

World champ leading local coaches

Bo Hanson knows about coaches. As a four-time Olympian, he's seen more than his share. Some probably better than others. So if anyone is in a position to help coaches do their job better, it would be Hanson. And that's exactly what he is doing through his coaching development business Athlete Assessments. (www.athleteassessments.com)

While it's one thing to expect a coach to produce peak performances from his athletes, doing so is another thing altogether. But Hanson said his approach focused on teaching coaches to understand their athletes mentality as well as their physicality. "When a coach understands an athlete's personality, they're better able to tailor a program to their needs," Hanson said. "If they're a team coach, they can better understand the team dynamic, and address any likely leadership scenarios before they arise."

It was his first-hand experiences across 16 years of Olympic competition that identified to Hanson the potential benefits that personality profiling would bring to the sporting arena. "I went to the last four Olympics for rowing, and through that I started getting into understanding personality profiling. "I recognised how valuable this type of tool would be for sport, it's not something typically used in sporting applications," Hanson said. "The big motivation behind it was to up-skill coaches so they can fully apply themselves to individual athletes. "A lot of the technology available is quite complex, so I was really keen to develop a tool that is easy to understand and immediately applicable to sport."

Hanson's program has struck a chord with Sunshine Coast coaches, with the first workshop, in August, a sell-out. That session, which focused on tailoring coaching styles to individuals, will be repeated at the Maroochydore Surf Club on September 23.

"We've had huge diversity, close to 40 coaches at the first workshop, from all sports – surf sports, rugby coaches, soccer coaches, cricket coaches," he said. "We basically had the whole spectrum. Coaches talk to others within their sport, but a lot of unique opportunities come from expanding their experiences. "Cross-training as an athlete is important, and the same applies for coaches."

Call it coaching for the coaches – Hanson compared it to speaking Japanese to someone who only understands English, and expecting the message to be understood.

"Every athlete learns in a unique way, if you can communicate in the right way and hit the right buttons, the message goes through."