JOB ANALYSIS OF COLLEGE DIVISION I-A FOOTBALL STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING COACHES

C. DWAYNE MASSEY,1 JOHN VINCENT,2 AND MARK MANEVAL3

1The University of West Alabama, Livingston, Alabama 35470; 2University of Alabama; and 3University of Southern Mississippi, Hattiesburg, Mississippi 39406.

ABSTRACT. Massey, C. D., J. Vincent, and M. Maneval. Job analysis of college division I-A football strength and conditioning coaches. J. Strength Cond. Res. 18(1):19-25, 2004.—This investigation consisted of a job analysis of 6 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I-A strength and conditioning coaches (SCC). All the subjects in the study were primarily responsible for providing strength and conditioning services to their institution's football programs. The procedures used for the gathering of data consisted of 3 questionnaires and a semi-structured interview. The questionnaires were followed up by the semi-structured interview. The purpose of this format was to use the semi-structured interview to delve more deeply into the issues raised by the questionnaires. The major job responsibilities and tasks are highlighted. These included conducting training session for athletes, disciplining athletes for infractions of team rules, on campus recruiting, and professional scout liaison to the National Football League. These coaches' perceptions concerning their profession, work environment, relationships with supervisors and co-workers, and the effect the job has on their spouses and other family members are also emphasized.

KEY WORDS. strength coaches, job responsibilities, semi-structured interview

INTRODUCTION

Major college football today is a very competitive endeavor. The pressure to win at this level is enormous. The careers and reputations of the coaches involved are on the line not only with every season, but also with every game. As almost any coach will tell you, "If you don't win you won't keep your job long." One practice that universities have increasingly employed to enhance their prospects of success on the athletic fields is to hire a strength and conditioning coach (SCC) to train their athletes. Today, the SCC is seen as an indispensable person in the process of preparing athletes to play (12). Virtually every National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I-A athletic program employs someone in this capacity. However, prior to 30 years ago, the position of SCC did not even exist, and it has only been in the past 15 years that the position has become a fixture at the major college level. Due to the meteoric rise in this discipline, limited empirical data is available concerning how these individuals go about their duties. Even less is known about their perceptions, attitudes, and feelings related to the work they do.

The research that has been conducted with this population has tended to be quantitative in nature and has mainly consisted of questionnaires and surveys. The primary focus of this research has been on demographic and descriptive data. McClellan and Stone (14) conducted a survey for the purpose of establishing preliminary information on the status and fundamental components of strength and conditioning programs at Division I-A universities. The researchers focused on the areas of staffing, facilities, equipment, budget, and administrative policies. Related to staffing, the researchers reported that 96% of the respondent institutions employed a full time SCC. The majority of the programs were found to have a head SCC and either a full- or part-time assistant. In the final analysis, the researchers found a positive link between win-loss record and superior levels of the investigated factors.

Pullo (17) also used a questionnaire format to gather data concerning SCC at both Division I-A and I-AA levels. The data gathered was related to demographic characteristics, educational background, experience levels, and duties of strength and conditioning coaches (SCC). Pullo found that the coaches were homogenous in these areas. He hypothesized that this finding was due to the limited life span of the profession. The most prevalent degree held by coaches in the survey was in physical education/exercise physiology. Almost half of the coaches at the Division I-A level were certified by the National Strength and Conditioning Association while only 30% at the Division I-AA level held this distinction. The vast majority of SCC in the survey had some background in weight training and had participated in college athletics. Football was the sport with the highest participation rate. Most of the coaches at Division I-A were full-time strength coaches while 63.3% of the Division II-A coaches had additional duties, the most frequently cited of these being that of football coach. At the Division I-A level, 42% of the SCC indicated that the athletic director (AD) was their immediate supervisor; at the Division II-A level, 56% of the coaches reported to the head football coach (HFC).

Brooks et al. (1) investigated leadership behavior, roles, and job responsibilities of NCAA Division I-A head and assistant SCC. The researchers found no significant differences between the 2 groups on the 5 leadership variables studied. These variables included training and instruction, democratic behavior, autocratic behavior, reward behavior and positive feedback, and social support. Head SCC were found to spend significantly more time on administrative duties than did assistant SCC. Brooks reported that the typical SCC was white, approximately 31 years of age, and was previously a collegiate athlete who either played football or participated in track. The head SCC provided strength and conditioning services primarily to male athletes participating in revenue sports (football and basketball), administratively reported to the AD, earned an average salary of more than $40,000 a year, held a National Strength and Conditioning Association...
ation certification, and held an undergraduate degree in health, physical education, recreation, or exercise science.

Massey et al. (13) analyzed the coaching behaviors of 6 elite SCC utilizing systematic observation. The Arizona State University Coaching Observation Instrument, consisting of 16 behavioral categories, was used for the collection of data. All observations occurred in each of the team's respective weight-training facility. The data collected consisted of a percentage analysis of the observed coaching behaviors. The most frequently observed behaviors were silent monitoring (21.99%), management (14.62%), and hustle (11.12%). These results indicated that this population of SCC were predominately engaged in observation of their athletes (silent monitoring), organization of the weight training activity (management), and verbal statements to intensify effort (hustle). These results were similar to other studies with coaches who were also involved in individual rather than team sports.

The conceptual underpinnings that have driven this research are based on the importance of investigating occupational life from the perspective of the worker. This rationale has significant support in the literature (4, 10, 19, 22, 25, 26). Each of these researchers acknowledged this perspective as a major approach to the study of organizational life. Without obtaining the view of the person in the situation, a complete understanding of an occupational culture is not possible. As Sage (19) so eloquently stated, "it is necessary to examine subjective experiences in order to understand the development of personal and professional identities; this is because self and professional roles and attitudes emerge in response to social interaction and interpretative processes within the framework of environmental variables constituting the work setting."

The purpose of this study was to determine from actual individuals working in the field what is it like to be an SCC, and how they think about themselves and their work situations. The intention was to develop a more complete picture of what an SCC does, how they feel about their job, their perceptions concerning their situation, and how the job affects the SCC and his family. The research was directed by several questions. These included: (a) What do SCC like about their job; (b) What do they dislike; (c) What are their major job frustrations; (d) What would they change if they could; (e) What work related activities do SCC engage; (f) How does the SCC view his relationship with fellow coaches within their respective athletic departments; and (g) How does their chosen profession affect the SCC relationship with their spouse and significant others?

METHODS

Experimental Approach to the Problem

The research methods utilized in this investigation were qualitative in nature. Because qualitative research seeks to describe and understand phenomenon from the participant's viewpoint, it was the most appropriate approach for conducting this investigation. Qualitative research methods have been employed in such diverse fields as anthropology, psychology, sociology, social work, and education for many years (24).

Researchers in education began to adapt qualitative methods of research particularly related to teacher effectiveness more than 40 years ago (2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 20). Qualitative research has been conducted in physical education and the sport sciences with increasing frequency since the mid-1970s (7, 9, 11, 18, 19, 21, 23). Massey et al. (13) used qualitative techniques specifically to examine the teaching and coaching behaviors of a population of SCC. The qualitative research techniques utilized in this study were based on well established procedures recognized as appropriate methods of inquiry (15).

Subjects

The population used in this study consisted of 6 male SCC from college Division I-A programs in the southeastern part of the United States. All subjects were primarily responsible for providing strength and conditioning services to their institution's football programs. Selection of subjects was based on their reputation within the profession. This determination was arrived at by a consensus of the research team after consideration of recommendations made by knowledgeable individuals within the field of strength and conditioning. Permission for the use of human subjects in this investigation was obtained through the Office of Institution Effectiveness at the University of West Alabama.

Data Collection

The procedures used for this investigation were twofold. First, the subjects were given a questionnaire to determine demographic characteristics, feelings, perceptions, and likes and dislikes related to their job. The SCC were also asked to complete 2 forms detailing their typical work schedule in the football in-season and off-season. The second method used was that of a semistructured interview. The information obtained from the questionnaire and work schedule forms were used to determine the direction of the semistructured interview.

The semistructured interview was used to delve more thoroughly into the issues raised by the questionnaires. It was hoped that this method would provide a full and rich description of what it is like to be an SCC from the perspective of the person doing the job. Each of the semistructured interviews were recorded and lasted from approximately 2 to 3 hours. The interviews were then transcribed.

Several methods were utilized to maximize validity and reduce the possibility of misinterpretations of the data. First, the transcripts were returned to each respective subject for them to review and determine if it was an accurate representation of what they said and the job they do. The SCC were allowed to point out discrepancies and errors. From their feedback, appropriate changes and modifications were made.

Once validity was established, analysis of the data itself began. This involved isolating the major job tasks of the coaches and identifying their thoughts and reflections concerning their circumstances. When this procedure was completed, members of the research team, other than the person who conducted the interview and analyzed the data, independently reviewed the process. This included reviewing the interview tapes, the written transcripts, and the conclusions inferred to determine if they were in agreement. The purpose of this was to ascertain if accurate conclusions had been reached. The last step in this process was to return a synopsis of the major findings to the research participants for any final input or clarification.
TABLE 1. Demographic coaching data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average age</td>
<td>37.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average years coaching</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average years as a SCC</td>
<td>8.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average years in current position</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longest tenure in current position</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortest tenure in current position</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total moves during career</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total moves as a SCC</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participated in college football</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC certification</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average salary</td>
<td>$47,416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of married coaches</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SCC = strength and conditioning coach; SC = strength and conditioning.

Demographic Data

The average age of the coaches in this study was 37.8 years. The ages ranged from 31 to 44 years old. The average years in the profession was 12.6. The coaches with the shortest time in the profession was 6 years while the coach with the most experience had 19 years. This reflects total years coaching regardless of area or specialization. When the SCC position was examined, the coaches had spent an average of 8.1 years in this capacity. Average time spent in their current job was 6.1 years. The coach with the longest tenure was 12 years while the coach with the shortest length of service was 4 years. As a group, the coaches moved 17 times for an average of 2.8 moves per coach during their career. This data may be misleading since 2 of the coaches accounted for 13 of these job changes, and they occurred prior to their move from a field coach in football to the SCC position. When only time spent as an SCC was calculated, the group moved 4 times for an average of 0.6 moves per coach. Four of the 6 coaches in the investigation had spent their entire careers as an SCC.

Five of the participants in the study played football in college. One had professional football experience. Four of the 6 were white, 2 were black. Half of the participants held undergraduate degrees in education. Two of these coaches had teaching emphases in physical education while the other coach had a teaching emphasis in social studies. The other participants obtained degrees in exercise physiology, fitness management, and athletic administration and coaching, respectively. Two of the coaches held masters degrees. These were in the fields of physical education and exercise physiology. Four coaches in the investigation held certifications in the field of strength and conditioning. Three had certifications from the Collegiate Strength and Conditioning Association. Two were certified by the National Strength and Conditioning Association, 1 of whom held certifications in both organizations. The average salary for the coaches in the study was $47,416. The range of salaries was $32,000 to $65,000. Demographic coaching data is highlighted in Table 1.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Major Job Duties and Responsibilities

While all of the coaches in the study were head SCC, the primary sport they were responsible for was that of football. Layden (12) stated that, "While SCC are often responsible for the fitness of the school's athletes in all sports, it is football that consumes their time and measures their worth." Although the coaches in this investigation had other duties, the vast majority of their time was spent in the training of athletes. The coaches reported spending from 6 to 10 hours a day in this endeavor. An interesting finding of this investigation was that the in-season portion of the coaches' season is their most intense time of year. Five of the coaches reported this to be the case. The coaches worked an average of 71 hours a week during this period. If the team has to travel to an away game, the coaches can work as much as 100 or more hours. The off-season is less intense, but the coaches still worked an average of 60 hours a week.

In addition to their duties in training athletes, the coaches worked with the football team on game day. They all conducted the pregame stretching routine. One coach stated that the biggest thrill he gets in coaching is leading the team out for this activity. Two of the coaches related that they were responsible for coordinating the entire pregame warm up. This involved making sure the team was on schedule in its preparation until kickoff. Another coach reported that he was responsible for typng up the itinerary the team uses on game day for home games and the itinerary that is followed when the team travels to away games.

Five of the coaches in the investigation served as sideline managers during the game. This involves making sure the players and coaches stay within their designated areas on the sidelines so the team does not receive a penalty. Two coaches reported that an additional duty was making sure the special teams send the correct number of men on the field. Four of the coaches were required to attend football staff meetings during the in-season and off-season to coordinate the team's activities. Two coaches indicated they attended these meetings only when the strength and conditioning program was discussed.

Each of the coaches reported handling discipline in some form or fashion. Some were designated as the primary person responsible for this assignment while others reported handling these duties in association with other coaches on the football staff. In contrast, one coach stated that the position coaches handled most of the discipline for the football team, but that coaches from other sports sometimes asked him to handle discipline for their athletes. Another coach stated that he and his assistant SCC handled discipline that was associated with the strength and conditioning program. On reporting his philosophy on discipline, one coach metaphorically related, "if you knock a player down you have to help him back up. You have to let him know you care about him as a person." Three of the coaches stated they were responsible for developing and implementing the budget for the strength and conditioning program. This included making all necessary purchases related to equipment and materials. The other SCC related they submitted purchasing requests when these items were needed.

All of the coaches had a role in recruiting. Although SCC are prevented from recruiting athletes off campus due to NCAA rules, they do meet with the prospective student athletes when they come to campus for their official visit. The SCC gives the recruit a tour of the weight room and the other workout facilities. He discusses this aspect of the program with the recruit and attempts to
Table 2. Major job duties of strength and conditioning coaches.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Tasks</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Training athletes</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-game stretching</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>routine/warm-up</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sideline manager</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinate special teams</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>during games</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional scout liaison</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discipline</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On campus recruiting</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop/Implement budget</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend football staff meeting</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each of the coaches reported deriving satisfaction from their relationships with their athletes. A dimension of this appears to be molding and influencing the young people under their supervision. One coach stated, "I enjoy watching young men mature personally and athletically, and watching them gain confidence in themselves." Another stated, "I like playing a role in turning boys into men. Seeing them mature and develop confidence in themselves." A third related, "I find touching and grooming the life of a young person very gratifying. I enjoy seeing them grow athletically and as people." This appeared to be the primary job motivator for the coaches in this investigation. A coach summed it best when he shared his belief that coaches who go into the strength and conditioning field do so overwhelmingly because they care about young people.

Another area cited prominently by the coaches that influenced their job satisfaction was the autonomy they enjoyed in their positions. The coaches felt they had significant latitude to conduct their training programs as they felt appropriate. Even though they had an ample workload, the fact that they had a large measure of control over how they go about doing their job appeared to make up for this circumstance. One coach cited enjoyment of the competition, and being able to stay involved in the game subsequent to his playing career as being important factors in his job satisfaction. Another stated that being an SCC allowed him to remain in athletics without the additional pressure and responsibility of being a field coach. The variety in the work environment also appeared to be a major factor that influenced this group's job satisfaction. One coach stated that he enjoyed the job because no 2 days were ever the same. The casual dress was another factor that was predominately mentioned as an advantage of the job.

When asked what they disliked about the job, the most common response pertained to the long hours. Most of the coaches, however, love the work so much that they rationalized the long hours as just the price they had to pay to be in the profession. Another problematic area that the coaches cited was working with the unmotivated athlete. Two coaches asserted that often your better athletes gave more discipline problems. They indicated that it was important factors in their job satisfaction. The coaches considered their jobs stressful with time pressure the most cited reason for this belief. A common complaint among this group was that they felt they had more to do than they could do. Others stated that they did not feel they had more than they could do, it just took a long time to do it.

Table 3. Strength and conditioning program information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Winning percentage of football program (5 years)</td>
<td>0.661</td>
<td>0.610</td>
<td>0.525</td>
<td>0.553</td>
<td>0.490</td>
<td>0.563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of assistant SCC</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate assistants</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size of the weight room (sq. ft.)</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>9000</td>
<td>8500</td>
<td>5500</td>
<td>5200</td>
<td>3700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total athletes in strength program</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women sports trained directly by SCC</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SCC = strength and conditioning coach; sq. ft. = square feet.
ties in the study. One coach expressed that it was particularly frustrating not having an office. He related that he did not have any place to conduct meetings, keep important materials, or store his personal belongings.

Although 5 of the 6 coaches in the study reported satisfying relationships with their fellow coaches, all perceived a lack of respect and appreciation of what it is they do. Two of the coaches specifically cited having an assistant sport coach go behind their back to a supervising authority or attempting to undermine their training efforts as particularly frustrating. As 1 coach put it,

“When it comes to training athletes, everyone thinks they’re an expert. They may have had some experience in their career training athletes and because they had some success, they think that is the only way to get the job done. What they don’t understand is that there may be several ways to reach the same objective, but that some of these methods may be more efficient than others.”

The coach went on to say that the best training methods are open to speculation, and often come down to the personal preferences of the SCC. The 2 coaches who identified this as a problem stated that the way they handled it is to basically inform the assistant sport coach, “I don’t come on the field and tell you how to coach your position.”

Don’t come into my area and tell me how to do my job.”

The coaches reported feeling secure in their current positions; however, several related that due to the precarious and unstable nature of the profession being secure in college athletics was relative. As 1 coach phrased it, “in this job you never know when you’re going to be fired.” The position of SCC appears to be a very political one. Five of the coaches reported at least a moderate relationship with the person they identified as their immediate supervisor and felt comfortable approaching him or her with problems or concerns. Often, however, these coaches are supervised or must answer to several different people.

Various dual supervisory formats were found to exist among this group. In football, the SCC usually reports directly to the head football coach (HFC). In many cases, the SCC reports to someone in administration as well. Sometimes this was the athletic director (AD), or in some instances an assistant AD. A common complaint among those coaches who were supervised by an administrator was a perceived lack of understanding on these administrators part as to what exactly an SCC does. While the coaches admitted this was an annoyance, for the most part they did not see it as a major impediment to their work. This was primarily due to the administrator not being involved in the day-to-day operation of the various athletic teams at the universities.

When the SCC works with sports in addition to football, they often reported to the head coaches of those respective sports. These SCC placed particular importance on keeping the various groups within the athletic department content and happy. One coach related that he made a concerted effort to go by and gauge the feelings of the different head coaches. He placed significant emphasis on relationship building with this group and attempted to feel them out concerning their satisfaction with the strength and conditioning program. The coach felt it difficult to meet the various demands of so many different people because their perception of his performance is so subjective. A source of conflict identified by this SCC was that the head coaches often felt they have to compete with the other sports to make sure they were treated fairly related to training time and access to the facilities. A lack of facilities in many cases contributed to this concern.

While these supervisory formats appear ripe for controversy, the coaches reported relatively few problems. Their saving grace in this regard may be their relationship with the HFC. As was pointed out by Layden (12), football is considered the primary sport and if the HFC is satisfied with the SCC performance that overrides other considerations. Two of the coaches stated that while the HFC was not directly responsible for conducting their job evaluation, he had significant influence in determining which SCC worked with his program. In other words, if the HFC did not want a particular SCC someone else would be found to work with that sport. In those situations in which the HFC wielded less influence, a good relationship with the AD also had a tendency to insulate the SCC from controversy.

Five of the coaches were married. Four of them reported high levels of marital satisfaction. Each of the married coaches reported that his wife was an asset to him in his career. One stated that he valued his wife’s opinion very much and sought out her counsel frequently. He further stated that due to the demands of his job and the long hours involved, it would be difficult if not impossible for him to meet these demands without his wife’s support. Another coach related that his wife had a good understanding of what it took to be successful in the coaching profession. When asked what it would be like if a coach’s wife were not supportive, he stated, “It would be rough. He would have to find a different profession.” Another coach stated, “If you’re going to be successful in coaching you have to have a supportive wife. The wife sets the tone. You have to keep her happy.” A third coach stated when asked what it would be like if his wife were not supportive said, “It would cause chaos in the home.”

Each of the married coaches indicated that their job demands created strain in their relationships with their spouses from time to time. Most SCC reported that their wives feel that their husbands’ job demands interfered with family life. The coaches, however, indicated that the couples were able to work out their differences. Four of the married coaches reported that their spouses derived satisfaction from their career choice, and enjoyed the lifestyle and excitement of being a coach’s wife. Each of the married coaches recognized their wife’s contribution to their ability to do their jobs.

Several of the coaches related that the demands of the job had interfered in their relationships with other family members. It was a universal theme that it was almost impossible for them to get away to family functions during the season or during their heavy training periods. One coach related that he had been unable to take vacation time due to his job demands. In fact, he stated that he had lost vacation because of his inability to take the time off. Several of the coaches related they had been unable to attend weddings due to their work.

One coach stated that what made the job so demanding was that it was year around. There is no off-season as there is in other sports. The coaches as a group attributed much of the success of their teams to their efforts in training the athletes. While they acknowledged other factors play a part, most felt that their contributions were the single most important variable in the success of their
respective programs. This is in line with Layden’s (12) observation. He stated that increasingly in college football when the team does not do well it is the SCC that is blamed for the poor performance. In some cases, the SCC may be sacrificed so the HFC can keep his job.

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this investigation was to look at the job of SCC through the eyes of people who actually engage in this type of work. The focus was on the feelings, attitudes, and meanings SCC associated with their profession. As Sage (19) intimated, it is only by seeing the situation through the perspective of the person involved that a full and complete understanding of an occupational culture is formed.

The coaches in this investigation as a group were very task oriented. They were focused on their work and very committed to what they do. They are internally motivated and all have the ability to work independently with minimal supervision. In fact, for these SCC, one of the prominent benefits of the job was the autonomy they possessed. The ability to conduct training programs in ways they deem appropriate was of tremendous significance to them. Although these subjects were highly competitive, their overriding motivation does not appear to be the thrill of competition as one might expect with other types of coaches. They are more focused on the task of developing athletic potential.

Consequently, their relationship with the athletes appeared to bring these coaches their greatest job satisfaction. Each indicated that shaping, molding, and influencing the young people under their supervision was very gratifying to them. Although the long hours are difficult, this was not a preeminent issue with these coaches. Their foremost concern was getting the work done and feeling that they had completed their job responsibilities in a competent manner.

Frequently, the environment these coaches find themselves is very political in nature. This is particularly true for those coaches who work with sports in addition to football and is due to the competing interests that can often be found in a typical athletic department. When this situation was compounded by a lack of facilities, it often contributed to lower levels of job satisfaction for those coaches.

This dissatisfaction was often accompanied by a perceived lack of respect from other members of the athletic department. These SCC believe, in many instances, they are not viewed as legitimate coaches by their peers. If accurate, this opinion might be linked to the ecletic nature of the profession and its relatively brief history. The absence of well defined job roles and responsibilities may also be a factor.

The married coaches in the investigation appeared to experience significant marital strain related to their job demands. The long hours and the time this took away from the spouse and family contributed to varying levels of marital discord; however, each of these coaches recognized their wives’ contribution to their ability to do what it is they do.

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

One of the purposes of the case study approach to research, of which the job analysis is one aspect, is the thorough and detailed description of a phenomenon under study. Patton (16) described the purpose of this type of research when he stated,

It is an effort to understand situations in their uniqueness as part of a particular context and the interactions there. This understanding is an end in itself, so it is not attempting to predict what may happen in the future necessarily, but to understand the nature of that setting—what it means for participants to be in that setting, what their lives are like, what's going on for them, what their meanings are, what the world looks like in that particular setting—and in the analysis to be able to communicate that faithfully to others who are interested in that setting. The analysis strives for depth of understanding.

Although inferences cannot be made to the larger population of SCC, the information obtained does give insight into the world of the professionals who engage in this vocation. It is hoped that aspects of this investigation may initiate future research into this emerging and important profession.

REFERENCES

16. Patton, M.Q. Quality in qualitative research: Methodological principles and recent developments. Invited address to Divi-


Address correspondence to C. Dwayne Massey, dmassey@uwa.edu.