



LIFELONG

LEARNING

FOR ATHLETES

TAKE ACTION



→ WHY?

[The Future Of Your Career Depends On Lifelong Learning](#) suggests that renewable and self-directed learning are essential skills that are required as the world of work rapidly evolves. Formal education is important, but may not be enough to sustain you throughout your life after sport. As, "However excellent your education was at school, within a few years of entering the workforce, a gap will be opening up between what you need to know, what has recently been discovered, and what you were taught while at school."¹

→ WHAT?

According to the OECD Centre for Educational Research and Innovation, lifelong learning is the ability to continuously develop over one's life span. You are already doing this. You have learned to be resilient; you have gained valuable knowledge and skills and you have engaged in experiences many only dream about. But can you apply these skills in the workplace without learning other things such as technical knowledge on a system of delivery of a program.

→ HOW?

Step 1 — Understand how you learn

Reflect on and identify how best you learn. Is it through video, reading, podcasts, other? This will enable you to seek out learning materials in the modalities that best suit you.

Some people are visual learners, others auditory and others like getting their hands involved and learn on the job.

Step 2 — Commit to learning

It is not uncommon in today's workplace, that people have multiple careers and multiple jobs over the journey of their career.

You, like many in our modern world, will be taking up a new career or changing direction in your 30s or 40s, so you need to commit to learning throughout your sporting career so that you are best equipped for this change.

With the support of trusted people around you, aim for holistic development throughout your life: physical, intellectual, social, and emotional growth.

According to the NZ All Blacks, applying a mindset as an athlete of 'life-long learning' takes a step beyond 'best practice' to think 'next practice'!

Education and training of "your mind" is equally as important as training your body. Developing a dual-path alongside sport will enhance your career and places the responsibility on the athlete to manage their time around both training and study.

Adult education often levels students to the depersonalised playing field of student number alone, and in doing so, levels results to a pure assessment of performance, smashing any sense of entitlement.

It broadens social networks making athletes develop social skills in new settings and with new types of people – including potential future employers."²

Being a lifelong learner keeps you in the game for the future.

Step 3 — Set goals

Life after sport takes planning, and learning [formal and informal] needs to be a part of that plan. So just as you set goals for training and competing, set SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic & Timely) learning goals.

Remember to write your goals down to hold yourself accountable and set yourself timelines for completion.

Step 4 — Explore new things

- Adopt a [growth mindset](#) – the belief that abilities and intelligence can be developed – and try new things.
- Be open to learning opportunities and challenges that take you outside of your comfort zone.
- Be curious to learn new and different things – you never know when you might find that leading edge, purpose based, change the world endeavour!



DO'S AND DON'TS

- ✓ **Do** accept responsibility for your own learning.
- ✓ **Do** find ways to include learning in your daily life. Think about the tricks and trips
- ✓ **Do** be organised to undertake learning or study as your competition commitments may ebb and flow throughout your course.
- ✓ **Do** celebrate successes.
- ✓ **Do** socialise with other lifelong learners and observe and learn from them.
- ✓ **Do** put into practice what you learn.
- ✓ **Do** teach others – this will solidify your own understanding.
- ✗ **Don't** procrastinate or find excuses – see learning as carving a path of more opportunities.



ACTIVITY

1. Complete Steps 1 to 4 above.
2. Discuss your learning goals and ideas with your AW&E Manager
3. Speak to a AIS Career Practitioner who will assist in coaching you to new and different roles.



THE ILLITERATE OF THE 21ST CENTURY WILL NOT BE THOSE WHO CANNOT READ AND WRITE, BUT THOSE WHO CANNOT LEARN, UNLEARN, AND RELEARN — ALVIN TOFFLER



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FOR AW&E

MANAGERS





THE KEY MESSAGE ABOUT LIFELONG LEARNING IS THAT IT WILL BENEFIT BOTH THE PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL LIFE OF THE ATHLETE.



These benefits include:

- the ongoing acquisition of knowledge and skills keeps one relevant to and current in the world of work
- learning is motivational – just as the athlete has learned to master skills in their sport and this has been invigorating and inspirational, so is continual learning and the “buzz” of having achieved something
- it is a networking enabler and vice versa, effective networking leads to learning
- it fosters adaptability which is not only an essential employment skill but also enables one to deal with change more effectively
- increasing capability which can lead to increasing confidence
- challenges perspectives and opens one up to new ideas.

Below is some useful information that you can share with the athlete.

Tips to integrate learning into your

every day

- Take time to read and do it.
- Build your network and ask questions of the experts.
- Become a member of an association related to your field.
- Use social media to grow your network and share learning and insights.
- Teach others.
- Find a mentor.
- Research areas of interest and/or related to your field.
- Be observant.
- Reflect on your learning.
- Apply your learning.

Learning resources for lifelong learning

- Online articles
- Case studies
- Subscriptions to publications in your areas of interest or field
- Complete online tutorials
- Attend  short courses
- Try a MOOC (Massively Open Online Courses)
- Listen to podcasts and watch videos in your areas of interest or field



ATHLETE ACTIVITY

1. When the athlete shares their learning plan with you provide feedback on their SMART goals and look for gaps. Have they included the tips and resources above?
2. Discuss how you continually learn, why and its benefits.
3. Share any useful resources (videos, podcasts, articles, books, etc.).
4. Refer to the CPRN for further guidance and support.



USEFUL LINKS

[How to become a Lifelong Learner](https://www.pitman-training.com/advice-hub/top-tips/top-tips-for-lifelong-learning/)

[9 ways to become a Lifelong Learner](https://www.lifehack.org/articles/featured/15-steps-to-cultivate-lifelong-learning.html)

[Lifelong learning](https://www.careeraddict.com/benefits-lifelong-learning-your-career)

References: <https://www.mindsetworks.com/science/>
<https://www.pitman-training.com/advice-hub/top-tips/top-tips-for-lifelong-learning/>
<https://www.lifehack.org/articles/featured/15-steps-to-cultivate-lifelong-learning.html>
<https://www.careeraddict.com/benefits-lifelong-learning-your-career>
<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/7-reasons-why-continuous-learning-important-amit-nagpal/>
<https://www.seek.com.au/career-advice/5-easy-ways-to-boost-your-professional-development>
<https://theconversation.com/how-to-help-athletes-adapt-to-life-after-sport-94584>