

[NO CLICHES] 5 things you're probably doing wrong in your Strength & Conditioning

Is anyone else a bit bored of people banging on about 'perfect technique' and 'not skipping leg day'? Talk about stating the obvious! How about I don't waste your time, and actually tell you things that you might be neglecting?

As athletes and human beings, improving physical performance requires attention to detail and clear, logical progression, rather than simply 'training hard' and doing what everyone else does because 'you saw it on Insta'.

1. MOVE FAST!

It's simple. In most sports, we need to be moving fast, really fast. Of course the duration, distance, direction, or type of movement that we need to do fast varies across sports, but the message remains; whether it's sprinting, lifting weights, jumping, or throwing, if we don't train the body to be quick, we can't expect to move ourselves or another object better than our opponents. Of course, this doesn't mean everything we do most abide by this. There's a time and a place. Context is everything.

2. Consider how each session effects the next

Athletes inherently want to work harder and do more. Whether it's doing maximum weight or repetitions, adding a 'finisher' or simply doing too much volume, athletes often find it hard to justify a session as productive unless they're knackered at the end of it.

Think about it, if I make you run until you hate me, or work until failure in a lower body session, how effective are you going to be tomorrow, or even 2 days later? It's all about the bigger picture; how does each session effect the next and is my cumulative training load going to mean I'm constantly fatigued? Here's a clue, your sessions won't be very productive.

There are times in your training year where you can bury yourself in a shallow grave, but it's a lot less often than you think.

3. Building the foundations

You can't see the foundations under a building, they're not exciting, but the wider and deeper you build them, the taller and stronger your pyramid will be. The same applies to training. Earn the right to be truly faster, stronger, fitter and more robust. Tortoise vs Hare.

Due to inappropriate volume and intensity at the beginning of a training cycle, athletes often miss out on the adaptations gained in the 'foundations'. An appropriate starting point and logical progression earns you the right to do the heavy and fast stuff that looks great on Instagram and will really make a difference in your performance.

4. Stop trying to be too sport specific

Ok, time for some context. People usually misunderstand sport specificity. Being sport specific is NOT simply copying a sporting movement and making it harder in some manner.

In actual fact, if you mimic something too closely, you've wasted your time because you're doing exactly what you do in your technical training anyway; you may even worsen your technical ability.

If a Tennis player uses a weighted racket with the intention of hitting with more force, they are likely to make technical changes to compensate for the added weight and reduce the efficiency of their swing. Instead, break down the movement and develop the angles, force production, speed, muscle groups, energy systems and any number of other elements that are SPECIFIC to getting better at that element of your sport. For example, throwing a medicine ball against a wall doesn't look much like a forehand, but the rotational power developed would help to develop striking power.

As a rule, the further you are away from needing to be at your best, the more general your training should be, with specificity gradually increasing.

5. Everyone squats. What's going to make you better than everyone else?

Have you ever tried freestyling when baking a cake? Don't. Trust me.

Nobody ever gets excited about baking powder, but the cake is crap without it. Everyone loves chocolate but it's a bit weird if you use it instead of flour. Using 500% too many eggs, but deciding not to bake it is likely to end with you spending a lot of time on the loo.

In baking you have to use the right ingredients, in the right order, with the right quantities and ratios; exercise selection must follow the same principles. There needs to be reasoning; context is key.

It's important to avoid choosing exercises purely because you like them or have seen someone else doing them.

Your opponents will largely do the same exercises as you, so how are you going to become the better athlete? No exercise is sacred, so pick the right ones, at the right times, for the right reasons. Context is everything.

There are different processes and ingredients for different cakes; don't try to cook a brownie with the ingredients for a carrot cake.

SO WHAT NOW?

It's easy to overcomplicate your Strength & Conditioning programme. The true art of designing an effective programme is not in adding more, but in getting the greater results from less time and energy.

To [sign up](#) for Personalised Online Strength & Conditioning or to find out more...

Email: ian@bespokeconditioning.co.uk

Visit our website: bespokeconditioning.co.uk

Or find us on Social Media!