

Good Practice Example: National Network of Female Coaches in National Teams – Swedish Sports Confederation

Organisation/body

The network is arranged by the Swedish Sports Confederation. The participants are women who have leading positions in national teams, in different sport federations.

Description of the activity

The network has its own slogan: network building, inspiration and knowledge.

The network meets twice a year, two days every time. We offer a varied programme: mainly academic content (both men and women are lecturers) as well as good examples and best practice. We also do something practical every time, often organised and run by a network participant. This makes it possible for us to try each other's different sports: karate, boxing, dance, table tennis, orienteering, handball etc.

What did you start with?

The network started in 2000 by an enquiry from the Swedish Golf Federation. They wanted to develop their female elite coaches, as well as meet other female elite coaches.

What did you want to achieve?

We strengthen and inspire each other with the ambition to reach higher levels within elite sport coaching and leadership, as well as increase the number of female elite coaches by being role models for younger and new female coaches.

Why?

We believe that Swedish elite sport, on all levels, needs both men and women in leading positions and as coaches. Our main goal is to empower Swedish elite sport, and that requires more and better coaches, both men and women.

Who is involved?

The female elite coaches in the network represent different levels of coaching; from Olympic head coaches to national coaches for juniors, to teachers and instructors at upper secondary sport schools. As women in leading positions in elite sports are a minority in Sweden, women in all different positions are welcome to participate (head coaches, assistant coaches, physiotherapists, sport managers and so on).

Budget

The Swedish Sports Federations have a budget for the national network of female coaches in national teams of approximately 10,000 euros per year. The participants, or their federations, pay for their trips and accommodation. We cover all meals and the full programme for each two-day event.

Impact

As an example, five out of 11 medals won at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games were won by athletes who have women as Olympic head coaches for the national teams. These women are involved in the national network of female coaches.

We know that the impact is of great importance for the participants, often on a very personal level. We have never done any systematic evaluation of the network and the impact of it, nor has any research been done. This could be something for the future!