HPE	Challenges athletes to be their best	20	55
GTWK	Creates a culture focused on family	15	48
IM	Inspires others through stories and life experiences	14	46
GTWK	Creates a team first culture	19	44
GTWK	Establishes a clear vision and obtainable goals	17	39
IC	Listens and works at building relationships	12	37
IC	Wants athletes to become better people	12	31
IC	Genuinely cares for people	12	26
IC	Recognizes individual differences and their value	15	25
IM	Focuses on creating a positive culture	14	25
ARM	Coaches from the perspective of love	8	24
IC	Develops specific roles for each individual	14	22
GTWK	Uses group activities outside of the pool to build the team	9	18
IS	Challenges others to creatively solve problems	10	16
IC	Allows athletes to be themselves	6	14
HPE	Creates a competitive practice culture	9	12
GTWK	Helps build a culture of trust	7	12
ARM	Displays excellent life balance	6	11
IM	Has a composed and accomplished presence	4	11
ARM	Establishes core values for the program	7	8

Note: DTLI = Differentiated Transformational Leadership Inventory, ARM = Appropriate Role Model, HPE = High Performance Expectations, GTWK = Fostering Goals and Teamwork, IM = Inspirational Motivation, IC = Individual Consideration, IS = Intellectual Stimulation.

## Findings Related to Individual Consideration

The first research sub-question examined individual consideration behaviors and whether a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach recognized and understood the individual needs of each athlete. The results of the analysis of the data were the development of six findings (Table 7).

Table 7

### *Individual Consideration Findings that Emerged from the Data*

	Sources	References
Listens and works at building relationships	12	37
Wants athletes to become better people	12	31
Genuinely cares for people	12	26
Recognizes individual differences and their value	15	25
Develops specific roles for each individual	14	22
Allows athletes to be themselves	6	14

**Listens and works at building relationships.** The finding with the most references under individual consideration was listens and builds relationships. Ten of the 15 interviewees made references to the time the head coach spent listening and developing relationships with the athletes.

In the sport of water polo, only seven schools won a NCAA men's water polo NCAA championship. One of those schools is Pepperdine University, but the experiences alumni described with the head coach there went much deeper. For this successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach, building relationships with the athletes was just as important as winning. The coach commented,

That is the beauty of coaching. I feel like you have these moments in time where you get to know these guys and get to understand their lives.

Hopefully I have a positive influence on them that helps them be a better man, husband, and father.

The alumni that were interviewed who had played for the head coach agreed that their experience was more than just about water polo. Although water polo was important for these alumni and the program set high standards for athletic excellence, their experiences demonstrated something more. One former alumni shared, “He really connects with us on a deeper level with a lot of us and that plays into it a lot. It was that relationship aspect that was key.” This was also clear in several of the responses noting the head coach spent time building relationships with the athletes. In the sport of water polo, athletes trained for up to 20 hours a week at the NCAA level, including time in the pool, video room, team meetings, dry land training, games, and other team activities (NCAA, n.d.-e). This provided a significant opportunity for a coach to make an impact on a student-athlete, which was evident this head coach did so. One alumni commented, “I think he really opened me up to more than anything else was really leading with the heart, being kind of more focused on the relationships and the bonds that were built through the program.” Additionally, another respondent genuinely described the impact the head coach had on his life, by saying,

It is hard to explain. It wasn't even the water polo, like the way he was teaching me to play or coaching me. It was more the personal relationship that we developed over the four years at Pepperdine. He helped me grow as a person and I know it sounds cliché, but become a man, put my ego behind me, and be a real team player. Not just me, but he taught all of us a lot.

A part of building the relationships and getting to know each athlete better occurred through the one-on-one interviews scheduled regularly throughout the season with the coaching staff. One of the assistant coach explained, “He takes the time to get to know each guy and I think that is crucial.” He went on to say that the meetings were not just about water polo, but,

“it is about your personal life too, just to gain everybody’s experiences.

Their experiences, their background information, and how they work, what they like to do, what they are good at, what they are not good at, what they enjoy about water polo, what they enjoy about school, what they dislike about those things, and so on and so forth.

In addition, the head coach himself emphasized the importance of listening, saying, “I try and make an effort to spend time with each guy throughout the season so they know that I really do care about them. Listening and being a good listener” This was noted in one story of a former player who was going to quit the team. The athlete happened to be in the pool swimming laps when the head coach jumped in and began swimming next to him. The athlete was frustrated with playing time and in the sport of water polo, only six field players and a goalkeeper are in the water at one time. He had approached the head coach previously about quitting since he was not getting the playing time he thought he deserved. They both happen to stop on the wall in the pool at the same time and began talking, which lasted for about an hour. The head coach explained to him that this was his one chance to play in college and be a part of a team, and that he would never have this same opportunity again after college. More importantly, the head coach spent the time “talking with him and hearing what he had to say and what his

frustrations were.” The athlete decided to stay on the team after that conversation and finished out his career. It was clear that this probably would not have been the case if the coach had not spent the time talking and listening to him. The head coach stated that “being open and understanding that these kids are going through a lot of stresses and a lot of things in life” in which a coach would only know if he spent the time building relationships with the athletes. These findings were consistent with Lyle (2016) who stated “the most meaningful aspect of his coaching career has been the relationships that he has formed with his players and coaching staff” (p. 245).

At one point in the head coaches career, he had the opportunity to sit down with John Wooden, the former UCLA men’s basketball coach, who told him that “one of the greatest attributes of a leader is to listen” (Lyle, 2016, p. 229). This head coach took that advice as evidenced from his former athletes who agreed with his ability to listen, with one saying, “He is a great listener and he will listen to you talk.” Additionally, the head coach mentioned that listening “helps foster that idea that you are cared about and loved. Both are two central themes of his coaching style caring and coaching out of love.” Most importantly, he wanted his athletes to become better people.

**Wants athletes to become better people.** In a book written about the coach’s life, the author wrote, “At its core, coaching is about inspiring, motivating and teaching young men to become the best people possible – not just the most accomplished athletes” (Lyle, 2016, p. 231). The second finding under individual consideration was the coach’s focus on more than just creating great water polo athletes, but wanting to mentor them into becoming better people. This began during the recruiting process when he told recruits coming into the program, “We want you to be successful as an individual when

you go out of here you can be a better husband, a better father, a better business man.”

He was also clear with parents that over the four years most student-athletes spent at the school, he would spend a tremendous amount of time with them. He went on to say, “I don’t take that lightly. It is an honor and responsibility that I get to help mold your child into the man he is going to become.”

The focus of being better people was also apparent at the beginning of each water polo season. Every student-athlete on the Pepperdine University water polo team received a handbook of information on the upcoming season. The first page of the handbook reads, “this program is about developing CHAMPIONS (in and out of the pool).” The head coach’s primary goal was to turn the student-athletes into better men, which was also found by Lyle (2016). These were not just his goals, the student-athletes who played for him felt the same way.

The idea of being a better person resonated throughout the data collection, being referenced 31 times by 12 different sources. One respondent described his experience playing for the head coach, saying, “He is definitely a great person and wants you to become a better person.” This was identified by multiple respondents reflecting on their time in the program playing for the coach. It was clear the water polo program was something more meaning, and one respondent shared, “It wasn’t just about water polo. It was growing as individuals and developing as individuals; as athletes, adults, and sons.” Another respondent agreed, describing the coach’s goal for the program and the student-athletes as,

The goal is to win the NCAA title, but that is not the ultimate end game of this. The ultimate game is how you are walking into and away from your life as a water polo player and what you are taking forward.

To help build this concept and develop tools the athletes needed to become better people and be successful in life, the head coach developed six pillars of Pepperdine water polo. As shown in Figure 3, the six pillars are respect, grit, commitment, excellence, family, and discipline.

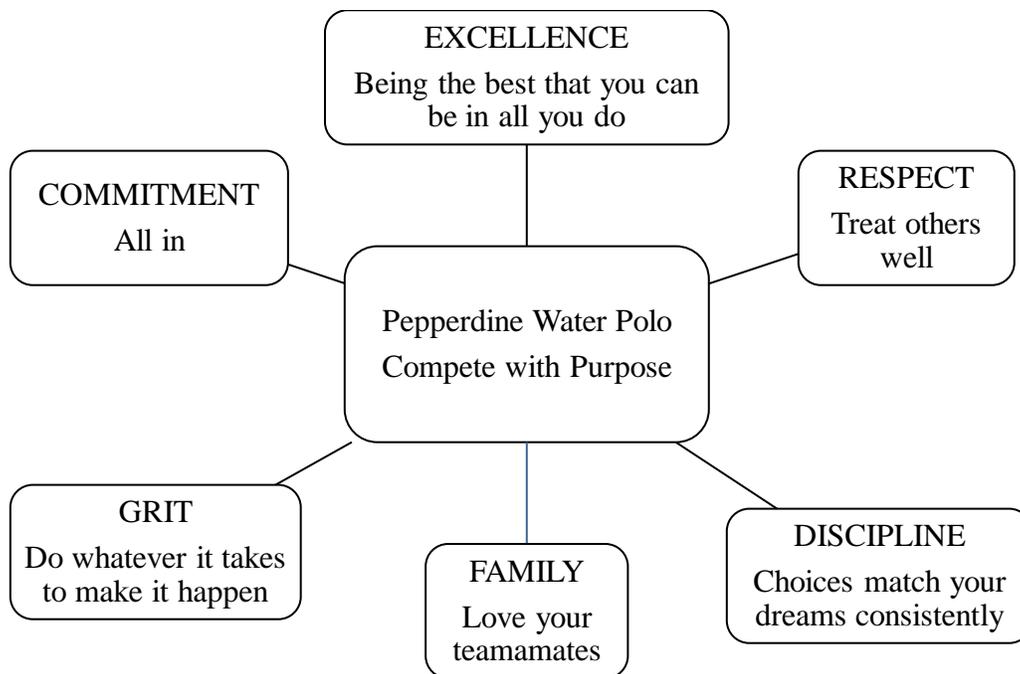


Figure 3. Adapted from the six pillars of Pepperdine water polo.

Copies of the six pillars were presented in the team handbook and handed out to each athlete and coach on cards for them to carry around. A respondent demonstrated this during one of the interviews by showing the researcher the card he kept in his wallet. He noted, “I...carry that everywhere I go. We try and teach our athletes to have that in and out of the pool. If you can follow those pillars in life as well you are going to be successful.” The head coach talked about the pillars throughout the season and reminded

the student-athletes of their importance on a consistent basis. The desire of the head coach to develop each student-athlete into a better person spoke to how much he genuinely cared for each individual.

**Genuinely cares for people.** Genuinely caring for people was the third highest finding under individual consideration, with 12 sources and 26 references. The reason he built relationships and wanted the student-athletes to be better people was because he genuinely cared about them. The head coach said, “We try and make ourselves available and they need to know that we care about them and that caring about them is not just about water polo, but transcends water polo for sure.” The idea of him caring about the student-athletes was corroborated by the other respondents’ meaningful stories and the repeated words “he genuinely cares.”

The stories told by alumni transcended water polo and demonstrated the character the head coach showed each of the student-athletes in the program. It was not just about the student-athletes, but their lives and families. During one season, a student-athlete on the team had a family member pass away; the coach immediately shifted the team’s focus to that particular athlete and his family. One respondent noted, “the whole team went and supported this family at the funeral. That is just how he is. He definitely looks beyond the athletic realm.” This also was demonstrated when the coach sent flowers to the family of the girlfriend of one of his student-athletes whose father passed away.

The athletes themselves felt comfortable going to the coach because of the relationships he built with them. In one instance, a student-athlete was dealing with a difficult personal situation; the athlete felt comfortable approaching the head coach about the situation and said,

I asked him to step out and let him know. He didn't have to say anything, he just has that bear hug about him... [he was] the guy I looked up to in water polo and I saw his face in the USA water polo magazine for years...I had him held up as this idol and this idol really came down to this humanistic form and he really just connects. Him just holding on and letting me know what ever he could do to help out, he would. I ended up missing tournaments that year. It was tough.

He was there for the student-athletes during their most difficult times and provided them with someone they could trust. When a student-athlete's father was in a coma from an accident, the head coach provided a scholarship opportunity for the student that took some financial pressure off the family. Another time, Pepperdine was pursuing one of the top recruits in the country when he lost his father to cancer; has was a sophomore in high school and needed a father figure. The head coach filled that role, providing a stable foundation for the student-athlete to lean on in college. A respondent shared,

He is just a stand-up dude period...water polo is big, but he is more about who you are as a person and your family. The sport is huge for him but he just does so much to invest his time, energy, and passion for you as a person and a player.

The head coach did this for each student-athlete that became a part of the program. "Whether you were on the bench and never played or whether you were on the traveling team, he cared about you, he knew about you." His caring for each student-

athlete built the relationships needed to recognize their differences and the value they brought.

**Recognizes individual differences and their value.** The fourth finding under individual consideration was the coach's ability to recognize individual differences and their value. In the coach's own words, "I think that is what has kept me excited about coaching, trying to figure out those puzzles of what makes this kid click and what's going on with this kid, and what can I do differently with this kid." The coach identified individual differences and the value that both the student-athletes and assistant coaches brought to the team, allowing individuals to flourish. For example, one assistant coach shared, "He surrounds himself with great people that complement his weakness or strengths." The assistant coaches did not just follow and take directions from the head coach; he allowed them to express their opinions and values. According to one respondent, "He always listened and valued my opinion, and we always talk things out. He definitely lets me know my thoughts are valuable, and if he doesn't agree with something, he still wants to hear what I have to say." This went for all the coaches involved with the program, including volunteers. The head coach recognized what the assistant coaches brought to the program and their value. In return, they saw that appreciation and enjoy working with him, with one saying,

I love coaching with him. It is unique because I think a lot of assistant coaches do not get to put as much input as he lets me give. Just by him doing that shows how much he values my skill sets or ideas.

It was not just the assistant coaches that felt valued, but the student-athletes that played for him no matter where they were on the playing depth chart. One respondent

said, “I will tell you that our bench that year would tell you the same thing. They knew that they were as important as everyone else.” In one situation, a highly-recruited goalkeeper went from starting his sophomore year to losing his position his junior year to a walk-on freshman. It was a difficult situation for the goalkeeper who had been a starter through high school and his first years in college to lose his job to a freshman. The head coach nurtured him and help him understand that he was still extremely valued on the team. It was noted, “he replaced, me but didn’t give up on me...I was allowed to be and I wanted to be. I didn’t want to stop contributing to the team.” The goalkeeper that lost his starting job went on to be voted most inspirational that season by the team saying, “The reason for that was because of the head coach.”

Whether it was his assistant coaches or student-athletes, the head coach recognized the differences everyone brought to the team and their value. As one respondent said, “He recognizes when people have a strength and lets them go with it.” This was the case in 1997 when Pepperdine won the national championship as a respondent reflected to that team,

When I think of value in what he did with that team, it was not to create divisiveness or separation; it was bring everyone together, collaborate, lead, and the best players will be the ones that will start then we will rotate in.

The head coach helped everyone find value by assisting them to understand their role on the team and how they could best contribute to help the team.

**Develops specific roles for each individual.** The fifth finding under individual consideration, with 14 sources and 22 references, was that the coach developed roles for

each individual. The coach did more than give each student-athlete a role, he helped them understand what their role was on the team, saying,

I think that a really important key to that is to help the players understand the roles. We try and meet with the guys one on one. Just help reinforce that and talk about their role on the team and get their feedback to what their frustrations might be.

This could be a challenge when a new group of high school superstars arrived at the University and needed to fill different roles on the team than what they had previously done with their other teams. The head coach described the importance of the roles in an excerpt from *Swimming Through Life* (Lyle, 2016):

But what is critical is that each player agrees that in order for him to be a participating member of the team, he has to play a specific role. For some that might mean being a cheerleader during games and helping to keep the positivity buoyed on the bench. For others that might mean being the one that is counted on to score in the critical moments of the game or to shut down the opposing team's best player. Regardless of each role, a healthy team must share a common team goal. Without that unity in direction, things disintegrate (p. 230).

The coach kept an open line of communication through individual meetings with the student-athletes so that everyone knew their place on the team. As one respondent commented,

One of the big things that he does is to keep everyone in the know.

Throughout the season, we will have three to four individual meetings and

he tells them what their role is, what they are doing right, and what they are doing wrong.

Developing and talking about these roles throughout the season let each athlete understand his importance to achieving team goals. In the 2016 season, this was a key component to winning the Gold Coast Conference championship. As one person shared,

We kept having the individual meeting with the guys and I think that was a positive thing we did. Fifteen to 20 minute meetings where we just talked about the roles and we talked about where we saw them and what they need to improve on or what they can do a little better to help us win.

Once the student-athletes bought into and understood their roles, they felt they were contributing in a positive way to the team. “The guys that were on the bench were totally into it and it was their role and who they were on the team. I think really through the season defining those roles helped us a lot.”

More than one respondent felt that a strength of the coach was his ability to help student-athletes find their roles and put them in positions where they could succeed. Examples of this were seen from the top players down to the last student-athlete on the playing rotation. Even when one student-athlete was on the bench, he said, “I wasn’t put aside, I was nurtured to still play a role.” Another respondent said, “I think he does a nice job of giving these guys who are never going to see the pool purpose in practice and keeping them motivated.” This was repeated by multiple alumni including one respondent who said, “My role was pretty significant in the sense where he wasn’t afraid to put the ball in my hands and let me make a decision on my own.”

It was clear that a critical component to the team's success was the athletes understanding their roles. In water polo, a player could get excluded for 20 seconds for different violations. There were important possessions and the games were often won or lost on how successful a team in scoring their six on five opportunities. In the championship game of the Gold Coast Conference tournament, Pepperdine earned a six on five opportunity at a critical point in the match. Often, coaches would call a timeout to set the athletes up in the right positions for specific plays. However, the coach had developed the role for one of the athletes in the water to get the team on the same page and call a play. The athlete knew his role, called a play, and the team worked together to move into the correct positions, pass the ball, and execute to score a goal. This was not just something the coach did often, with alumni saying, "What coach does is look for people in the pool to be able to drive that unity." In 2016, the coach found that and got the athletes on the team to buy into their roles and win the Gold Coast Conference championships.

**Allows athletes to be themselves.** The final finding that emerged under individual consideration was that the coach allowed athletes to be themselves. This finding was referenced 14 times from 6 different sources. As one respondent put it, "He is allowing the individual characteristics to come out in each individual and harness them, not control them." This fit with his coaching style as he challenged athletes to figure things out on their own, saying, "I try and allow them some room to fail so that they can learn from failure. Failures is how we learn best." Respondents agreed the coach would step away and allow the team to develop on its own. The athletes then felt empowered to

be who they wanted to be and not completely controlled. One respondent described the coach's ability to allow athletes to be themselves as:

Giving us the green light to shoot, the green light to play defense, the green light to be creative. That alone allows somebody to be inspired. That alone allows somebody to be creative and not live inside this tight little bubble that I can't do this, I can't live outside that role. He allowed us to really grow our wings and in a crucial moment, then he would bring us back and use positive reinforcement, completely positive reinforcement.

This was also noted by a respondent who said, "He allows players to be themselves. That is the main thing. He allows each kid on the team, each player on the team is going to have their own personality and he doesn't try and change them." The coach understood this and saw this as one of the challenges of coaching, recognizing each individual and finding out what made them work.

### **Findings Related to Inspirational Motivation**

The second research sub-question looked to examine the inspirational motivation behaviors that a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach demonstrated. The results of the analysis of the data were the development of three findings (Table 8).

Table 8

#### *Inspirational Motivation Findings that Emerged from the Data*

	Sources	References
Inspires others through stories and life experiences	14	46
Focuses on creating a positive culture	14	25
Maintains a composed and accomplished presence	4	11

**Inspires others through stories and life experiences.** The first finding was the coach's ability to inspire others through stories and his life experiences. Fourteen different sources made 46 references to being inspired by his life and the motivational stories told by the coach. His life was an inspiration, having played in three Olympics and being a member of the national team when the United States boycotted the 1980 games, winning two silver medals as an athlete, serving as the head coach in two Olympics leading a team to a silver medal, winning a NCAA Division I national championship, having statue in front of the Coliseum in Los Angeles, and earning a doctorate in chiropractic medicine. As a respondent put it, "It is hard not to be motivated by somebody who has so much experience and so many connections and so many stories." Another respondent said, "It's motivating to go workout with someone who is a statue in front of the Coliseum." His athletic accomplishments and experiences inspired and motivated athletes to play for him. This was true when he was a member of the national team, as one person shared,

He was a freaking machine, he was a man. For all of he was a huge role model, that is the reason I went to play there. How could you not play for the big guy in your sport? It's like playing football and I want to be on Vince Lombardi's team.

The athletes that played for him were not just inspired by his Olympic experiences and athletic accomplishments, but by how he lived his life. For example, one respondent said, "He just achieves and strives for excellence in every aspect of his life, not just water polo. That is extremely motivating...he carries himself, achieving what he has achieved and what he still strives to do." Another said "It is how he carried himself;

he is just a humble guy. I think the way he carried himself in life, we all looked up to that.” The athletes knew about his accomplishments, but were just as inspired by his humbleness and how he presented himself. As one noted, “He taught us how to be humble in so many ways. Humble in his own life, humble in his presentation of his interviews.” They recognized and respected him as a husband, father, Christian, chiropractor, and coach. “No matter what you thought of him as a coach, you had to respect who he was as a man.” One respondent described his experience with the coach and how he inspired his life, commenting,

He was more a life coach and a mentor of things that he did. He was a great husband. He was a great father to his kids. He was a great Christian man. Those three things to an 18 to 23-year-old seeing and wanting to emulate. I think I learned more about life in that aspect than water polo.

He is a great mentor in that respect.

The coach’s life experiences naturally provided him with incredible stories that he often used to inspire the student-athletes. The respondents spoke of different stories and how the coach liked to tell stories to inspire them. One shared, “He would talk a lot about his Olympic teams, how they were successful, and how guys had different roles.” Another also felt that was a way in which the coach inspired the team, adding, “I think his way of always inspiring though what he had accomplished was huge for all of us. He brought a lot of that into the program, which I think naturally motivated and inspired people.” One story, as described by Lyle (2016) stemmed from when the 1992 Olympic men’s water polo team lost the semifinal game to Spain. It was a heartbreaking loss as reality set in that he would not have a chance of achieving his dream of a gold medal. On

his way, back to the Olympic village, he ran into Kirk Kilgour, an All American and Olympic volleyball player who was in an accident that paralyzed him for life. The incident reminded the coach of all his blessings and that he was still fortunate enough to be playing for a bronze medal the next day. The story was referenced by two different respondents who played for the head coach as one that always stuck with them. Other stories he told were about great Olympic athletes he met or knew. For example, the coach wrote about a story in an online article referencing a time when Karch Kiraly was asked by a fan how he prepared for the gold medal. Karch's answer was beautiful; he simply said, "I did not prepare for the gold medal, I always prepared for the next point" (Schroeder, 2012, para. 15). It was from stories like these that he shared with his student-athletes that inspired them to work hard and perform their best.

**Focuses on creating a positive culture.** The second finding under inspirational motivation was the positive culture the coach promoted. There were 14 sources that referenced the coach promoting a positive culture 25 times. Direct evidence of this was an article written by the coach titled *Habits of a Champion in Water Polo* (Schroeder, 2012). The coach created a list of 10 habits he believed helped people become champions, one of which was positive self-talk. He noted,

Positive self-talk – the things that you say to yourself will direct your life.

If you wake up and say to yourself "I don't feel well" or something like this, you are probably not going to have a very good day. If you wake up and tell yourself "it is going to be a great day" then your day will more than likely be much better. Listen to what you are saying to yourself all day long. Are you building yourself up and or are you tearing yourself

down. Your inner voice is very powerful. Be positive – tell yourself you are going to become a champion.” (Schroeder, 2012).

The positive culture started with him and how he treated his student-athletes and how he expected them to treat each other. This was also noted by Lyle (2016) who shared,

He does not believe in ever humiliating his players – publicly or privately. Instead, he concentrates on building people up versus tearing them down with criticism. His methodology extends to the same expectation in the behavior of his athletes. Instead of allowing them to suffocate their teammates with negativity and criticism, he insists that the team forms relationships with each other that will take them to the top. He says with resounding conviction, “when you elect to become part of a team, the success of the unit depends on each person sacrificing part of himself and becoming accountable to the team. This means that all of the choices that the individuals make – both good and bad – have an impact on the team.

(p. 243)

The athletes saw this from the start of the season when they opened the team handbook, which said, “Display a positive attitude both in and out of the pool.” His positivity and leadership set the tone, even during the hardest and toughest times. One respondent described the experience of early morning practice as, “I mean it’s five o’ clock in the morning and the guy is like ‘ok, let’s get in the pool’ and he is happy as a lark and we are all freezing and bummed out and tired.” That is his personality according to another respondent who said, “He always tries to look at the positive things in life. He is a very positive human being.” This was also observed by the researcher in a match

against Stanford University when the team was down by three goals. The team did not have much going their way in the game and managed to get a goal to close the lead to two and the coach calmly yelled out, “Here we go” trying to motivate the defense. He was not focused on the fact the team was losing and not playing well, but on the moment and keeping it positive. This was also evident from a story a respondent told about losing to a team they should have beaten, saying,

I think a good example of that is losing my junior year, my red shirt year, against Air Force. He didn't take it as hard as I thought he would take it. It was more this is the situation and its ok, let's move on and let's get better. That same year, we go on and almost beat UCLA. Where that could be a turning point and he could lose his shit over everybody and I can't believe you lost to Air Force and the season completely go down the other way.

His positivity as a coach was modeled after something that Coach John Wooden said; the coach told the researcher,

[Wooden] used to say, one of the things that used to help him be successful was to give seven compliments to every negative you tell a player. Almost impossible, I mean, I think about that all the time and sometimes you just lose it and yell at somebody in the heat of the moment. But what he did say is, that ratio is even more important for the guys on the bench than your starters. You have to keep those guys engaged and those guys hungry and feeling good about the team. It's the guys on the bench that need a little more love and positively.

This was something the coach tried to emulate and during the 2016 season after losses to several teams in the month leading up to the Gold Conference Championship tournament. He continued to focus on the small wins and the positives in each loss, saying, “We just keep putting those positive things in their heads. It is the little things that have to come together.” Despite the losses in October, the message to the athletes did not change, “Our message to them was always positive and that we can do this.” The athletes believed in that message and won the Gold Coast Conference tournament with wins over top seeded teams.

**Has a composed and accomplished presence.** The third finding that emerged under inspirational motivation was the presence of the coach. This finding had 4 sources that made 11 references to his presence. The coach’s presence came from his physical stature, his accomplishments in the sport of water polo, and his composure on the pool deck.

For college athletes, this was motivating, as one respondent said, “He is the kind of guy that motivates you when he walks into the gym or onto the pool deck.” Another agreed, noting, “A lot of it also came from his presence and his history. He is a man who deserves a lot of respect for what he accomplished, so you want to do well in that respect.” One respondent also alluded to his accomplishments, adding, “If someone walks in and they are the guru in what you do...his pure presence in the room raises your game.” A respondent also referred to the calming presence he brought when he walked on the pool deck. The researcher observed this calming presence both in practice and during the intensity of games. This presence motivated athletes and made them want to succeed as one said, “You know he has this presence on the deck and when he is

coaching and talking to you, you just want to make him proud. It is hard to quantify into words the feeling you get of someone's presence.”

**Findings Related to Intellectual Stimulation**

The third research sub-question looked to determine the intellectual stimulation behaviors that a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach demonstrated. The results of the analysis of the data yielded one finding (Table 9).

Table 9

*Intellectual Stimulation Findings that Emerged from the Data*

	Sources	References
Challenges others to creatively solve problems	10	16

**Challenges others to creatively solve problems.** The one finding that indicated the coach demonstrated intellectual stimulation was challenging others to creatively solve problems. There were 10 sources with 16 references identified during the data analysis. The coach provided a structure that gave athletes the opportunity to learn and grow from their mistakes. As the coach said, “I try and allow them some room to fail so that they can learn from failure. Failure is how we learn best.” In this style, he provided an environment for the athletes to creatively work through problems. He went on to say that, “I think my feeling is that I like to help them go through it almost by challenging them to figure things out on their own.”

One example of this was how he responded to the athletes when they made mistakes and needed to be corrected. Instead of telling them what to do, he posed it in a question saying, “What could you have done to help?” or “Where do you see this?” It helped the athletes solve problems in a positive way that was not embarrassing or putting

them down. The coach viewed his role as helping the athletes “grow as a player and a person.” In the 2016 Gold Coast Conference championship tournament when the team was awarded a man up situation, known as a six on five, at a critical point in the game, the researcher observed the head coach not calling a timeout but rather allowing one of his athletes in the water to read the defense and call the six on five play. The head coach said, “as you get toward the end of the year, if they have had more of that problem-solving and being able to do it a little more on their own, a lot of time they mature more.” This was the case in the game as the team successfully scored the goal and ended up winning the game.

The assistant coaches were treated the same way and allowed to provide input on how they would do things. One commented, “I know that he has a lot of faith and trust in us as assistants...he is open to our ideas in different aspects form scouting, recruiting, and video breakdown.” The assistants felt they had a voice and at the same time were challenged by the coach, as one noted, “He always makes me think outside of the box and I have learned from him.” The head coach provided a structure, but allowed for creativity and challenged those who surround him to solve problems.

### **Findings Related to Acceptance of Group Goals and Teamwork**

The fourth research sub-question examined what behaviors a successful NCAA Division I men’s water polo coach demonstrated to foster acceptance of group goals and promote teamwork. The results of the analysis of the data were the development of five findings (Table 10).

Table 10

*Acceptance of Group Goals and Teamwork Findings that Emerged from the Data*

	Sources	References
Creates a culture focused on family	15	48
Creates a team-first culture	19	44
Establishes a clear vision and obtainable goals	17	39
Uses group activities outside of the pool to build the team	9	18
Helps build a culture of trust	7	12

**Creates a culture focused on family.** The finding with most references under fostering acceptance of group goals and teamwork was the coach creates a family culture. There were 15 sources that referenced family 48 times during the data analysis. The men’s water polo program at Pepperdine University focuses on the six pillars the coach developed and believes will lead them to success. One of the pillars is family and about loving your teammates. His great successes when he was a player on the Olympic teams happened when the teams loved each other like family. This aligned with what Lyle (2016) wrote about the 1984 Olympic men’s water polo team:

Apart from the ‘what could have been’ heartbreak, the positive, incalculably valuable story that came out of the 1984 Olympics was the quality of the team’s relationships with each other. They didn’t just become a cohesive team who trusted and respected each other. They became a close family who genuinely loved each other as brothers. (p. 128)

As the Olympic men’s water polo coach in 2008, he led the team to a silver medal, which one respondent described as,

The great example is him having the team before the 2008 Olympics; he had only been with the team for one year. It was a team that was kind of in disarray and he brought them together. It wasn't about X's and O's or the strategy of the game. He brought them together as a family.

The same was true with the teams he coached at Pepperdine, including the 1997 NCAA Division I championship team; Alan Herrmann (as cited by Lyle, 2016), a member of the team described his experience as "Being part of the Pepperdine 1997 championship team was one of the greatest times in my life. The coach showed us how to be a family inside and outside of the pool" (p. 240). That was the coach's focus, to build his teams to understand that they were more than a team, but a part of a family saying, "pretty much everything in life involves around a team and our families is the greatest team there is." Establishing a culture where everyone was a part of a family created a bond the athletes felt for each other, as one respondent described,

You want to give a hundred percent at all times because you don't want to let your family member down. He builds this bond of friendship and respect that if you don't give your all, you are letting someone down. Like in a marriage, if I don't give my all to my wife, I am letting her down and letting my kids down. That is the type of family we have built, so you make sure people are giving a hundred percent.

This started from the coach who led out of love and created a family culture with the program where he was often referred to as a father figure, such as when a respondent shared,

There were a lot of times in my younger career as a player in college and after college I would reflect on him as being a second father to me.

Carrying that father figure torch of loving you unconditionally and supporting you in a way that I know you are going to make mistakes; life is about making mistakes, but it's ok, we are going to grow from it.

This was echoed by another respondent who said, "He is like a father figure to all of us" and the coach treats the athletes as he would his sons. His house was always open to the athletes and alumni where they would hold team barbecues. As the coach said, "The way I joke about it is that the assistant coach and I both have 2 daughters, but in reality, we also have 25 sons." These were the types of relationships that drove the coach as he talked about one of his former athletes who refers to him as a second father, saying "that warms my heart to have that kind of impact on even one kid. There are a lot of kids who have expressed that too me. I feel very fortunate and blessed to have that opportunity." The building blocks of creating team cohesion were with the family culture he created. As another respondent shared, "We were a part of a family and as I am talking...it out for the first time in 20 something years of being in his program, his program is really about family and it starts with him."

**Creates a team first culture.** The second finding under acceptance of fostering goals and teamwork was creating a culture that focused on the team. The data revealed 19 sources with 44 references to a culture centered around teamwork. On the first page of the team handbook it says, "Contribute 100% of yourself to teamwork... WORK TOGETHER!" It reminded the athletes they must work together as a team if they wanted to be successful. The coach knew from his experience the importance of the group

working together, saying “no one individual is going to win the game...It’s helping them understand that it is sacrificing a part of themselves.” According to one respondent, the coach was a man of great quotes and one that stood out was,

It is amazing what you can accomplish if you don’t care who gets the credit. That is something that he teaches, selflessness. I have played against a lot of teams that have great individual players and he preaches that you cannot do anything in this sport as an individual; it is a team sport. The best team is going to win, not the best talent.

The coach made it a foundation of the program; no matter who you were on the team, you were important. This was reflected in the coach’s comment,

That again is one of the foundations here, caring about each other, loving each other enough that you do not have to be the guy. On a certain day you may not score a goal, you may not even make an assist even, but you are a very important part of the team.

This was something the athletes understood and saw as a focus of the program, saying, “His real focus is coming together as a unit coming together as a team making the most of the opportunity together.” He got the entire team to buy into the goal, even those who were not regulars in the playing rotation. As another respondent explained,

Something that he does that I think is extremely important is that he keeps even the last guys that don’t even travel involved. With any good team, I think it is the guys who aren’t getting playing time who are actually the backbone of the team. I think he does a nice job of giving these guys who will never go to see the pool purpose at practice and keeping them

motivated. When they are motivated and showing that they buy into the team goal, I think it is much easier for them.

This was done every day according to one respondent who shared, “He will stop plays in practice and say, if you would of drove here your teammate would have been open. You may not have scored the goal, but your teammate would have scored the goal leading to team success.” This team mentality was observed during a shooting drill the coach set up; while one player was shooting, other athletes where encouraging their teammate to make the four shots that each had to make before they could stop the drill. Also, the researcher observed before each game after the team introduction, the team walked back to the bench and the coaches shook each team member’s hand. It was an example of developing a team attitude and showing each one mattered to the team. As one respondent described,

What it came down to was the team was more important than any one of the players. You have to recognize that every practice, every shot, every pass has to serve a purpose for the whole team goal, whatever that was.

The team aspect, we all fought for each other and he was the one that put that into place.

One story exemplified how the coach took seriously the importance of the team. A respondent described a time when the team was undefeated and one month away from the NCAA championship tournament; the seniors decide to have a ditch day and not show up to practice. The respondent shared:

We all ditched morning practice...Everybody is there except for the seniors and one senior that we left out. We show up at the pool deck in the

afternoon and it is the only time I have ever seen him pissed in my entire life. He is so furious and you could just tell the look on his face and his actions. He sat the seniors down and got everybody else in the pool and what he yelled at us for wasn't the senior ditch day. It was because we left the senior out. We literally, after him bitching us out for 20 minutes, we swam the entire practice.

It ended up being a pivotal moment in the season because after that, the seniors knew that they could not let the team and the coach down. They ended up going on and winning the 1997 NCAA championship that year. One respondent commented, "I think he empowered each individual to be their best and...manifest it into a team environment and team atmosphere. He didn't have individual pieces going off in different directions; he tried to bring them all together." The coach created the team culture and got each athlete to come together to work toward a clear team goal.

**Establishes a clear vision and obtainable goals.** The third finding in fostering the acceptance of group goals and teamwork was the coach setting a clear shared vision and obtainable goals. This finding was referenced 39 times by 17 different sources. The coach was able to create more than a family and team culture and understood the importance of getting them to work toward a common goal. This was described by Lyle (2016) as, "Regardless of each role, a healthy team must share a common team goal. Without that unity in direction, things disintegrate" (p. 230). He accomplished this by forming ideas of what was possible with each team and encouraging them to buy into the vision. As one respondent said, "the way he coached was here is a vision and here is your vision; let me empower you to have your vision." An example of this was leading

up to a match against Stanford, which had a fast team whose strength was counterattacking (like a fast break in basketball and scoring on transition). The coach presented the vision to the team that they were going to counter the counter. The team bought into the idea that they were going to out swim one of the fastest NCAA teams at the time. “I will never forget ‘we are going to counter the counter’...I never swam that fast in my life, ever. I remember one of the guys on the team saying, ‘we can do that.’ We are going to do that.” Another respondent told the story with a grin, feeling the excitement of reliving the game, saying, “I will never forget ‘we are going to counter the counter.’ I will never forget we beat Stanford and we beat them by swimming their own medicine.” It was examples like these where the coach set out an obtainable goal for the team, they bought into the idea, and they achieved it.

The coach used his positive mindset to find small wins in each situation, even the losses. “It’s looking for the little success,” he said in talking about a game where they had a close loss. It was a strategy he used in one of the biggest wins in his coaching career for the United States national team. In preparing for the 2008 Olympics, he took the team to train and play against the Serbian national team, one of the top countries for water polo; they beat the United States team seven times by six or seven goals each time. He proposed the idea to the U.S. team back on the podium in the 2008 Olympics and they were six or seven goals away from the Serbian team. As he went back and looked at the video after the trip, he realized a huge positive, the U.S. team drew more exclusions by 50% over the Serbians; an exclusion in water polo is drawn from a penalty and gives a team a man advantage, known as a six-on-five, for 20 seconds and are critical to winning games. He took this positive and the team worked on their six-on-five leading up to

the Olympics. When it came to the Olympics, the United States upset Serbia and, according to the coach, was one of the biggest upsets ever.

In 2015, Pepperdine finished one of its worst seasons. At the end of the season in the final tournament, the coach was not complaining or focused on what had happened, but was setting the vision for the following season. He took aside the only four players that would be returning in 2016 and said, “It doesn’t feel like it right now, but you guys are going to be the foundation of this team being successful next year.” He was setting the vision for what he saw for the team in the coming year and beyond, and that was to win the Gold Coast Conference championship. The coach said,

The Gold Coast is something we can look at and say “let’s win the Gold Coast Championship.” That’s been our goal and the guys see that. I think it’s really looking at the team and making it a realistic goal, but a challenging goal.

In 2016, that was the teams goal and he encouraged them along the way that it was possible, even during losses leading up to the final tournament. As the team entered the Gold Coast Conference tournament seeded fourth, he continually reminded them of that goal of winning the tournament. The team goal was set and they played as a team winning tournament. As a respondent said, “It shows that throughout the year, he is setting this plan, setting this vision, and it is coming together under his way of setting the vision and empowering them...I think he does a good job.”

**Uses group activities outside of the pool to build the team.** The fourth finding under fostering acceptance of group goals and teamwork was the coach involved the team in activities outside of the pool. There were 9 sources and 18 references to the team

being involved in activities outside of the pool to build a team dynamic. A water polo athlete often spent hours in the pool training during the week. The coach recognized this and used activities outside the pool as a chance to workout and build a bond within the team and family.

Specifically, respondents spoke of barbecues at the coach's house and at families of different players on the team while they were traveling. The team often played different activities during these barbecues, whether it was horseshoes, volleyball, or badminton. It was not just the athletes playing, but the competitive nature of the coach. One respondent recalled how competitive the coach was during volleyball and horseshoes, noting, "We would play volleyball and he would own us...I set up the horseshoe pit thinking he has never played horseshoes so I'm going to get him. He hit three ringers in the game he had never played and wins." Another respondent also spoke of playing sports at parents' houses during barbecues, adding,

I was like "check out coach, he is like spiking that shit." We were all kind of laughing at him. It was kind of when his guard was down and wasn't feeling like he was a coach anymore and he was just acting like he wanted to act. It was a very natural setting. It is some of the biggest impressions I had of water polo is going to some of the different parents' houses after we played and having meals at their houses.

It was obvious with the passion that the respondent told the story, those were moments that meant a lot in building the team and the relationship with the coach.

There were two different activities done typically at the beginning of the season with the teams. One of those was known as the *stairway to heaven or hell*. The

Pepperdine campus sits on hills above the Pacific Ocean, so walking through campus is usually either up or down hills. The stairway to heaven starts at the parking lot below the basketball gym and goes up to the cafeteria. It is a significant hike up the stairs and the coach would often use these as a training activity with the team. Respondents spoke of times when they had to carry rocks, sandbags, or water jugs, sometimes racing up them. Again, the coach was not always a spectator and would occasionally join in the strenuous activity. The other activity that was referenced was the sand dunes off Pacific Coast Highway north of the campus. The dunes were a big hill the team would run up. The coach would get creative and make it into a game where he would try and tackle them or they had to carry another teammate on their back. One respondent described it as, “He would be throwing people in the sand and everyone would be tackling him and the whole team and him would literally end up covered in sand. It was just laughing and really enjoying the experience.” The coach used these activities to create memorable experiences where the athletes were working hard, but building the foundations for the team. The respondent also recalled his experience at the sand dunes telling a story about one of his teammates breaking out into a heartfelt laugh, saying,

We were climbing up it and going down it and we were doing land training. He started running down that thing and his feet started getting higher than his head. He was going so fast and coach was like “shit stop.” He literally was going 20 miles per hour. He was the most hilarious son of a bitch. He started tumbling down this thing. I mean it was funny; it was so funny.

He went on to say after describing these moments outside of the pool, “Those are endearing moments where you can extract a pound of favor for an ounce.” It was clear the impact that the activities outside of the pool had on the alumni that were interviewed. They were some of the more passionate stories told. They were times when relationships were made stronger between the athletes and coaches, and they bonded the team together.

**Helps build a culture of trust.** The final finding in fostering the acceptance of group goals and teamwork was building a culture of trust. There were 7 sources that made 12 references to building trust. When it came down to building the cohesion on the team, a big part of that for this coach was building trust amongst the players. The coach said,

I really think a lot of being successful as a team it comes down to the guys trusting each other and believing in each other, that they are all committed and there to do their best and that they care about each other and love each other.

He provided an example of this with the 1997 NCAA championship team at Pepperdine, explaining they had lots of ups and downs but three things came out in the end: trust, love, and commitment. He added,

They had great trust and love for each other and they knew that each other was committed to be the best they could be. When we won the championship, it was really those things that came through. I think my role is to help remind them along the way that those are the things that really matter.

The coach helped foster trust between the players and between himself and the athletes. One respondent said,

He definitely invested the time and energy to who I was and who I am going to be. It built an enormous amount of trust that you want to go play for this guy; you want to go to battle with this guy who really cares about you as a person not just as an athlete.”

Another respondent also spoke of the trust built with the coach as he talked about losing his starting position; he shared, “We built another layer of trust; there was more trust built through the adversity.” It was through his philosophy of coaching out of love that he built trust and the team. In talking about his role he said, “Love them through the process and help build trust amongst the team members.”

### **Findings Related to Setting High Performance Expectations**

The fifth research sub-question looked to examine what behaviors that a successful NCAA Division I men’s water polo coach demonstrated to set high performance expectations. The results of the analysis of the data were the development of two findings (Table 11).

Table 11

#### *High Performance Expectation Findings that Emerged from the Data*

	Sources	References
Challenges athletes to be their best	20	55
Creates a competitive practice culture	9	12

**Challenges athletes to be their best.** The first finding under high performance expectations was the coach challenging athletes to be their best. The data revealed 20 sources with 55 references of the coach challenging the athletes to be their best. The

expectations were laid out in the team handbook and discussed performance in the pool as well as in life and the classroom. The coach said, “Expectations are for you to do your best in everything you do every day and not be a cruiser...this is a great opportunity and we expect you to be strong in the classroom and strong in the pool.” For example, the coaching staff challenged each athlete to do their best in the classroom, striving to have each athlete achieve above a 3.0 grade point average.

To further emphasize the importance of the coach’s expectations, he developed three golden rules athletes see in their hand book in capital letters:

1. Do unto others as you would have done to you. (Self-awareness and control)
2. Make good choices (Self-discipline)
3. Be the best you can be every day (A commitment to excellence)

The third rule spoke to the high-performance expectations the coach placed on the athletes every day. Three of the pillars of Pepperdine water polo also eluded to high-performance expectations: excellence, commitment, and grit. On the pillars, it described excellence as performing one’s best at everything attempted, commitment as being all in, and grit is as doing whatever it took to make it happen. These were the expectations the coach had for each athlete who was part of the program.

Although the coach was about winning, his approach did not put the pressure on them to win, but to be their best. This was clear when the coach said,

All I want is for the guys to feel like you did your best and you left it in the pool. It’s not putting the pressure on them to win. We talk about winning, but it’s really trying to encourage them to challenge themselves to be at their best. To challenge your teammates to make themselves

better in the water each day. If we are doing drills, sometime you do drill where you push against each other in the water and there is really only two people that know how hard they are pushing. On the deck, you look at them and they appear to be working hard, but if they are good they can put on a pretty good show of that too. They are the ones that have to push each other to make each other better.

This too came from his philosophy of coaching out of love. The coach added,

I am pushing on you because I care about you I love you and want to make you better. That is where I think, where I try and come from. I am pushing you because I want you to be better and I see there is more in you and I want to help get that out of you.”

From the deck, he would challenge the athletes with a simple question, “Is that your best effort?” A respondent said, “You would reply by judging yourself...That in itself creates an internal competition where I need to push past whatever barriers I am facing right now because for the most part people want to do their best.” As another respondent put it, “I expect you to be the best version of yourself that you can be. The words ‘I can’t’ do not exist in your vocabulary. I can’t do this does not exist. I remember that clearly.”

The researcher also observed this during a practice when the team was not performing at their best. The coach stopped the practice and called the entire team over to the side of the pool. In his calm, composed demeanor, he challenged the team to pick up their performance level in the water and play smarter. The team went back out to

continue the scrimmage, accepting that challenge and playing with a greater intensity and at a higher level.

The coach would challenge athletes in multiple ways to be their best, whether it was in practice or in games. During the 2016 season, the coach made the decision to pull a starter out of the game because of how he was performing. The athlete was upset that he was pulled out of the game. After the game, the coach sat him down and told him they could not win the Gold Coast Conference tournament without him, saying, “I know you are capable of it, you just haven’t been playing very consistent.” They had some individual meetings and the coach challenged him to step up in a positive way. The athlete went on to lead the team in winning the Gold Coast Conference championship and earning recognition as the tournament’s most valuable player.

Other alumni who played when the coach was still an Olympic athlete had different experiences. One respondent recalled how the coach got in the water to push him, sharing, “I knew it was going to be a bad day when he went into the pool room and came out with the blue Speedo...He would come in and ruin me because I wasn’t playing hard enough.” He went on to talk about how the coach pushed him and challenged him in the water as only a three time Olympian could do to a NCAA Division I water polo athlete. The coach read the athletes and pushed them to their best, which was highlighted by a participant who said.

I think what he did is push individuals more than perhaps they could be pushed. I am going to say physical limitations, but you know kind of pushed to a higher level during practices. I think that was probably the one thing perhaps more so than other coaches that I have had.

**Creates a competitive practice culture.** The second finding under creating high-performance expectations was the competitive practice culture, with 9 sources and 12 references. The coach created competitions in practice to push the athletes and challenge each other. A respondent recalled this as he reflected on practices, noting “he would make these games, and that would take place during hell week. Even though he would make things challenging, he tried to make it fun and keep us distracted from what we were doing while getting in shape.” The researcher also observed this during a practice session where they were performing a shooting drill. The team had to make a certain amount of goals to move to the next drill. The researcher observed the intensity in the athletes as they wanted to make every shot to move ahead. This also occurred in another drill where the athletes had to wrestle with another player then swim to the point where they were going to take the shot. They had to keep performing the drill until they made four goals. The competition in both drills increased the focus and intensity, and pushed the athletes to perform at a high level.

The competition was also seen when the coach made a change in the lineup if he needed to challenge an athlete to step up. As a respondent said, “He created a healthy competition environment and he was a coach. If there needed to be a change in the lineup, he made a change he thought was necessary.” Another agreed that the coach created competition when he talked about losing his own starting position, saying “Part of that was him kind of stirring the pot and him trying to create competition...In a way, he challenged me.” As it said in the team handbook, “be ready to work hard and challenge yourself and your teammates to become better.” One of the ways the coach did this was

by creating competition in practice to bring out the highest level of performance in each individual.

### **Findings Related to Appropriate Role Modeling**

The sixth research sub-question looked to examine what behaviors a successful NCAA Division I men’s water polo coach demonstrated that showed appropriate role modeling. The results of the analysis of the data were the development of four findings (Table 12).

Table 12

*Appropriate Role Model Findings that Emerged from the Data*

	Sources	References
Leads by example in multiple aspects of life	19	63
Coaches from the perspective of love	8	24
Displays excellent life balance	6	11
Establishes core values for the program	7	8

**Leads by example in multiple aspects of life.** The first finding that emerged under appropriate role modeling was the coach leading by example. This finding had 19 sources and the most references out of any of the findings with 63. It was clear the coach led by example in many ways and the athletes and coaches who worked for him saw it every day in how he coached and lived his life. This was also found by Lyle (2016) when a former athlete explained, “he is the most incredible leader I’ve ever encountered. He leads by example and is a man of his word. He’s genuine, motivating, inspiring, compassionate, strategic, technical, calm, and excited only when necessary” (p. 241).

As an athlete on the Olympic team, his teammates recognized his leadership (Lyle, 2016). As a coach, he tried to be that example for the athletes and coaches that

surrounded him. During the interview, the coach reflected on a time when John Wooden talked about being an example, saying,

I try to be an example in how I live my life, from him having a bible on his desk and kids know he has strong faith, how he reacts to his wife, how he reacts to situations in the game, how he talks to referees, how he talks to the team before and after the game win or lose. I think that team spirit is an attitude that I need to portray every day to make it known that this is who we are and this is what we are about.

The coach took the advice from John Wooden and it was how he viewed his role as a coach, setting the example every day. He realized that everything he did set the example for his athletes, saying,

We are about being the best we can. We are about good attitude and caring about each other. That part is a little bit on my shoulders in setting that example every time I step on the deck or when the team sees me at home coming over for a barbecue. They see how I react with my daughter. My daughter is at Pepperdine now and she comes on campus and they see me with her and that is a big part of that.

It was the part of his job that he enjoyed and he hoped he could influence his athletes in a positive way. In talking about that example, the coach understood the responsibility, adding,

Being somebody that hopefully these kids can look up to and say “I really like that about coach and I want to model my life after that in that way too.” I do not talk to them a lot about that other than just the way I try and

do things and realize the way I live my life and the choices I make are impacting them every day. It is a huge responsibility that I know is out there and I love that part of it. I feel it is really the reason I have stayed in coaching that long, is to be able to have that impact on their lives.

The athletes saw this in him, both as a coach and someone successful in all areas of his life. As one respondent said, “I think the way he lives his life. He is a great example, but trust me, he likes to have fun. He is a fun guy. We all looked up to him.” The athletes saw the example he set as a father, businessman, and husband, with another participant commenting, “He is a quiet leader... We were all stressed then you look at him he has a business, he is coaching, on the national team, and raising a family. I think in that sense he is a leader by example.” He provided the athletes a solid role model in their life. As another respondent described,

You would see on his desk Christian books as well as how to be a good father, how to be a good husband. They were all open and they got their little notes and little book marks. It wasn't like they were just collecting dust. To me that was always a good example, look at this guy as a young, immature man looking at my coach who implements everything I want to be like is reading about how to be a better person, how to be a better father, how to be better to his wife, and how I can relate that to my girlfriends, or be with his kids someday, or reading the bible. He lived it, it wasn't a façade.

The athletes saw the way he acted and treated people, and not just on the pool deck but everywhere. They looked up to him as a role model and the example he set. As one respondent shared,

Everyone enjoyed him not screaming and everyone thought of him as leading by example. It is not just on the pool deck but on a day-by-day basis he would treat everyone the same way. Whether it was the person at the gas station or whatever, nothing could get him out of his mood. Even if he wasn't, he would pretend he was in a good mood and calm. He wasn't just acting like that with us, he was acting like that with everyone. That was definitely something that you realized. At some points, you think of it as, "is it fake? Does he truly mean that?" Then when you see him interacting with people the same way, you know that it is actually him. We saw him and his daily life that he was doing the same thing. That was definitely us, realizing he is leading by example not just on the pool deck but off of the pool deck as well.

The athletes recognized how he lived his life and respected how he conducted himself. The word that described him most often was even-keeled in his emotions, as one respondent said, "I looked at him as a positive role model even then. He is so even-keeled." Another agreed, describing the influence his temperament saying,

He has never once lost it. Like he will lose his cool sometimes at a referee, but it's not like other coaches at other Universities that berate the officials. Or you know, absolutely flip their lid and lose their mind. He

will get upset, but he is always under control. I feel like always having that temperament around has definitely influenced me to be more even-keeled.

This was echoed by another respondent who also recognized the example the coach set by how he carried himself. This participant explained,

He is a very humble and soft spoken guy. Everyone respects his experience and knowledge. It is kind of one of those things like, what is that saying. Walk softly but carry a big stick or something like that...He doesn't have an ego and it is a great way to lead by example.

The researcher also observed his calm, passionate style even in the intense setting of the Gold Coast Conference championship game. There was a time in the game when he let the referee know with passion and intensity that he did not agree with the call that was made. He did not dwell on it and moved on, keeping his composure and focus on the team. He remained calm even toward the end of the game when his team had the ball stolen with less than a minute left and up by one goal, which provided the opponent with a chance to tie the game. The coach was observed smiling as he walked back toward the bench. The athletes on the bench clearly followed his lead.

As one respondent said, "I think his leadership style was by example." This example was set by how he lived his life and by physically getting in the water to show athletes how to perform different moves. According to one respondent mentioned, "He gets in with his players and shows them instead of just telling them. He gets in the water and actually shows them the movements." Although the researcher did not observe this, it was clear this made an impact on the athletes. As one person said, "I think...led by example, truly by example, in terms of getting in the pool and those sorts of things and

showing you how it is done.” Another also remembered that as he reflected on his time with the coach, sharing,

He would put his speedo on and get in the pool, almost daily. I don't know how it is now, but back in the day. You figure he went to 1992 and I was there in 93 and the guy was in shape and it was game on. He would literally get in the pool and it was game time and he could play with the best of them. That is from an athletic stand point. He could literally kick anybody's ass at any point in time. I mean I was the top of my game and he would still. When I was in my junior and senior year, probably not so much. He literally he was just a stud. That lead by example was just there. You could never call him out because you knew he could hop in the pool right now and kick your ass. He got in a lot. He would swim with us and play with us.

Another participant also talked about the coach getting in the water, describing the challenge in coaching water polo, saying,

He was a gifted athlete; he was still able to jump in and teach us from the water. As you know in our sport it is very difficult to teach because we are not in the same environment as the athletes. In basketball, a coach can get off the bench and walk on the floor and football a coach can walk on the field and in baseball the manager can walk on the mound. We literally have to jump in the water. We were lucky that coach was able to jump in the water with us and literally show us where your legs have to be.

The athletes also looked up to how he took care of his physical body and his commitment to health. This motivated the athletes, as described by one respondent,

The biggest thing is, this guy would get in the water and still work out with us. He would be down in the gym when we were working out. You are looking over at this guy and I think he was still in his forties at the time, but he was still charging and kicking peoples tails. If you saw him in there, you were like, I have to try and keep up. I think that was a really exciting part about going to practice every day.

The coach was a positive role model and the athletes who played for him reflected that image. This was summed up by a respondent who said,

I think a coach is your leader and without a good leader, you are not going to be able to do much. He is a darn good leader. He has taught me a lot about the sport, taught me a lot about fatherhood, and being a great person.

**Coaches from a perspective of love.** The second finding that emerged under appropriate role modeling was that he coached out of love, which had 8 sources and 24 references. Coach Wooden once told the coach “that the love he showed his family and friends sets the example for his players to follow” (Lyle, 2016, p. 229). The coaching style to be an appropriate role model for his athletes was coaching out of love.

The coach reflected to his playing days as he talked about his coaching style, saying, “I think coaches can coach from fear or they can coach from love.” This was something he experienced first-hand when he played for a coach who coached out of fear on the United States men’s water polo national team. He describes him as a “guy who hammered us, yelled at us, and screamed at us.” He went on to say, “we really bonded

together as a team because we feared him. A month before the Olympics in 1984, we almost stepped up and signed a petition to get rid of him because guys were broken down.” However, the experience bonded the team together because, as he said, “we had to love each other through the hate that we held.” This experience helped mold his coaching style, saying, “I think the other part of where a coach can be successful was to be based on love and that is where I hopefully try to focus my coaching style and foundation is based on love.”

The athletes who played for him saw this, as one respondent echoed the coaching out of love style, saying “He doesn’t coach out of fear as some coaches do. He is so down to earth, loving, caring, trustworthy, and loyal. Those are some great words to describe him and why has been so successful.” Another respondent felt the same way, saying, “he coaches out of love. I think it resonated with those guys in that one weekend to push them over the top.” He described a time when the coach got the most out of team and led them to a strong finish in the Mountain Pacific Sports Federation conference tournament. This respondent said, “He is coaching out of love. He genuinely cares about each individual success.” The coach’s comments to the researcher reiterated his style as he described what he told the 2016 team as they were going through struggles at a point during the season; he told the team, “I would not want to be with any other team in the country right now. This is where I want to be I want be with you guys. I love this team and I believe in you guys.” That was the type of relationship he built with his players and example he sets even when they made a mistake. As one respondent put it, “I think you walk on that pool deck and you know even if you let him down that he is going to love you forever.”

**Displays excellent life balance.** The third finding that emerged under appropriate role modeling was the life balance the coach displayed, which garnered 11 references from 6 sources. He served as the coach of a NCAA division I men's water polo program and ran a chiropractic clinic, in addition to being a father and husband, and at was involved with the national team as a player and a coach. The alumni interviewed recognized his work ethic and ability to create such balance in his life. As one person said, "He taught me in life you have to be balanced. You have to put in the same effort in everything you do." Another respondent talked about the balance that the coach demonstrated, describing,

They see a great human being, a great husband, a great businessman, a great chiropractor, a great water polo player, a great coach. What he taught me is to have balance. If that day he is at the chiropractic office, he is going to be the best chiropractor he can be. Then later he has to get in the car to go to practice and he is going to spend three hours at practice. In those three hours, he is no longer a chiropractor, he is going to try and be the best coach he can in those three hours. Then later on he is going to go home and he is going to be a husband and a father and at that time he is going to be the best husband and father.

The coach's family was described as a huge part of his life and the athletes recognized it. One respondent admired that about the coach and saw it as something he wanted to model his life after, saying,

He has set the priorities with his family first and that is also inspiring. As much as water polo is his life, he understands the priorities of his family

and his daughters. That is something that I highly respect and want to model myself after with my priorities and my personal life and with water polo.

The coach was hard-working and set that example, but no matter what he did, he was present in the moment. The alumni that spoke about the balance he displayed admired that about him. This was described as,

He leads in all aspects of life by example. The juggling of everything he does; being a chiropractor, dad, husband, all this stuff because of who he is, people asking to speak at conferences and seminars. He is still here, present and involved, everyday shows the guys that you can still have balance in your life and still be successful in all three for them.

The coach was a positive role model in how he demonstrated success in so many areas of his life from water polo, to business, and his family. This was an aspect of his life that was recognized by the alumni and that provided them a role model who was successful and balanced.

**Establishes core values for the program.** The fourth finding that emerged under appropriate role modeling was establishing core values that guide the program; this finding had seven sources and eight references. The values were known as the six pillars of Pepperdine water polo. They were printed in the team handbook, which every athlete received at the beginning of the season.

The coach took a break from coaching the Pepperdine water polo team to coach the United States men's water polo national team from 2006 thru 2012 until he took over

the head coaching position again in 2013. When the coach returned to Pepperdine, he started the six pillars, saying,

The foundation of them are family, excellence, discipline, respect, commitment, and grit. They are our six pillars and they really speak to those three things. Discipline is doing what is right. Respect is about respecting your teammate and realizing that we are all different and respecting those differences and loving people through it. These two things doing what is right, even when you don't want to speak to the whole idea of trust and building trust within a team. This corner speaks about being committed, being all in, and doing the best you can at all times. That is academically and athletically. The family is the care or love and loving each other. Grit is the wildcard the ability to pick yourself up when you are down by a couple goals in the fourth quarter.

The pillars were something the coach spoke about often and did so with the team. It was evident through the conversations with him that these were the guiding values of the program he created. The expectations of the athletes were centered around the pillars. As the coach said,

It is a really good thing to tell these kids to become who you can become, become your best. Do the right thing. Care about each other. Again, you come back to build trust and people knowing that you care. The expectations are really centered around those pillars.

The alumni interviewed also described the six pillars the coach said were needed to be successful. The coach even created business-style cards with the six pillars for the

team carry with them. One respondent talked about the coach's principles and how he portrays the six pillars. When the researcher asked the coach about the success of the 2016 season and winning the Gold Coast Conference championship, he felt a big reason was the foundation of those six pillars, saying, "this was the first year where we would build on those and use them as foundational building blocks for the team." The team displayed those values as they committed to their goals, stood as a family, respected each other, were disciplined, gave their best, and displayed grit to win the Gold Coast Conference championship.

### **Summary**

Chapter IV began with a summary of the study, including the purpose statement, research questions, and methodology. This phenomenological study examined the transformational leadership behaviors of a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach. The researcher collected data by interviewing the coach and 14 subjects who played for the coach, 5 of whom also worked as an assistant coach with him. In addition, the researcher observed the coach in action during practice and games. Furthermore, artifacts that were collected included a team handbook, articles written by the coach, and a book written about the coach's life that further supported the data collected from the interviews. The multiple methods and data sources were used to triangulate the data and strengthen the results by providing corroborating evidence (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2015). Twenty-one findings emerged through the data to answer the primary research question and the six research sub-questions. Chapter V expands on the findings of the study and provides conclusions and implications for action.

## CHAPTER V: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### **Overview**

This qualitative study was designed to examine the transformational leadership behaviors of a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach. To date, no studies were found that examined leadership in successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coaches. This study used a phenomenological approach to examine the phenomenon of a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach who won a national championship and led a national team to an Olympic medal. The researcher collected interviews from participants who had direct lived experiences with the coach and triangulated the data with observations and collection of artifacts. The study was guided by the differentiated transformational leadership inventory (DTLI; Hardy et al., 2009) adapted by Callow et al. (2009) for use in a sports setting.

This chapter begins with a review of the purpose statement and research questions that were introduced in Chapter I. The methodology, sample, and population are then summarized, along with the major findings. This is followed by conclusions and implications for action. Finally, the researcher presented recommendations for future research and concludes with closing remarks and reflections.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to understand and describe the transformational leadership behaviors of a successful NCAA Division I championship water polo coach. This study built off the work of Newland et al. (2015), who used a phenomenological framework and suggested that investigating athletes' experiences was vital to understanding transformational leadership in sports.

## **Research Questions**

This study was guided by a primary research question and six sub questions. The primary research question was: What transformational leadership behaviors does a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach demonstrate? The sub-questions were:

1. What individual consideration behaviors does a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach demonstrate?
2. What inspirational motivation behaviors does a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach demonstrate?
3. What intellectual stimulation behaviors does a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach demonstrate?
4. What behaviors does a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach demonstrate to foster acceptance of group goals and promote team work?
5. What behaviors does a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach demonstrate to set high performance expectations?
6. What behaviors does a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach perform to demonstrate appropriate role modeling?

## **Methodology**

The purpose of this study was to describe the transformational leadership behaviors of a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach. According to Patton (2015), when describing behavior the most appropriate methodology is a qualitative approach. A qualitative methodology allowed the researcher to provide a deeper understanding of the coach's behavior. Phenomenological studies looked to describe the

experiences of people who were directly associated with a phenomenon (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). In this study, the researcher looked to examine the phenomenon of a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach who led a team to a NCAA championship. In addition, the coach also guided the men's Olympic water polo team to a silver medal. Only five current NCAA men's water polo coaches led their team to a NCAA championship. Furthermore, only three of those coaches also coached the men's national team and only one, the subject for this study, led the United States men's national water polo team to a medal in the Olympics.

In this study, the researcher captured the lived experiences of people who were directly associated with the phenomenon. The researcher conducted interviews of the head coach, assistant coaches, and alumni who played for the coach. In addition, the researcher observed the coach in a natural setting during practices and games. The researcher also collected artifacts that corroborated the data from the interviews and observations.

### **Population**

The population was the 15 coaches who led a NCAA Division I men's water polo team to a national championship, as well as the student-athletes who played for these coaches and assistant coaches who worked alongside them. The population was narrowed into a target population based on criteria established by the researcher. The researcher established three criteria for the target population: (1) they were associated, either as player or coach, with a NCAA Division I school that won a national championship; (2) the coach who led the team to the national championship was still coaching for the school; and (3) the head coach also spent time as the United States

men's water polo national team coach. The target population for this study was three head coaches who met these criteria, along with the alumni and assistant coaches associated with them.

### **Sample**

The sample in this study was limited to the coaches, alumni, and assistant coaches who agreed to participate. The researcher attempted to contact all three coaches in the target population and one agreed to participate in the study. The sample for this study was 15 participants, including the head coach, alumni, and assistant coaches from the Pepperdine University men's water polo team who directly experienced the phenomenon.

### **Major Findings**

This study examined the transformational leadership behaviors of a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach. The transformational leadership behaviors found were summarized to answer the research questions. The following major findings appeared from the interviews, observations, and artifacts.

#### **Findings for Research Sub-Question 1**

Six findings emerged from the interviews, observations, and artifacts that showed how the coach demonstrated individual consideration leadership behaviors. The six findings were: listens and works at building relationships, wants athletes to become better people, genuinely cares for people, recognizes individual differences and their value, and develops roles for each individual. Altogether, there were 155 references to the coach demonstrating individual consideration. The results aligned with previous studies where Newland et al. (2015) found caring as one theme when examining transformational

leadership in coaches and Mills et al. (2016) determined that professional soccer coaches demonstrated empathy or individual consideration.

### **Findings for Research Sub-Question 2**

Three findings emerged from the data indicated the coach demonstrated inspirational motivation behaviors. The three findings were: inspires others through stories and life experiences, focuses on creating a positive culture, and maintains a composed and accomplished presence. In a case study examining transformational leadership on a successful high school football coach, Pharion (2014) found positivity and presence as two of the themes the coach demonstrated. Consistent with this current study, Mills et al. (2016) found that premier league soccer managers demonstrated inspirational motivation through team talks and inspirational messages. In addition, the researcher determined that two themes overlapped with two of the research questions; focuses on a positive culture could also be seen as an appropriate role modeling behavior because the coach's positive behavior was an example for the athletes to look up to. Additionally, the researcher grouped establishing a clear vision and obtainable goals under fostering goals and teamwork; the coach's vision could also be seen as a way the coach inspired the athletes.

### **Findings for Research Sub-Question 3**

The third research question looked to determine the intellectual stimulation behaviors that a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach demonstrated. The researched yielded one finding, challenges others to creatively solve problems. Previous research demonstrated that intellectual stimulation behaviors in coaches varied (Mills, 2016). Furthermore, Newland et al. (2015) found no consistent themes that developed

under intellectual stimulation. However, it was clear in this study that the coach allowed the athletes and coaches creative freedom to solve problems. The coach provided a structure, but challenged the athletes to develop their problem-solving skills throughout the season.

#### **Findings for Research Sub-Question 4**

Five findings emerged from the data that showed the coach demonstrated behaviors that fostered acceptance of group goals and promoted teamwork. The five findings that emerged were: creates a culture focused on family, creates a team first culture, establishes a clear vision and obtainable goals, uses group activities outside of the pool to build the team, and helps build a culture of trust. There were 161 references that the coach engaged in behaviors that fostered acceptance of group goals and promoted teamwork. Most notably was the coach's deeper view of the team as a family that brought them together, which had 48 references. Additionally, the coach established a culture of trust with the players that also fostered acceptance of group goals and teamwork. In the same way, Newland et al. (2015) found the importance of building trust between athletes and coaches. The coach used his vision of what the team could achieve to get the athletes to buy into the importance of the team goals. The vision inspired the athletes and brought them together working toward a common goal, therefore fostering teamwork.

#### **Findings for Research Sub-Question 5**

Two findings emerged from the data that indicated the coach's behavior demonstrated high performance expectations. The two findings were: challenges athletes to be their best and creates a competitive practice culture. There were 55 references to

the coach challenging the athletes to be their best. Additionally, the coach created a practice culture that promoted competition and athletes to push each other. Similarly, Hodge et al. (2014) found the expectation of excellence and trying one's best every day in their study of the All Blacks rugby team. In the same way, M. J. Smith et al. (2016) found that leaders of a professional cricket teams challenged players by their high-performance expectations.

### **Findings for Research Sub-Question 6**

Four findings emerged from the data showing the coach's behaved as an appropriate role model. The four findings were: leads by example in multiple aspects of life, coaches from a perspective of love, displays excellent life balance, and establishes core values for the program. The finding of leads by example in multiple aspects of life had the most references of any finding with a total of 63. According to B. M. Bass and Riggio (2006), transformational leaders were role models with high standards and moral behavior that influenced followers to want to emulate them. The data found through the lived experiences of those around him, the coach clearly displayed this behavior and was someone the student-athletes looked up to. In addition, the core values the coach set for the program and lived out provided a model for the athletes. Likewise, the coach's perspective on coaching through love also provided a model for the athletes regarding how they treated each other. Similarly, love was also seen with the New Zealand All Blacks and the deep relationships with the players (Hodge et al., 2014).

## Conclusions

The following conclusions were drawn based on the findings from the data in this study. The researcher established eight conclusions about successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coaches who demonstrated transformational leadership behaviors.

**Conclusion 1: To positively impact an athlete's academic and athletic experience, coaches must set a positive example both on and off the pool deck.**

It was concluded from the findings in this study that a coach leads by the example set both on and off the pool deck. Leading by example in multiple aspects of life was the most referenced finding in this study. A coach exhibited positive behavior of a transformational leader by serving as an appropriate role model (Callow et al., 2009; Hardy et al., 2010). The athletes recognized and aspired to emulate the positive example the coach set on the pool deck, and as a father, husband, hard-working businessman, and human being.

**Conclusion 2: To help athletes perform at their best, coaches must create a practice culture that increases intensity and motivation.**

It was concluded that coaches who are transformational leaders develop a practice culture that creates competition and challenges athletes to be their best by pushing their teammates. The findings of this study indicated that the coach challenged the athletes to be their best regularly. When a coach creates competition and challenges athletes to push their teammates, it increases intensity and improves motivation. Similarly, Charbonneau et al. (2001) found transformational leadership in coaching improved intrinsic motivation. Additionally, these high-performance expectations were also demonstrated with the New Zealand All Blacks rugby team (Hodge et al., 2014).

**Conclusion 3: For athletes to be successful in game situations, coaches must allow for creative freedom within an established structure.**

It was concluded that coaches who are transformational leaders challenge their athletes and coaches intellectually. The findings in this study supported the idea that the coach allowed the athletes to use creativity to solve problems in the water. The coach provided a structure, but within those parameters the athletes were challenged in different situations to solve problems. This was noted by assistant coaches and the alumni in the interviews. In addition, the researcher observed the coach allowing athletes to make critical decisions in a championship game. However, the coach provided the opportunity throughout the season for this athlete to develop his problem-solving skills.

**Conclusion 4: To strengthen the bonds between athletes, coaches must foster the idea that they are not just a team, but a family.**

It was concluded that coaches who are transformational leaders foster the idea that they are not just athletes on a team, but form a deeper connection as a family. The findings in this study supported the idea that the coach built a strong unit and fostered teamwork by treating the athletes as members of a family. The individual consideration the coach demonstrated toward the athletes was the same that he would toward a member of his own family, therefore creating relationships that bonded the team to work together as a family. It was evident in the interviews that respondents felt that they were part of something bigger than a team, but a family.

**Conclusion 5: Motivating and inspiring athletes can be done effectively through sharing stories and life experiences.**

It was concluded that coaches who are transformational leaders could inspire and motivate athletes by telling articulate stories and sharing their own life experiences. The findings in this study indicated the athletes were motivated by the stories the coach told. Additionally, the coach's own experiences that he shared with the athletes inspired them, as demonstrated by the stories shared by the alumni. The coach provided optimism through these stories and his experiences that provided inspirational motivation.

**Conclusion 6: Developing a shared vision and establishing team goals fosters unity on a team.**

It was concluded that coaches who are transformational leaders establish a shared vision and obtainable goals that unite a team. The findings in this study clearly demonstrated that the coach inspired and motivated the team by creating a vision and obtainable goals. This was evident from the vision the coach provided to the team at the end of the 2015 season that they would win the Gold Coast Conference in 2016. At the end of a losing season in 2015, the coach pulled aside four of his top players and told them, "It doesn't feel like it right now but you guys are going to be the foundation of this team being successful if not next year, in two years." The team united behind that vision of success through the ups and downs of the 2016 season. Successful coaches who are transformational leaders create a vision and team goals to inspire and bring a team together.

**Conclusion 7: Coaches that focus on building strong relationships demonstrate that they genuinely care.**

It was concluded that coaches who are transformational leaders coach from a perspective of love and genuinely care about their athletes. The findings indicated the coach significantly worked at building relationships with the athletes and wanted them to be better people. The alumni and assistant coaches shared story after story that demonstrated the coach taking the time to build relationships. These relationships were foundational to the coach being able to communicate with the athletes openly and developing roles for each athlete. In the same way, Newland et al. (2015) found caring as the most prominent theme in coaches who were transformational leaders.

**Conclusion 8: Developing core values that represent the foundation of the program will establish a positive desired culture.**

It was concluded that coaches who are transformational leaders establish core values for their programs to provide the foundational components of their desired culture. The findings in this study indicated that the coach focused on creating a positive culture centered around core values. The coach established what was referred to as the six pillars of the program that were the foundation of what the team needed to be successful. In addition, the coach set the example for the athletes in being positive and living out the values every day.

**Implications for Action**

The following section provides implications based on the research of the transformational leadership behaviors that a successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach demonstrated. The study provided the evidence of transformational

leadership behaviors that lead to success in a NCAA Division I men's water polo coach. These implications provide clear steps that coaches, athletic directors, and administrators must take to have a successful program.

**Implication for Action 1: It is recommended that coaches are required to get training and develop emotional intelligence.**

The stories told by the respondents in this study revealed the coach led by example and demonstrated a high level of emotional intelligence. Coaches who are transformational leaders set a positive example. Although different areas of transformational leadership are important in success, it was clear this coach demonstrated a high level of emotional intelligence. On more than one occasion he was referred to and observed by the researcher as even-keeled, a good listener, and one who kept his emotions under control. Therefore, it is recommended that athletic directors provide resources for coaches to develop emotional intelligence. The importance of emotional intelligence was also noted in a study on the New Zealand All Blacks rugby team (Hodge et al., 2014). A successful coach must have the emotional intelligence to lead athletes and interpersonal skills to interact with them.

**Implication for Action 2: It is recommended that drills in practice replicate game-like scenarios that foster teamwork in high-intensity situations.**

A successful coach must create a culture in practice that replicates the high intensity of a game. The findings indicated that coaches who are transformational leaders created a practice culture that focused on competition and challenged their athletes to be their best. In the same way, Newland et al. (2015) found that coaches also challenged athletes, holding them to high standards and expectations. Therefore, coaches must use

competition in drills to increase the intensity level and push athletes to challenge their teammates to be their best. Additionally, coaches must hold athletes to high performance expectations and provide means to motivate them. Coaches must use visual stimuli that replicate game-like scenarios such as shot clocks, a game clock, and scoreboard during practice.

**Implication for Action 3: It is recommended that coaches allow for athletes to solve problems in games and practices, especially early in the season.**

The findings in this study determined that successful coaches allowed for athletes to creatively solve problems. The coach in this study established a culture that provided athletes the opportunity to be creative and learn to solve problems throughout the season. This prepared the athletes for the championship tournament when the ability to solve problems in a pressure situation was most critical. Therefore, coaches must challenge athletes throughout the season to think through situations and not just provide them the solution each time.

**Implication for Action 4: It is recommended that athletic departments provide a budget to allow for activities outside the pool.**

The findings in this study determined that a successful coach must build a strong bond within the team that functions like a family. This example of a family and deep love for a teammate was also shown in the New Zealand All Blacks rugby team (Hodge et al., 2014). The coach in this study used activities outside of the pool from barbeques to physical challenges to build the relationships within the team. Therefore, athletic directors must provide coaches with the budget to fund activities outside of the pool such as team trips, barbeques, and other experiences.

**Implication for Action 5: It is recommended that coaches share stories and experiences focused on the team's values and desired culture.**

In this study, the coach had tremendous Olympic experiences to share with the athletes he coached. The findings of the study indicated the athletes were motivated and inspired by the stories and experiences shared. The stories were told in a way to not just highlight his accomplishments but also emphasized the core values that represented the desired culture. Although every coach may not have the Olympic experiences the coach in this study had, coaches must share experiences, stories, articles, and books that highlight the team's core values and desired culture.

**Implication for Action 6: To establish a team first culture, it is recommended that coaches work with a sports psychologist in creating a vision and establishing goals for the team.**

The coach in this study established a clear vision to bring the team together working for a common goal. The findings in the study indicated the importance of continually setting goals to work toward the vision. The shared vision is a critical component of a transformational leader who inspires followers (B. M. Bass & Riggio, 2006). It is recommended that athletic directors hire a sports psychologist to work with coaches on creating a vision for their program and developing team goals with their athletes.

**Implication for Action 7: Coaches must spend time with athletes one-on-one building relationships, improving their listening skills, and asking questions.**

The findings of this study found that the coach focused on building relationships with the athletes. Coaches who are transformational leaders coach out of love and focus

on building relationships that result in improved communication, defined roles, and improved team dynamics. It is recommended that coaches take the time to meet regularly with their athletes one-on-one to listen, ask questions, and build deeper relationships. Additionally, a coach must develop a perspective of truly loving the athletes as a transformational leader, rather than leading by fear, which would be more transactional.

**Implication for Action 8: To build a desired positive culture, it is recommended that coaches establish and live out their core values, develop a positive mindset, spend time in reflection, and recognize the importance of small wins.**

Based on the findings of this study, the coach built a positive culture in the program. Coaches who are transformational leaders establish core values. It is recommended that coaches develop core values as the foundation of their desired culture. In addition, coaches must develop a positive mindset, spend time in reflection after practices and games, and focus on the small wins, especially during losses. For example, the coach in this study stayed positive during the latter part of the season when the team had multiple key losses. His focus was to reflect on the games and what the team did well to stay positive and remind them of their core values.

### **Recommendations for Further Research**

This study was the first on coaching water polo and leadership. It provided the foundation for additional studies needed in coaching, the sport of water polo, and transformational leadership. Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that further research be conducted on the following topics:

1. In the current study the researcher was only able to study one head coach.

Therefore, it is recommended to conduct a qualitative study looking at the top

five NCAA Division I men's water polo coaches and the transformational leadership behaviors they demonstrated. This would provide a more diverse sample and overview of successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coaches.

2. Conduct a qualitative study examining the transformational leadership behaviors of NCAA men's water polo coaches that were not regularly ranked in the top 10 each year. Other factors that lead to success including budget, history, location, and recruitment. A coach could still be a successful coach and leader at a school that might have fewer resources than other programs.
3. In NCAA athletics, recruiting prospective student-athletes is a significant part of success. Therefore, a qualitative study examining the leadership behaviors of NCAA men's water polo coaches and their recruitment strategies would provide valuable insight into a critical component of college athletics.
4. In this study, the focus was on one successful NCAA Division I men's water polo coach. However, there are many successful coaches in a variety of sports that could provide valuable information in leadership and coaching. Therefore, it is recommended that a qualitative study be conducted that compared behaviors of successful NCAA men's coaches in a variety of sports.
5. In the sport of NCAA water polo, several coaches lead both the men's and women's teams. It is one of the few sports in college athletics where this occurs. A study that examined these coaches through both seasons would provide a unique perspective into leadership comparisons when coaching men's and women's teams.

6. In this study, it was recommended that coaches develop emotional intelligence. Therefore, it is recommended that a study be conducted that examines the emotional intelligence and leadership behaviors of successful NCAA men's coaches.
7. In this study, the leadership behaviors of a collegiate coach were examined. However, it would be important to understand the leadership behaviors of successful coaches at all levels of athletics. Therefore, it is recommended that a study be conducted that compared the leadership behaviors of successful high school, collegiate, and Olympic water polo coaches.
8. Intercollegiate sports bring a significant amount of money into a university. It is important that the athletic director hire the right coach to lead the program in any sport, especially the larger revenue producing sports. Therefore, it is recommended that a study be conducted that examines the leadership behaviors that athletic directors from successful NCAA Division I athletic programs look for when hiring new coaches.
9. This study highlighted key transformational leadership skills of a successful NCAA men's water polo coach. However, in college athletics, especially the larger revenue producing sports, every season coaches are fired for their win-loss record. A study that examined the leadership behaviors of coaches in these sports that were fired due to their win-loss record would provide insight into coaching leadership behaviors.

## **Concluding Remarks and Reflections**

As a water polo coach for the past 16 years, I would continually work at improving my knowledge of the sport in both the technical and tactical components. Coaching clinics would have some of the most successful coaches in the sport come and present on drills, tactics, and techniques of the game. However, as I continually learned more and more about the sport and coaching, I realized there was an area that was continually lacking in coaching education, leadership. This study was the first conducted that examined the leadership behavior of a successful water polo coach. A coach can bring in the most talented recruiting class and have all the resources available, but if he or she cannot bring the individuals together and lead them, the team will not be successful.

This study demonstrated the importance of leadership with the Pepperdine men's water polo coach taking a group of individuals and bringing them together as a family to win the Gold Coast Conference championship. The coach was a transformational leader who created a shared vision the athletes could see and believe that they could achieve. More importantly, he focused on building relationships by demonstrating to them that he truly loved and cared for them. Coaching is more than just being a technical and tactical expert in the sport. The best coaches are the ones who can teach and lead. Coaches will be successful in terms of wins if they can recruit the best athletes that fit their program values, teach them the skills needed, and lead them through the ups and downs of a season.

This study helped me recognize the importance of leadership, relationships, and emotional intelligence. They are three areas not often discussed at coaching clinics, but valuable if one wants to be successful in life. It is critical that young coaches are

educated and develop skills in emotional intelligence and leadership. This is not to say that the technical and tactical components are not important, but if a coach cannot lead a group of athletes to become a team, they will struggle when the challenges become difficult. I know this process has made me a better coach and a stronger leader. I hope this study adds to the body of research on coaching and leads to future research in coaching in the sport of water polo. Additionally, I hope that water polo coaches can use the findings of this study to educate and become leaders both on the pool deck and in life.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A

#### INFORMED CONSENT AND PARTICIPANT BILL OF RIGHTS

Information About: A phenomenological examination of those who have experienced the leadership of the head coach of the Pepperdine men's water polo team 1986 to 2005 and 2013 to 2015.

Responsible Investigator: Scott McCall, M.S.

Purpose of Study: You are being asked to participate in a research study conducted by Scott McCall M.S., a doctoral student from the School of Education at Brandman University. The purpose of this phenomenological study was to understand and describe the transformational leadership behaviors of a successful NCAA Division I championship water polo coach.

By participating in this study, I agree to participate in a one-on-one interview. The one-on-one interview will last between 30-60 minutes and will be conducted in person or by phone. In addition, participants will be observed during practices that occur in October thru November. The completion of the one-on-one interviews, and observations will take place October through December 2016.

I understand that:

- a) There are minimal risks associated with participating in this research. I understand that the investigator will protect my confidentiality by keeping the identifying codes and research materials in a locked file drawer that is available only to the researcher.
- b) The possible benefit of this study to me is that my input may help add to the research regarding transformational leadership and coaching sports. The findings will be available to me after the study and will provide new insights about transformational leadership and coaching sports in which I participated. I understand that I will not be compensated for my participation.
- c) For this research project audio from the one-on-one interviews will be recorder by the researcher, transcribed by the research or sent to a transcription service. The audio recordings will be deleted by the researcher after the completion of the study in May of 2017.
- d) If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Scott McCall at XXX or by phone XXX; or Dr. Jeffrey Lee (Chair) at XXX.

e) I understand that I may refuse to participate in or I may withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences. Also, the investigator may stop the study at any time. I also understand that no information that identifies me will be released without my separate consent and that all identifiable information will be protected to the limits allowed by law. If the study design or the use of the data is to be changed I will be so informed and my consent obtained.

f) I understand that if I have any questions, comments, or concerns about the study or the informed consent process, I may write or call the Office of the Vice Chancellor Academic Affairs, Brandman University, 16355 Laguna, Canyon Road, Irvine, CA 92618 Telephone (949) 341-7641. I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this form and the Research participant's Bill of rights.

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Signature of Participant or Responsible Party

Date

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Signature of Principal Investigator

Date

Brandman University  
Institutional Review Board  
Research Participant's Bill of Rights

Any person who is requested to consent to participate as a subject in an experiment, or who is requested to consent on behalf of another, has the following rights:

1. To be told what the study is attempting to discover.
2. To be told what will happen in the study and whether any of the procedures, drugs or devices are different from what would be used in standard practice.
3. To be told about the risks, side effects or discomforts of the things that may happen to him/her.
4. To be told if he/she can expect any benefit from participating and, if so, what the benefits might be.
5. To be told what other choices he/she has and how they may be better or worse than being in the study.
6. To be allowed to ask any questions concerning the study both before agreeing to be involved and during the course of the study.
7. To be told what sort of medical treatment is available if any complications arise.
8. To refuse to participate at all before or after the study is started without any adverse effects.
9. To receive a copy of the signed and dated consent form.
10. To be free of pressures when considering whether he/she wishes to agree to be in the study.

If at any time you have questions regarding a research study, you should ask the researchers to answer them. You also may contact the Brandman University Institutional Review Board, which is concerned with the protection of volunteers in research projects. The Brandman University Institutional Review Board may be contacted either by telephoning the Office of Academic Affairs at (949) 341-9937 or by writing to the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, Brandman University, 16355 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine, CA, 92618.

## Appendix B

### Email to Head Coach

On Sun, Sep 4, 2016 at 9:38 AM, Scott McCall wrote:

Coach,

My name is Scott McCall and I am a former Division I water polo athlete and I am the men's water polo coach at Merced College. In 2014 I enrolled as a doctoral student in the organizational leadership program at Brandman University. While my degree focuses on organizational leadership, I have always been interested to see how water polo coaches utilize many of the leadership skills I learned in my program.

I am designing a study for my dissertation, and I am interested in only looking at an exemplar water polo coach and your name has emerged as the best, and most appropriate. You were selected because you have successfully coached at the NCAA level and also with the National team. I was wondering if it would be possible to schedule a short phone call or a meeting to explain the scope of my study, potentially seeing if you might be interested in participating. Knowing how busy you are running a nationally recognized program, participating would be extremely non-intrusive on your time. It would likely just be 1-2 short interviews. I would follow up with interviewing some of the alumni from your program to drill deeper into your influential leadership skills.

Please let me know if you are available to discuss this further. I look forward to your response.

Scott McCall  
Merced College  
Head Coach, Men's Swimming and Water Polo

## Appendix C

### Second Email to Head Coach

On Thu, Sep 8, 2016 at 6:12 AM, Scott McCall <> wrote:  
Coach,

Thank you for replying back to me. I just wanted to follow up and see when you had a few minutes to discuss the study. I know your schedule is extremely busy I can be available almost anytime.

Thanks

Scott McCall  
Merced College  
Head Coach, Men's Swimming and Water Polo

## Re: Coaching and Leadership Study

█ @pepperdine.edu>

Reply all

To:

Scott McCall;

Thu 9/8/2016 9:52 PM

Inbox

You forwarded this message on 9/8/2016 9:55 PM

Scott,

Maybe a phone call this weekend? Text me at █ and we will figure out a time.

█

## Appendix D

### Alumni Recruitment Flier



# Pepperdine Water Polo Alumni Coaching and Leadership Study

My name is Scott McCall and I am a former Division I water polo athlete and current head water polo coach at Merced College. I am a doctoral student in the department of education at Brandman University, conducting a study on transformational leadership and coaching. The purpose of the study is to understand and describe the lived experiences of those who played for Pepperdine men's water polo head coach Terry Schroeder. I am interested in gaining a better understanding of his coaching and leadership style.

I am asking for your assistance in the study by participating in one interview which will take from 30-60 minutes and will be conducted at a time convenient for you. If you agree to participate, you may be assured that it will be completely confidential. No names will be attached to any notes or records from the interviews or focus groups. All information will remain in locked files accessible only to the researcher. No one else will have access to the interview information. You will be free to stop the interview and withdraw from the study at any time.

**If you are interested in participating please contact me by  
November 1, 2016 by email, phone call, or text.**

Scott McCall: [smccall@mail.brandman.edu](mailto:smccall@mail.brandman.edu)

(209)-769-7496

## Appendix E

### Interview Questions for Head Coach

#### Transformational leadership

1. Just like an effective coach a transformational leader motivates their followers to perform beyond their expectations. In your case, can you think of a time when your team performed beyond your expectations? What was your role as the coach in pushing them beyond those expectations?
2. Water polo is a team sport and getting the individuals to work together in all aspects of the game can be challenging. How do you encourage your athletes to look beyond their own self-interests to benefit the team?

#### Individual Consideration

3. While water polo is a team sport it is important to recognize the individual differences along with the strength and weaknesses of each player to develop diversity amongst the team. How do you demonstrate to your athletes that you value them each as individuals?
4. An NCAA coach is limited to the number of hours they can conduct practices each week. However, athletes may need extra help if they are struggling academically, athletically, or in life in general. Do you ever spend extra time to help your athletes outside of normal practice hours? If so, what kinds of things do you do to help your athletes outside of practice? Why is this important to you?

#### Inspirational Motivation

5. Motivating athletes to perform well in practice, games, and in the classroom, is extremely important in the sport of water polo. What do you do to motivate your athletes to perform well athletically? What about academically?
6. In your article that you wrote for Water Polo Planet “The Art of Goal Setting” you talk about the importance of setting a vision and goals. What do you do for your team to create goals or set a vision to motivate them? How do you develop a share vision for the team so that the athletes see the vision and not just yourself?

#### Intellectual Stimulation

7. As an NCAA water polo coach you get athletes from all over the world who have been taught to do things differently. How do you challenge the athletes to think creatively or differently about doing things, such as how to solve a problem? Can you think of a time when you challenged an athlete to solve a problem in a new way?

### High Performance Expectations

8. Pepperdine is one of only seven schools that have won a national championship in water polo. The expectations for your athletes must be high to achieve a level of success each year. Describe the expectations you have for the student athletes athletically every day in practice, in games, and for their career. What about academically?

9. For a new water polo player that comes to Pepperdine they may be unaware of the high expectations you have. How do you convey your expectations to your student-athletes?

### Fostering Acceptance of Group Goals and Teamwork

10. A huge challenge for a water polo coach is to get a group of individuals to function as a unit working toward the same goal. Describe how you encourage athletes to be team players and get them to work together?

11. In water polo a sport like water polo it is important to develop a team attitude and team spirit. How do you develop a strong team attitude and team spirit amongst your team? What are some of the things that you do to create this?

### Appropriate Role Model

12. An NCAA coach spends a tremendous amount of time with an athlete over four years and can have a positive impact on their lives. What specifically do you do to set a positive example for your athletes?

### Leadership

13. A NCAA water polo coach has many roles and is not just a tactical and technical expert of the sport. Just like an executive for an organization a water polo coach must lead a group of individuals to achieve common goals in order to be successful. Beyond what you already discussed, could you share any stories or examples that exemplify your leadership?

## Appendix F

### Interview Questions for Assistant Coaches

#### Transformational leadership

1. Just like an effective coach a transformational leader motivates their followers to perform beyond their expectations. Can you think of a time when the coach led the team to perform beyond expectations? What did he do specifically to push the team beyond those expectations?
2. Water polo is a team sport and getting the individuals to work together in all aspects of the game can be challenging. What does the coach do to encourage the athletes to look beyond their own self-interests to benefit the team?

#### Individual Consideration

3. While water polo is a team sport it is important to recognize the individual differences along with the strength and weaknesses of each player to develop diversity amongst the team. What does the coach do to demonstrate that he values the players as individuals? How does he demonstrate and value your individual strengths and weaknesses that you bring to the program as an assistant coach?
4. Being a head coach of a NCAA division I water polo team takes a lot of time with the many duties asked of the head coach. Can you describe a time when the head coach spent extra time to help athletes with water polo, academics, or life in general outside of normal practice? If so why does coach take the time to help athletes outside of practice?

#### Inspirational Motivation

5. Motivating athletes to perform well in practice, games, and in the classroom is extremely important in the sport of water polo. A head coach must be able to motivate his athletes to get them to perform at a high level. How does coach motivate his athletes to perform well athletically? What does he do specifically to express confidence in yourself and motivate you as the assistant coach?
6. In a team sport like water polo it is important for the head coach to create goals and a clear shared vision for the team. What does the coach do to establish and promote team goals and a vision? How does the coach emphasize goals or set a vision for the team?

#### Intellectual Stimulation

7. As an assistant coach the head coach assigns you many different tasks. The way you perform a task may be different than his. Therefore, how has the coach challenged you to think creatively or differently about doing things, such as solving problems? Specifically, what does the coach do to promote creativity and innovation?

### High Performance Expectations

8. When you arrived at Pepperdine you had certain expectations on what you wanted to achieve. Can you describe the expectations that the coach sets for the team and as you as the assistant coach? Specifically, what did he do to make sure that everyone was performing at a high level? What about academically?

The head coach sets a level of expectations and the standard for high performance. What expectations does the coach set for assistant coaches? Athletes? What does he do to establish these high standards for performance?

### Appropriate Role Model

9. As an assistant coach you are working alongside with the head coach. The head coach has been successful in many different areas of his life. When you look at the head coach what behaviors make him a positive role model to yourself and others? How has the coach positively influence your life?

10. A water polo coach can often be seen on the deck yelling across the pool and shouting out instructions. However, a good leader often leads by example. Can you share any experiences when the coach led by example as opposed to just telling others what to do? What example does he set for you that makes you want to follow him?

### Fostering Acceptance of Group Goals and Teamwork

11. In water polo it is critical for the individuals to function as a team. This may be a difficult task for a coach to get a group of athletes who were stars in high school to work together for a common goal. Can you describe how the coach encourages unity and for the athletes to work together as a team? What specifically did he do to foster teamwork amongst the team? and the coaching staff?

12. In sports successful team often develop a team attitude and team spirit that brings together a team. How does the coach develop a strong team attitude and team spirit amongst the team? What does he do to build a strong team attitude and team spirit?

13. Working alongside the coach you have access to him on a regular basis and how he functions as a leader. What are some of the behaviors or characteristics that would describe his leadership style? Do you have any other stories or examples that would describe or demonstrate the coach's leadership?

## Appendix G

### Interview Questions for Alumni

#### Transformational leadership

1. The coach set expectations for your team in every practice and in each game. Can you describe a time when the team performed beyond those expectations? What specifically did the coach do to help the team go beyond those expectations?
2. Looking back on your time playing water polo at Pepperdine and for the coach you spent a tremendous amount of time with him over the four years you were there. How has playing for the coach specifically influenced your life today?

#### Individual Consideration

3. Water polo is a team sport but you as an individual brought different strengths and weaknesses to the team. Describe how the coach valued you as an individual?
4. As a student-athlete you spent required number of hours with the team in practice and in games. However, the demands of water polo, academics, and life may have caused you to reach out to the coach after practice. Can you describe a time that the coach spent extra time to help you outside of normal practice hours? If so, what kinds of things does he do outside of practice?

#### Inspirational Motivation

5. Looking back on your water polo playing days you may or may not have always been motivated and inspired to play at your best every day in practice and even in games. Can you provide examples of how the coach motivated or inspired you to perform well? What specifically did he do to motivate you to perform well academically?
6. Establishing goals and a vision for a team can provide a clear path and motivate a team. What did the coach do to create goals and a shared vision for the team?

#### Intellectual Stimulation

7. As an athlete coming out of high school you were taught a certain way how to do things in the water and how to solve problems a certain way. How did the coach challenge you to think creatively or differently about doing things, such as solving problems? What specifically did he do to promote creativity and innovation in the water?

#### High Performance Expectations

8. When you arrived at Pepperdine you had certain expectations on what you wanted to achieve. Can you describe the expectations that the coach set for the team and as you as an individual in the water? Specifically, what did he do to make sure that everyone was performing at a high level? What about academically?

### Appropriate Role Model

9. During your four years at Pepperdine you spent a lot of time with the coach. At the time, you may or may not have recognized the positive example he was setting for you. Can you describe the behavior that the coach demonstrated that you would make him a positive role model in your life?

10. A water polo coach can often be seen on the deck yelling across the pool and shouting out instructions. However, a good leader often leads by example. Can you share any experiences when the coach led by example as opposed to just telling others what to do?

### Fostering Acceptance of Group Goals and Teamwork

11. In water polo it is critical for the individuals to function as a team. This may be a difficult task for a coach to get a group of athletes who were stars in high school to work together for a common goal. Can you describe how the coach encouraged team unity and for the athletes to work together as a team? What specifically did he do to foster teamwork?

12. In sports successful team often develop a team attitude and team spirit that brings together a team. Looking back on your time at Pepperdine. How did the coach develop a strong team attitude and team spirit amongst the team?

13. When you think back at your time at Pepperdine and playing for the coach. What are some of the behaviors or characteristics that would describe his leadership style? Do you have any other stories or examples that would describe or demonstrate the coach's leadership?

## Appendix H

### Observation Log

Date:	Time:	Name:
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Definitions and subscales of the DTLI (Callow et al., 2009)</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Individual Consideration (IC):</u></b> The extent to which the coach is able to understand and meet the individual needs for growth and development of each athlete.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 1. Treats each team member as an individual</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2. Helps team members to develop their strengths</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 3. Considers that athletes have different strengths and abilities from others</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 4. Recognizes that different athletes have different needs</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Inspirational Motivation (IM):</u></b> The extent to which the coach is able to motivate athletes by providing inspiration and an incentive to perform well.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 1. Talks optimistically</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2. Talks in a way that makes me believe one can succeed</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 3. Talks enthusiastically</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 4. Expresses confidence</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Intellectual Stimulation (IS):</u></b> The extent to which the coach can challenge athletes cognitively.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 1. Tries to help us work out how to solve problems</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2. Gets athletes to rethink the way they do things</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 3. Shows performers how to look at difficulties from a new angle</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 4. Challenges me to think about problems in new ways</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Definitions and subscales of the DTLI (Callow et al., 2009)</u></b></p> <p><b><u>High Performance Expectations (HPE):</u></b> The extent to which the coach provides high expectations for athlete behavior and performance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 1. Expects a lot from us</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2. Expects us to achieve high standards</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 3. Will not settle for second best</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 4. Always expects us to do our best</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Appropriate Role Model (ARM):</u></b> The extent to which the coach provides a positive behavioral model for athletes to follow.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 1. Leads by example</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2. Leads from the front whenever he can</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 3. Leads by ‘doing’ rather than simply ‘telling’</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 4. Is a good role model</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Fostering Acceptance of Group Goals and Teamwork (GTWK):</u></b> The extent to which the coach can facilitate team cohesion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 1. Encourages athletes to be team players</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2. Develops a strong team attitude and spirit among team members</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 3. Gets the team to work together for the same goal</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Narrative Evidence:</b></p>		