

# SWIM TO LIVE MANUAL

EDITORS: Tina Jeromen and Maja Isaković



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## Review of the Swim to live manual

Swim to live manual is an important contribution to European community with the main objective to promote citizens to active lifestyle through swimming. Manual follows several objectives as to increase social inclusion through sport for all population regardless age, health status, social status, abilities and race and aims to develop a certificate of competence named a »Swim to Live« licence for swimming instructors and club leaders. Manual tackles all the most important fields important for swimming instructors and organisers in the clubs from the swimming kinesiology, pedagogy, coaching, motivation, markets plan and intercultural dialogue. In practical part are explained different approaches to teaching swimming for different abled people. Manual was written by the very competent professionals from the field of sport, especially swimming, marketing and psychology with a lot of practical and theoretical experience. Additional added value of the manual is that was written by the experts from different countries who have been gathering experience for a long time. Everything that is written or described in the manual is based on actual experience and is to be used as a helping tool for swimmers, swimming instructors and sports organizers in Europe and worldwide.

Ljubljana, 22.12. 2017     Assistant Professor Boro Štrumbelj, Ph.d.

*Swim to Live Manual* is the ultimate guide to promoting practical and theoretical knowledge from different fields regarding health issues and swimming, perfect for everyone interested in promoting an active lifestyle and spreading the love for swimming.

This new manual presents fully up-to-date information covering different types of objectives - practical guidelines, good examples and practices, practical experience of how to increase social inclusion through sport (swimming) for everyone, regardless of age and health. It also provides priceless information on how to promote an active lifestyle and raise awareness about the importance of health-enhancing physical activity. The manual was written by experts from different European countries. Finally, it provides the basis of different practical tasks to gain a certificate of competence or licence for swimming instructors and club leaders.

*Swim to Live Manual* is perfect for any "sport and swimming buffs" in need of an ultimate reference guide, or anyone looking to top up their sports knowledge.

Izola, 26.2.2018

Assistant Professor Maša Černelič-Bizjak, Ph.D.  
Faculty of health sciences, University of Primorska

Firstly, we would like to say “Thank you!” to everyone who took part in the project, we couldn’t have done it without you. Keep swimming!

We would like to express our gratitude to many people who saw us through this manual; to all those who provided support, talked things over, read, wrote, offered comments, allowed us to quote their remarks and assisted in the editing, proofreading and design.

Thanks to our partners, we are so happy that we connected and worked together!

Above all we want to thank our co-workers, swimmers, friends and family, who supported and encouraged us in spite of all the time the Swili project took from us. It was a long journey for them.

Thanks to Joh Dokler and his web mastership - without you this work would never find its way to so many people.

Last but not least: to all those who have been with us, kept swimming over the course of years and whose names we have failed to mention, but are present and live in the way we think and work.

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# Swim to Live Manual

## 1. Introduction

The objective of Swim to Live project is to promote voluntary activities in sport, along with social inclusion, equal opportunities and to raise awareness about the importance of health-enhancing physical activity through increased participation in, and equal access to, sport for all.

With this project we want to expand swimming activities, knowledge and experience to other European countries. We see a great opportunity in spreading the knowledge and love for swimming to previously non-active people by simply engaging them. During the one year project we have educated swimming instructors and club leaders and provided 5-8 people (per partner country) free swimming lessons for up to 6 months with the hope that most of them will start to love swimming as much as we do and continue with their training after the project ends. In June 2017 we also organised a weekend event (an educational seminar, together with a night swimming competition) in Ljubljana for our partners and also other interested individuals. Our project included and connected all groups of people – people with and without disabilities, young and old, masters swimmers with a lot of experience and beginners - and encouraged them to become physically active or be even more involved in sport.

Our objective has been to raise awareness and accessibility of swimming as one of the safest sports the world has to offer. We want to teach people how to motivate themselves to be active, how to teach others to stay motivated and connected through the world of water and swimming. Above all, we want to spread the love we feel for swimming. During this project we have, with the use of our interactive web portal and other social media, promoted regular physical activity, taught how to teach, how to promote regular activity and combined altogether with swimming courses for locals. This is a novelty in swimming approaches.

### The main goals of the project

- To increase social inclusion through sport (people can join an established collective of like-minded people), to promote equal opportunities in swimming (anyone can join, healthy or not, with or without disabilities, young or old, male or female) and to enhance physical activity in the largest possible num-

ber of people, locally and globally. Besides an improved physical well-being, a healthier lifestyle promotes a better self-image, a more positive outlook on life, new friends and colleagues, which improves one's social inclusion.

- To spread the love for swimming and to make swimming activities a regular habit among European citizens.
- To develop a certificate of competence, a "Swim to Live" licence for swimming instructors and club leaders. They have received different practical tasks and assignments to gain the "Swim to Live" licence. Swimming instructors have gained knowledge about teaching everybody, no matter of their previous physical abilities. They gained competences in the fields of working with swimmers of different abilities, learnt how to deal with problems, how to teach different age groups and use different motivational strategies. Club leaders have learnt about how to promote good practices and multiply their influence on the local environment. Because of the project, local people are better informed about regular physical activities, especially swimming. Club leaders have learnt about promotion, marketing and leading groups of instructors. We have engaged professionals from the field of sport, marketing and psychology, who hosted a series of webinars, where they educated club leaders about promoting swimming and instructors about teaching swimmers with different abilities and how to motivate people to participate. At the same time we shared ideas, asked questions and posted comments on social media and on our portal.
- One of our goals in the project was to discover local specifics about teaching swimming, which are presented in the manual - we have written them down to maintain them as they are, but at the same time we would like to upgrade them with good practices from other nations. Every country has a different approach and habits in teaching swimming. Through this project we have gathered a lot of knowledge in one place, which will produce a snowball effect of more innovative approaches on local levels. The biggest impact we anticipate is that despite different traditions of learning, a swimming instructor will be able to find new ways for every one of his pupils. It is our dream and goal to share the practices that have been developed in different social areas, to see them implemented and improved over the years around the world. First we want to spread our message within the EU, but later with as many countries as possible.

## The licence

The "Swim to Live" licence for swimming instructors and club leaders is a starting point of the educational process and the issuing of the "Swim to Live" licence. We will continue on this journey as we think it is a very valuable and holistic



way of teaching swimming. Hopefully in some years it will become the norm for swimming instructors in Europe and elsewhere. We expect an instructor with the licence to be competent in all basic fields of sport teaching, competent to work with swimmers with different abilities, to know how to deal with gender, political or religious issues, different age groups and of course be familiar with sport psychology (motivational strategies, knowledge of motivational theories, change models etc). The instructors had to work on different assignments.

### **Tasks for swimming instructors**

1. Coaching: members upload a video of themselves teaching their group of swimmers on one selected theme (i.e. freestyle stroke, breaststroke breathing, exhaling exercises etc.);
2. Facilitation: instructors write the proposal of goals for their group and how to achieve them, the measures of success;
3. Mentoring: mutual giving and receiving advice regarding set goals;
4. Teaching: reflection on using or giving a certain advice to or from a colleague (explaining the right way and time to give advice, the reason they chose this advice);
5. Technical mastery - propose a new or different swimming exercise and demonstrate it in a video clip;
6. Transformation: show on a video clip (before and after) the improvement within the group, either in a certain technique or in regular attendance of their pupils;
7. Social inclusion - demonstration of a chosen swimming exercise for differently abled people (fully abled, visually impaired, hearing impaired, disabled, autistic, clinically obese);
8. Sport psychology: define psychological needs and desires of his or her specific group, which is demonstrated by how feedback is given to their swimmers.

There were also assignments for club leaders through which they learned and shared different skills.

### **Tasks for club leaders**

1. Define what you would like to change for the better within your organisation and how these changes can be implemented;
2. Report about activities and effects of set goals;
3. Write a code of conduct for your organisation;
4. Read a suggested leadership article (i.e. Chelladurai) and write your reflections, changes you will practice in the future;
5. Develop a pilot project to attract more inactive people, discuss it with the rest of the participants and try to implement it in real life.

This manual is the epilogue of this year's project. We have collected practical and theoretical knowledge from different fields regarding our project (kinesiol-

ogy, pedagogy, coaching, psychology, special needs). The manual also includes chapters about practical guidelines, good examples, good practices, articles of renowned experts, a guide how to organise such a project, practical experience of intercultural dialogue and social inclusion through sport. It also provides information on how to promote an active lifestyle and information about practical use of our project that other countries can use in similar activities all over Europe.

The participating organisations in this project are from European countries, where the inhabitants are physically active below the EU average, like Italy, Romania and Portugal. Some of the organisations are sports clubs and some are working directly with disabled people, like Asociatia Babilon Travel from Romania. We want to promote the awareness of the importance of regular physical activity.

## **Following our goal**

### **Keeping in mind the health enhancing benefits of swimming and well-being of participants**

Our project has addressed the objective to encourage people of all ages, all social groups, different body types, different abilities and disabilities, with current or lasting injuries to take up or maintain swimming as one of their basic physical activities, as it is appropriate for everyone. Swimming is also one of the rare sports, where we can find equal numbers of women and men.

Our hope was to enhance participants' well-being. We made an effort to teach people in smaller, homogeneous groups, where they had the opportunity to socialize for up to 6 months during and outside of training. Competitions also create a very powerful bond, not only within a club, but also among different clubs and different nationalities. At our event in June, members of different countries connected immediately and had a great time in Ljubljana.

In Slovenia, swimming is the second most popular sporting activity, right after walking. It is not only a healthy and safe way to maintain one's physical fitness, but also a survival method. 93% of school children finish primary education as able swimmers. We have a national programme with a plan to teach every child to swim at least 50 metres without stopping before finishing elementary school. This education is performed by trained swimming professionals, as studies have shown that existing PE curriculum, planned and delivered by specialist PE teachers with higher PE teaching competences rather than general teachers, positively affects children's physical fitness.

In the EU, people who are less likely to be physically active are women and people over 55. This lack of activity is especially evident in more southern countries like Por-

tugal, Malta, Bulgaria, Romania and Italy. With this project we aim to address these groups and to improve their physical fitness. The main reasons for inactivity are lack of time, lack of motivation or interest, physical disabilities or illnesses, monetary reasons, fear of injuries, disliking the competitiveness in sport and lack of friends to do it with. We wanted to tackle these issues head on. First by proving that swimming can be quite an inexpensive means of exercise for an individual, that even a few hours of swimming a week can go a long way, that it is highly recommended to go swimming during or after injuries (as long as one doesn't strain himself too hard and keeps listening to his body), that injuries during swimming are very rare and as an individual sport inside of a collective, it is up to the swimmer how competitive one wants to be.

Swimming can help with a lot of health issues. It is much cheaper to invest in a healthy lifestyle and to prevent diseases, than to cure them after the fact. And it is not only about sport itself, but also about everything it brings along. Once one starts to be more active and more self-aware, the shift to healthier food is easy.

## **Innovative aspects**

### **The web portal**

The web portal combines instant access of peer to peer feedback, contemporary knowledge and experienced teachers with up-to-date technology. It is an open space for anyone interested in swimming to join and share opinions, knowledge, ask questions, related to problems, read or discuss themes connected to teaching swimming. The main goal of web portal is to engage and educate partners (at the beginning of the project) and other sport clubs (as a part of the dissemination process) which offer swimming activities.

It is a virtual space for partners and our experts to share knowledge, ideas, connections, tutorials, video clips. Everybody involved with the project had to upload some materials with the task to learn new things and spread good practices. Some materials were educational, some with the goal to learn new things.

Every partner had to complete certain tasks which were given by our experts. The instructors uploaded short video clips from their trainings. Instructors and experts then commented on them, asked questions or answered with a similar clip. This way we promoted good working practice of swimming teachers, shared training ideas or simply bragged about some good work.

### **Exchange of knowledge and experience**

Our goal is to motivate everyone, no matter what age or physical abilities, to join her or his local swimming club regularly in a weekly swimming practice. Through

regular swimming practice we want to promote a healthier lifestyle, including a better self image, a more positive outlook on life, new friends and colleagues, which also improves one's social inclusion. Our project promotes social inclusion through encouraging people of all ages, all social groups, different body types, different abilities and disabilities, with current or lasting injuries to take up or maintain swimming as one of their basic physical activities, as it is appropriate for everyone.

Combining all four organisations we get years of experience in different fields of expertise, like the field of teaching swimming (children, adults, disadvantaged and disabled people), working with visually impaired people and teaching all sorts of watersports and traditional games. During this project we have learned a lot from each other, which will help us with our future endeavours.

Our goal was to collect the needs of all who want to swim, so that everyone can get the most from an active lifestyle - not just physical benefits. Being aware we cannot know everything, this exchange of knowledge and experience on the web portal becomes an incredible tool for teaching, learning and sharing. All of the professionals involved can contribute to the final result - the best possible methods for motivating to become more active, methods for integrating activities and teaching methods for instructors.

The forums and web portal present a great place for the project participants to share different thoughts and ideas, positive and negative experience and ask for advice from colleagues when they need it. Sometimes they needed a little persuasion to do so, but in the last year we managed to build a nice sized web library of knowledge. We wanted to provide a safe and nurturing place for them, where they could feel completely free to share their thoughts and feelings about and because of the project.

## **Learning by doing and peer learning**

We believe theory and practice go hand in hand. They are like two wings of a bird, and the bird can only fly if the two wings are equal in size and strength. During the project we have placed importance on the theoretical part with webinars and experts, but most importantly, we tried to put all of this knowledge into practice at the swimming pool. Some things may look good on paper, but until you try them out, you cannot be completely sure if they work or not. So with the help of the web portal we are able to keep working on the collection of knowledge.

In life we are more attracted to successful stories and tend to distance ourselves from mistakes and failures. But while success is very nice and is easy to accept, the failures actually make us grow and learn the most. As they share their expe-

rience, the other participants and we are able to learn something from them. By sharing not only good practice but also failures, we can grow and flourish together.

The main activities we based our project on were online webinars and forums, swimming lessons and workshops. We wanted to transfer theory into practice, to build a collection of knowledge. That is why for this project we wanted and needed active involvement from our partners from the beginning of the project until the end. With planned assignments we ensured that every partner was fully involved throughout the project. There was a common goal to all activities: to see how other instructors work with swimmers, which competences they have and what recently inactive people need to make this important lifestyle change.

The rest of the manual consists of four parts - empirical part, practical part, our practical experience (conclusions) and guidelines for the future.

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# 2. Empirical Part

## 2.1. Swimming kinesiology

Author: Jan Jereb, Professor of sport education

To understand swimming, we first need to understand different terms that are used in the process of teaching swimming.

- Feeling for water is the swimmer's ability to feel and effectively capture water.
- Simple forms of movement are different types of movement used in everyday life (walking, running, crawling).
- Simple forms of swimming are simplest types of movement that enable person to swim (frog swimming, dog swimming).
- Useful forms of swimming are swimming movements with different useful purposes. Germania is used for relaxation and active break. Butterfly with breaststroke kicks is used as an exercise for strength or for practicing breaststroke kicks. Side swimming and rescue crawl are used for saving people.
- Swimming techniques are ways of swimmer's cyclic movements that are defined with competition rules. Swimming techniques are freestyle, breaststroke, backstroke and butterfly (Kapus, et al., 2001).

The Oxford Dictionary tells us that swimming is the sport or activity of propelling oneself through water using the limbs. In different words, we are using different forces to keep our body on the surface and to move it around in the water. There are, of course different physical laws in the water than on the ground. We need to understand them first, so that later we can use them to our benefit of seeking the most optimal swimming technique.

### Basic biomechanics of swimming

At this point we start to talk about forces - the physical quantity with which mutual operation between swimmer and water is described. Forces with an impact on a swimmer are divided into two main groups: hydrostatic and hydrodynamic. If the swimmer is not in motion, only hydrostatic forces have an impact on his body. If he is in motion, both hydrostatic and hydrodynamic forces have an impact on his body (Kapus, 2001).

There are two hydrostatic forces. The first one is weight that is equal to body weight and its direction is facing straight down. The second one is buoyant force, which is equal to the weight of displaced water and its direction is facing straight up.

Hydrodynamic forces are: propulsion force, which means a propelling force and resistance, meaning a retaining or retracting force. While swimming, we are trying to advance ourselves in the water with our hands and legs, while our progress is slowed down by the water, as we encounter the water's resistance. The science of hydrodynamics deals with this subject in greater depth (Bíró, Révész and Hidvégi, 2015).

Generally speaking, propulsion force is divided into drag force and lift force. Drag force is based on the third Newton's law. Swimmers propel themselves through successive propulsive segmental actions that intend to push water backwards in relation to the intended direction for entire body movement. Lift force is defined as hydrodynamic force, perpendicular to the body's direction of motion (Dias-Boas, 2010).

Along with scientific development, the swimming techniques changed as well. In the past swimmers were making strokes perpendicular to the body, using only drag force. The hand of a swimmer had the role of a paddle, i.e. to take as much water as possible and push it backwards.

After recognizing the influence of lift force, the composed swimming stroke was invented with direction of hand movement in three different ways.

Today swimmers in different phases of the stroke use both propulsive forces. They are developing a feeling for water, an ability to feel and effectively capture water. Feeling for water is one of the most important phases in teaching swimming (Kapus, et al., 2001).

## Swimming techniques

Swimming techniques are ways of swimmer's cyclic movements that are defined with competition rules. Swimming techniques, i.e. freestyle, breaststroke, backstroke and butterfly are combinations of kicks - movement of legs and strokes - movement of hands. Coordination of the technique is a way of connecting kicks, strokes and head movement into one whole movement (Kapus, et al., 2001). Having in mind the didactic approach to teaching swimming, we distinguish three different levels of swimming techniques i.e. basic, advanced and competitive level (Kapus, et al., 2001).

### Freestyle

Body position: the swimmer is lying in extended position on the water surface. His head is between his extended arms.

Kicks alternate in up and down direction, just a bit under the water surface, with small amplitude and high frequency. Kick down starts in the hip. The knee is a bit flexed, but at the end of the kick down, the swimmer extends his leg as a whip (also in the knee). The foot is extended and rotated inside.

Strokes alternate as well. The swimmer is paddling in a way that the angle between both arms is 90 degrees. When the first arm goes in the water, the other arm is perpendicular to the body. The swimmer puts his almost extended arm with the tip of fingertips into the water, aligned with the shoulders. Then he extends his arm forward a bit under surface (he glides on the water) until he finishes the underwater stroke with the other hand. Then he starts to paddle down in lateral plane with extended arm. He continues with the stroke until he puts his almost extended arm out of the water and carries it back above the water into the first position. The speed of the stroke is increasing from the beginning until the end of the underwater stroke. The return above the water is slower and relaxed.

Head movement and breathing: the swimmer exhales into the water. To inhale, he rotates the head in direction of the arm that is finishing the underwater stroke. He doesn't put the head out of the water. He starts inhaling in the first half of the path of returning of the above water arm. In the second half of returning arm, he rotates his head back into the water.

## Breaststroke

Body position is changing: during exhaling, the swimmer is gliding in stretched position on water surface with his head between the hands. During inhaling, the swimmer puts his head out of the water and legs under the water surface.

Kicks are synchronic and made under the water surface. The swimmer is in gliding position and starts bending his legs so that his heels come closer to the buttocks. He rotates his feet out and kicks in the following directions: back, out, down and in. The kick is finished when the swimmer is again in the gliding phase. The speed of the kick is changing.

Strokes are synchronic and made under the water surface. The swimmer is in gliding position, rotates his hands out and starts paddling with both stretched hands in outside direction, until he comes in the plane position with shoulders. Then the paddling stops and the swimmer bends his arms and elbows and puts his forearms in front of the body and stretches his arms in a way that he finishes in gliding position. In the phase of returning arms into gliding position, hands start returning facing direction up and finishes facing in direction down.



Head movement and breathing: during exhaling, the swimmer is gliding stretched position on the water surface with his head between the hands. At the beginning of the stroke, he starts putting his head out of the water. When the arms reach the plane of the shoulders, the head is at the highest point and the swimmer is inhaling. During the return of the arms, the swimmer is also putting the head down between the arms, so that he finishes in the gliding phase (Kapus, et al., 2001).

The project Swim to Live was meant for swimming beginners, therefore the previous text explains only the basic level of swimming techniques. Basic level is the simplest of swimming techniques. It is a combination of simple kicks and strokes and uses mostly drag force to move the swimmer in wanted direction and help him to stay above the water. The basic level includes only freestyle, breaststroke and backstroke techniques, without butterfly.

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## 2.2. Pedagogy

Author: Karmen Tomažič, Professor of sport education

Pedagogy is the discipline that deals with the theory and practice of teaching. Pedagogy informs teaching strategies, teacher actions, teacher judgements and decisions by taking into consideration theories of learning, understandings of children and their needs, the backgrounds and interests of individual children. Pedagogy includes how the teacher interacts with children and the social and intellectual environment the teacher seeks to establish (Wikipedia, 2017).

Educating and teaching are two inseparable, highly connected processes. When teaching children, we are also educating them. Education is a lifelong, systematic

and pedagogic process of learning, teaching, socialisation, guiding and shaping of an individual's personality. We teach children values, rules, models and norms of behaviour (Škof, 2007).

The teacher is an important part of educational system. He or she is an expert in his field, with didactic skills, positive human characteristics and psychological knowledge (Kapus, et al., 2011).

## **The three roles of a teacher:**

*An employee* – a teacher is bound to the structure of his hiring facility, he complies with the laws and rules.

*An expert* – a teacher has professional and practical skills, which he wishes to pass on to his students. He possesses a broad spectrum of sports knowledge, is well-read and constantly upgrades his profession by attending different seminars and cooperating with other teachers.

A human – a teacher needs to have appropriate pedagogical, organisational and communication skills. He needs to have a positive attitude, has to be kind, patient, understanding, in good spirits, creative and without double standards.

A teacher's approach and knowledge of certain area are the most important with every activity carried out by children. In order to achieve educational as well as learning goals, the motivation of students is necessary. Among other qualities, a teacher also needs to be a good motivator, who can help his students take advantage of their potentials. One of the important activities that children experience in their daily life is sport. Sports activities influence children's harmonious and even development. Swimming is one of the activities, which has a lot of physical, psychological and social effects. Sport is an excellent tool which can be used to educate children.

Swimming is basic motion in water. It represents a person's control over water with his own forces, which allow him to move safely in a desired way on the surface of the water or beneath it. It is important to allow the children a contact with water from early age on, to encourage them to swim and play in the water. Swimming activates all the muscles in a body and the burden to the joints is a lot lower than on land. It also helps with the development of motor and other skills that children develop through movement (Kapus, et al., 2011).

One of the key assignments of a teacher is to know the children's age characteristics. In early stages the child's development is very fast and his abilities, needs

and characteristics change accordingly. Pedagogy is therefore also based on good knowledge of children's needs.

The following are early childhood cognitive, emotional and social characteristics (4 to 6 years) (Cecić Erpič, 2007):

- Children's attention span is short, but with activities which interest them very much, their attention span can be longer.
- Children are careful when doing something and are not prepared to work for a longer period of time.
- Children like to please adults. They like to learn new things, but need help and guidance from the adults.
- Their imagination is very well developed.
- Children are interested in activities based on rhythm.
- Abstract thinking is not developed yet and they can solve problems only in a very direct manner. Therefore any explanation has to be based on direct presentation of the task or problem. Children need to see the task and cannot solve it only on a mental level.
- At the beginning of this period, boys and girls have common interests, but at the end their interests start to grow apart.
- Children are egocentrics. They are not capable of working in larger groups; this is why their playgroups are normally small.
- Children are often aggressive, self-critical, display strong reactions and have problems bearing defeat.
- Children comply with authority; they try to please adults and follow the instructions.

After children turn 4 years of age, they are physically and psychologically mature to learn swimming. Before this period the parents' involvement with their children's swimming pool activities is very important. This way a safe environment is set up for the children, so they can get acquainted with water and adapt to it to some extent.

Learning to swim is a process and children need to be given enough time to master the basics. It is useful to use interesting activities, which are done through playing and present swimming to children as positive and fun. We use swimming requisites such as swimming boards, warms, sinkable objects, rollers and balls. We try to make sure that the requisites are of different colours, shapes, sizes and as appealing to children as possible (Jurak and Kovač, 1998).

At first we have to allow the swimming beginners to adjust to water. Water adjustment comprises of adjusting to water resistance, head sinking, looking underwater, exhaling into the water, navigability and slithering (Kapus, 2011).

From a security and psychological point of view it is best if the adjustment process takes place in shallow water, maximum knee or chest height of the swimmers. The biggest obstacle with learning to swim is fear of water, this is why we must firstly adjust the trainee to the water in order to make him relaxed and loose the fear. We always have to encourage and compliment them. We never force the child into the water or push his head under water. If necessary, we can expand the adjustment time to the child's need. When diminishing an individual's fear of water, the effect of group or peer power can be useful, because the child imitates the movements that some others have already mastered. Once the child is well adjusted, he will not be afraid of water anymore and will be ready to learn swimming techniques. The strokes and beats are taught gradually, first outside of the swimming pool, at the edge and then in the water; first with requisites and then without. The children have more problems with coordinating and connecting the strokes and beats into a coordinated movement. Therefore we devote more time to coordination exercises, in order for the children to master and reinforce the movement (Kapus, 2011).

When teaching swimming we use different didactic principles, which enable gradual learning. The learning process moves from familiar to unfamiliar movements, from closer to distant, from simple to complex, from rough to details. In the process of sports activity, the result always depends on the learner and teacher's efforts and cooperation between them. The learners should at any time know exactly what is expected from them and what their task is (Kapus, 2011).

The teacher has to set clear frames of behaviour, rules and values in order to ensure a successful learning experience. A teacher, who cannot set clear educational, content boundaries and demands, risks becoming incapable to take the appropriate measures. He will not be respected and appreciated by his learners. Allowing too much freedom to the learners, the teacher finds himself in an awkward position where he cannot comply with all the demands, while at the same time he loses the power to change the course of action, to take measures and direct the action towards desired course. A teacher, who is well organised, systematic and is himself disciplined, can achieve and demand discipline (Škof, 2007).

Nowadays, forceful leadership does not bring success. The teacher does not have indirect power or influence to forcefully get the children to listen to him or be motivated. The teacher's power to lead the students depends highly on his personal characteristics, knowledge and feelings. In order for the teacher to get the students to listen to him and feel motivated for work, a strong emotional bond between the child and the teacher must be created, so that the child can identify with the teacher and imitate his role model. This is another reason the teacher has to be a good role model for the children in as well as outside the swimming pool (Škof, 2007).

The teacher is the one who has to show the children the importance of the content and activities they are doing. This way the children can develop inner motivation, which stems from interest and curiosity. When children feel inner motivation, they do not need external encouragement, because the activity is the reward by itself.

Playing is very attractive to children and we have to use it also when teaching swimming, because it has various complex effects. Playing can be involved at all stages of the learning process (adjustment to water, learning the swimming techniques) and in all parts of the activities (warming up, main part, closure). Playing is very important, especially in the initial period, because it reduces the feeling of jeopardy and fear of water. It can also be used to diversify the exercise itself and enforce the group dynamics (Jurak and Kovač, 1998).

The goal of playing should be clearly set and the games should be carefully and logically selected and carried out. During the early childhood the number of stimuli increases and they stir the emotions of joy. At this stage the children are happy to be involved in different activities, together with other people (mostly peers). Their joy intensifies when they are more successful than their peers. They project their emotions through different moving activities such as jumping, hugging, diving and sprinkling (Cecič Erpič, 2007).

The important task of every teacher is to teach the children they have to work hard in order to become good swimmers and that success only comes with the improvement of their abilities. At around 5 years of age, children start to compare their abilities with others and develop "healthy" competition. Inner motivation to compete with others appears. Questions such as "Who is the fastest, the strongest, the biggest?" are important to them. Research has showed that at about five/six years of age children tend to develop interest in sport, which combined with the motivation of social comparison of physical and sports abilities, presents the first indicator of their readiness to join an organised sports activity (Škof, 2007).

Mutual cooperation of teachers, parents and children brings the best results. Children improve their physical skills while having fun and feel motivated to attend sports activities. The habits learned in the early, middle and late childhood remain with children lives for the rest of their lives and it is important to approach the teaching of these in a careful and responsible manner.

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## 2.3. Pedagogy of adult non-swimmers

Author: Tina Jeromen, bachelor degree in psychology, swimming coach

There are two basic differences when comparing teaching children and adults. First, adults may be embarrassed that they have not yet learnt to swim and may lack confidence in their abilities. Second, adults tend to be very analytical and concerned about the details, which can hinder mastering the basics. This is quite different from teaching children's swimming lessons - children just want to swim, play and have fun; they don't worry about the little things.

Learning to swim as an adult is a great challenge. It should be seen as a diverse pedagogical process, which is influenced by the student's emotions towards water and swimming as well as the student's motor skills.

The most important thing for adult novice swimmers is to become comfortable in the water and learn to float. That is easy, if you succeed in convincing them that the details are unimportant, to just relax and enjoy the activity.

- The first thing you should do with adult swim students is to develop trust. We recommend that before going near the water, you develop trust with your students by simply talking with them about their experience with the water and what they would like to accomplish during the lessons. Many adults, who want to do lessons, have issues with the fact that they have put this off for so long. Discuss this with them and reassure them that it's never too late to learn this essential skill and that it is not their fault that they did not learn to swim in their youth. Listen to their stories and early experience, so they feel relaxed around you.

- Have patience and empathy, allow them learn at their own pace. You are there to help and guide the students — not to push them. Get in the water with your student(s) to demonstrate the skills you want to teach.
- Give a lot of positive feedback, but do not hesitate telling the novice swimmer what she or he can do better.
- Help them feel safe in the water; if you can, find a quiet, private environment to teach, as adult novice swimmers may feel embarrassed that they don't yet know how to swim. Don't teach them alongside children or in the middle of a crowded pool.
- Start by teaching basic skills in water that is shallow enough to touch the bottom, and once your students are comfortable with that skill, move to deeper end of the pool, if it is possible.

## Basic swimming skills, first steps

- Submerging under water: there are 3 key steps to work through, especially for those with fear of water. Others will find them easy. The 3 steps are:

Getting the face wet, taking a breath and partially submerging, total submersion and swim underwater. A gradual approach is needed here. One stage at a time and only when you are happy and confident, you proceed to the next stage. To go through this phase easily, use a lot of different and playful exercises, swimming props, different floating devices and funny toys.

- Blowing bubbles on the water surface or blowing an object along as you swim - you can either blow gently "like blowing through a straw" or blow with force "like blowing out candles on a cake".
- Cupping water in your own hands and throwing it onto your face.
- Throwing and catching a ball - the smallest of splashes from the softest of throws will be sufficient to have a positive effect.
- Partially submerging the face is the next stage of mastering swimming under water - you will learn how to hold your breath and holding it all in. An object can then be placed just under the water surface, shallow enough to see and reach for it, but deep enough for the mouth to be submerged in order to reach it. Once confidence is gained with this exercise, then the object can be lowered slightly to encourage the mouth and nose to be submerged.
- Floats and glides: get them to experience the buoyancy, first start in the shallow water and near the edge of the pool, where they can experiment with their body. You can encourage your students to wear goggles if you think it will be easier

for them. Important: before you even attempt to teach swimming strokes, help your adult students learn to float and glide in the water, as follows:

**Front float:** explain to the students that when they take a deep breath, their lungs fill with air and act as a floatation device. While holding to the side of the pool, the students should back away from the wall until they are leaning onto it diagonally with their arms straight, then they take a big breath and put their face in, so that only the back of their head is exposed. Slowly their legs will float toward the surface. Encourage them to stay in the position longer and longer, until they float 5-6 seconds.

**Glide:** swimmers take a breath; put their face in the water, place fingers of one hand over the fingers of the other. Then they push off the wall or from the bottom of the pool and glide for 5-6 seconds.

- Once you've helped the adult swim novice become comfortable floating and gliding, begin to teach specific swimming strokes. Teaching the swimming strokes is actually the least important part of giving adult swim lessons. Remember, this isn't a competition, teaching adults in a comfortable, slowly paced manner is the best way to proceed. If the students advance enough, you can then teach them other basic strokes: the backstroke, breaststroke and freestyle (Young, 2010).

## Teaching swimming techniques

We say that you know how to swim when you know how to float, tread water and can do a basic stroke (usually a breaststroke). Check out our videos at [swimtolive.org](http://swimtolive.org).

Tips for instructors:

- Always practice in a safe environment.
- Use the swimming drills progressions.
- Decompose complex motions into smaller components and practice the components independently. For example, teach arm motions independently from leg motions. Or teach the arm motions one side at a time.
- Use swimming aids, but make sure that the floatation devices don't become props that the swimmers can cling onto even when they aren't needed anymore (pull buoy).
- Use dry-land training to rehearse new motions you want to teach, lie down on the floor and demonstrate how to execute components of a swimming technique, have the swimmer do the same.



- Be creative while devising exercises to practice stroke components. Trying out new exercises may sometimes be awkward, but it's often a lot of swimming fun too.
- Have fun while you teach, laugh at yourself; if something doesn't work, try something new.
- Learn and educate yourself as much as you can about swimming, use online videos.
- Get a waterproof digital camera and film your class swimming. Seeing yourself swimming is a great way to become aware of your mistakes.
- Ask your co-workers about mistakes your swimmers are making.

## The basic terminology

- An Olympic-sized short-course pool is 25 meters long and an Olympic sized pool is 50 metres long.
- Lane: a marked part of the pool where you can swim in laps. The same rules as on the road apply - swim on your right hand side.
- Swimming style - there are four: breaststroke, backstroke, butterfly and free-style or front crawl. Most swimmers you see in the pool are swimming free-style, as it is the most comfortable technique for longer distances. Beginners, older or less experienced swimmers prefer to swim breaststroke. It is useful for them, as they can swim with their head up, breathe comfortably and see their surroundings.
- Breathing correctly is also a huge part of having swimming stamina. Eventually, you can get to a point where you can swim a whole lap or more breathing comfortably. When you are doing freestyle, the most useful breathing pattern is to inhale in on both sides of your body (stroke/stroke/breathe, stroke/stroke/breathe). The earlier you get into this habit, the better; it makes you not too reliant on one arm and evens out the muscles in your body.

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## 2.4. Swimming for visually impaired and/or blind people

Authors: Dr. Dragos Adrian Maniu and Emese Agnes Maniu

Carol Bellamy, former Executive Director of UNICEF, said: “.. UNICEF has recognized that sport and development go hand in hand. We would be disrespectful if we ignored the role of sport as a tool for approaching and inter-human communication, removing barriers between people, and encouraging values such as dignity, respect, fair play, and peaceful resolution of conflicts. Athletic competition and friendly play exists in our DNA for some reason; we must get into this spirit “ ([http://www.unicef.org/sports/unicef\\_abstract.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/sports/unicef_abstract.pdf)).

In the case of young people with disabilities, it is known that sport is one of the best physiotherapeutic and kinesthetic solutions. By doing sport, they learn discipline, become motivated and the shame of their disability is replaced by pride in their ability. It has already been demonstrated that water therapy is one of the most important benefits for blind children.

There are surprisingly large numbers of blind people who have never had the courage to move fast or to run away without fearing to strike something. Swimming at full speed or sinking and walking under water provide a real sense of freedom. Numerous different positions can be adopted during water movement, which creates a wonderful sensation, is physically and sensibly beneficial. The tactile sense develops not only at the fingertips, but at the whole body level, becoming a primary sense instead of being a secondary one.

Water provides an effective learning environment for a visually impaired person. He feels safe and relaxed, not only because he understands the dynamics of the water, but also because the space is relatively small and limited.

In the pool, a blind person can learn about body image and space by using concrete reference points such as water level, wall-to-wall distance etc. Water is also a very good medium for multiple sensory stimuli: temperature, texture, smell, watering etc.

Sport for people with disabilities has been around for over 100 years. In the 18th and 19th centuries, contributions were made to show that sport activities were very important for the re-education and rehabilitation of people with disabilities. After World War I, physiotherapy and sports medicine became as important as orthopedics and internal surgery.

Sport for people with physical disabilities was introduced after World War II to meet the medical and psychological needs of a large number of former soldiers and civilians who were injured. In an attempt to find new ways to minimize the consequences of their immobility, updating the idea that sport is a means of

treatment and rehabilitation has crystallized as a new and excellent opportunity. The benefits of the aquatic environment for people with disabilities are multiple and can be grouped into three broad categories: (1) physical, (2) psychic and (3) social (American Red Cross Textbook: Adapted aquatics 1977). Physical benefits comprise of two major development areas: organic development and psychomotor development or motor activity. Organic development consists of cardiovascular resistance, muscle strength, strength and mobility. The factors contributing to psychomotor performance are: speed, agility, perceptual motor factors. Perceptual factors include areas such as balance, kinesthetic awareness, laterality, direction, spatial relationships, visual discrimination, audience discrimination, foot hand coordination, eye hand coordination.

The existence of psychological benefits has been demonstrated through positive and successful experience (Priest L., 1987).

People with disabilities are at risk of developing a form of depression, anxiety and increased stress, low self-esteem and motivation, withdrawal from social life. Interventions through therapeutic exercises have proven to have a positive effect on social function, self-esteem, depression and self-confidence in engaging in physical activity (Shapiro and Martin, 2010).

Water is a supportive element. According to Price (1980), water claims 790 times better than air.

1935 marks the beginning of “physical educators” who not only write about the use of water as a therapeutic way, but also put this into practice (Lowman and Bright, 1935). In 1940 the Red Cross initiated a swimming programme for people with physical disabilities.

According to Kelly & Darah (2005), aquatic exercises can be used to improve physical education for children with disabilities. The potential benefits of adaptive aquatic therapy include increased cardiorespiratory resistance, strength, coordination and improvement of water guidance skills (Fragala-Pinkham et al., 2010).

The unrestricted movement and the ability to use muscles that have problems in overcoming the gravitational constraints are the main reasons why swimming and associated water activities are suited to those with a wide variety of incapacitating physical conditions, including amputation, cerebral palsy (Prins, 2009). Aquatic activities improve breath control and functioning of the cardiorespiratory system.

When a person with physical disabilities learns to move and swim without the help of others, he may also improve his self-esteem and self-awareness (Lepore, 2005). Water is also an environment in which anyone can participate in recreational or therapeutic activities, regardless of their age (Daly and Lambeck, 2007).

***Formation of swimming skills (initiation- perfection to mastery) in people with visual impairment and blind people***

Biomechanically analysed, swimming skills are composed of a series of natural driving actions (sequences of basic driving actions such as positions, movements in the stand, walking, running, climbing, pitching etc.). They are called differently from water specificity to:

- A. allow immersion, diving
- B. support floating in positions as close as possible to the horizontal of the water
- C. produce body motion through series or cycles of movements of the limbs.

All of this creates difficult conditions generated by an unstable equilibrium in the water. Balance is accomplished according to natural laws (see the principle of Archimedes), using resistance, water density - to succeed in finding hydrodynamic support points that lead to the manifestation of floating and body advancement (Maglischo, 1982).

***Forming motor skills (learning to swim) involves going through several stages, optimally and desirably - progressively.***

1. water adaptation, face immersion and control of breathing (moderate inhalation - immediate and deep exhalation);
2. habituation with the fundamental positions of floating and moving in a balance as stable as possible + relaxation against water consistency;
3. the broken learning of the forward movements, i.e. the exercising of the movements of the legs, arms;
4. forward with simplified coordination, and finally in global coordination + breathing of as many sports swimming procedures;
5. jumping skills, deep plunge, starts and regular turning technique

Behavior becomes effective when breathing becomes comfortable (there is a widespread statement: swimming is the 'art' to breathe). Oxygen deficiency can alter the correctness and efficiency of movements. A deficit in correct movement can also occur because of excessively strained, imprecise and inadequate movements.

To put it most concretely - the efficiency of movement, the mastery, will be appreciated if this action produces the advancement of the body in the desired direction of swimming (Daly and Lambeck, 2007).

# Means and methods specific to visually impaired and/or blind people

## Orientation and mobility

Familiarizing, knowing the workspace is very important for blind people. This includes the changing rooms, showers, the space around the pool etc.

The starting points and final destinations need to be established. Between these, intermediate points also need to be established for better orientation.

We have to choose a starting point, e.g. the entrance door. From there we can set the fixed landmarks we are heading to and count the steps between them. For example, we count 20 steps to the bank where we leave the towel. You set the travel direction between the landmarks. For example, 20 steps from the entrance door to the bank where we leave the towel, we turn 90 degrees right, we walk along the wall 10 steps to the flower, we turn right 90 degrees, continue 2 steps to the first blockstart, to the right corner of the basin, 2 steps to the entrance staircase.

It is very important to establish concrete concepts and appreciate the distances between landmarks.

We can stick signs, tactile guidance on the floor of the pool that will make a blind person feel very easy to move along the way to the end point.

## Familiarization with water and the pool environment

The pool has to be measured in length, width, distance between the lines, distance from the stairs to the end of the pool etc.

Using different water games helps to get acquainted with water and to understand water properties such as ascent, floating on water.

## Kinesthetic method

Proprioception (from Latin proprio (own) and perception) is the sense of perception of body parts. It is the sense that informs us about the position of the body and limbs without the help of exteroceptors.

Kinesthesia is another term often used as a substitute for proprioception, although kinesthesia puts more emphasis on movement.

Although proprioception and kinesthesia seem to be related, however, they are different. Sherrington's original description states that proprioception is the ability to determine exactly where different segments of the body are, while kinesthesia is described as the sensation that the body or its segments have moved.

When we teach a blind person to swim, it is very important to realize that the information he receives cannot be visual. We have to use other senses - hearing, the sense of touch, the kinesthetic, proprioceptive to make him learn and execute as accurately as possible the fundamental skills of swimming.

The method consists of moving the body or body parts to create "muscle memory". The movements can be fragmented for a better understanding and when applied isometrically at certain moments of movement can help in a stronger feedback about the position and movement of the segments.

Before we start, we should allow the blind person to feel the movement of the coach or another colleague, to create an overview of what he or she is going to execute (the complete method).

It will also explain in detail every single movement performed to understand it. It will insist on the correctness of the execution of the movements from the beginning in order not to form the wrong skills which is very difficult to correct later on.

## Keeping the direction

This is a common difficulty for a visually impaired or blind person. Swimming along the line would be one of the solutions, allowing them to feel the edge with their fingers. Different sounds could help the swimmer to guide him in keeping the direction.

The correct learning of the movements of the arms and legs, the identical thrusts of the arms leads to maintaining the direction.

## Conclusions

Swimming is an excellent recreational physical activity and competitive sport for individuals, who are blind or visually impaired.

It represents one of the general forms of exercises, which utilise the whole body during the activity. It is a valuable life skill, with many benefits and can facilitate the participation in many other water based activities

A person can go swimming anywhere where there is a safe body of water, whether at home or abroad, in a swimming pool, a river, a lake or in the sea. It is a family friendly activity which appeals to adults and children, to men and women, young or old people and has been practiced by blind and visually impaired for many years.

Some people have the option to take part in competitive swimming, usually through a local club. Swimmers compete within three sight classifications, defined by IBSA. Swimming is governed by the International Paralympic Committee ([www.ipc-swimming.org](http://www.ipc-swimming.org)), which incorporates the rules of FINA.

Blind swimmers must wear darkened blackout goggles and are provided with a tactile 'tap' warning to the head or upper body as they approach the end of each lap of the pool. Allowances are made in the rules for blind swimmers who may swim too close to a lane line to execute technically correct arm strokes or touches in butterfly or breaststroke.

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## 2.5. Pedagogy of adopted sport – Para swimming

Author: Jana Čander, bachelor degree in sports education

Individuals with a disability can particularly benefit from an active lifestyle; not only does it reduce the risk for secondary health problems, but all levels of functioning can be influenced positively. Regardless of the type of person, there are lessons to be learnt from them. People with disabilities are especially influential, as our hardships in life aren't easily forgotten.

There are many types of disabilities and some examples of common disabilities you may find in sports are:

- vision impairment,
- deaf or hard of hearing,
- mental health conditions,
- intellectual disability,
- acquired brain injury,
- autism spectrum disorder,
- physical disability.

If the athlete's disability is not clear to you, ask how it affects their sport activity and if they need adjustments in order to do sports to the best of their ability (Adapted Swim Committee, 2001).

Tips when working with people with disabilities in sport (Sherrill, 1994)

- Don't make assumptions about a person's abilities. If you're not sure what someone can do, just ask! Speak to adults with disability as adults.
- Treat the athlete as an athlete. Focus on the person, instead of the disability.
- Think about putting in place an inclusion policy so inequality/discrimination can be addressed quickly.
- Collaborate with the athlete to modify sport techniques. Coaches have to adapt drills and activities all the time for athletes that don't understand the drill, cannot do it correctly or have to do it differently because of a temporary injury. Generally, coaches are very creative in coming up with new ideas and they can do this to help an athlete with a disability to succeed. It also makes sense to ask the athlete of the best ways for him/her to be successful.
- Provide safe, friendly and accessible environments.
- Mix physical and social activities. Build confidence by including non-competitive activities.
- Ask before you help and respect the person's right to refuse your help.



- Always speak directly to the person with disability. If the person is with a carer or interpreter, do not direct your conversation to them.
- Learn about the accommodations, based on the rules of the sport governing body. Most sports have rules or accommodations that have been established to successfully include people with disabilities. For instance, in wheelchair tennis, the ball is allowed to bounce twice before the person has to hit it. If you are coaching a tennis team with a player who uses a wheelchair, you could allow them to let the ball hit the ground twice, but the other players must hit the ball after just one bounce.
- Foster independence. Coaches should promote independence among his/her athletes as well.
- Seek advice. Along with seeking advice from the athlete, coaches can talk to other coaches, teachers or administrators who have experience in working with athletes with disabilities. There are many coach-related chat forums on the internet and a coach can seek answers among his/her peers.

## Para swimming

*“Water is one of the big equalizers,” said Queenie Nichols, long-time Paralympic swim coach.*

The basic principles of swimming are the same for all swimmers. No two swimmers have the same physique, strength, balance, physical or learning ability. Be prepared to experiment to find out what works best for an individual. Allow plenty of time for skills to be achieved, practised and developed to maximum ability. Every swimmer has a unique style, regardless of ability. The strokes taught should be as close as possible to the norm (ASA, 2017)..

Example:

No propulsion in legs – exaggerate lower head position to achieve streamlining or use swimming float and help the swimmer with the start. Use to gain maximum propulsion from arms when leg kick is weak or unpredictable. In video (<https://swimtolive.org/swimmers/webinar/5/>) you can see a swimmer (tetraplegic): He is mainly relying on his arms for swimming. His hand, trunk and leg function is limited. He is doing double arm stroke.

When teaching people with disabilities, it is important that you look at the person’s abilities, what they can do rather than the negative disability and what a person cannot do. For this reason we need to have an open mind and treat them with empathy, not sympathy, i.e. put yourself in his/her position and imagine what it is like to be in their situation. This way you can be more positive on the outcome of a skill you are trying to set for a person with a disability to achieve.

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## 2.6. Coaching

Author: Kaja Pilko, swimming coach

Sport training is a built process of sports improvement. With its planned and systematic activities it affects the competitive ability, which enables an athlete to achieve the best competitive results (Ušaj, 2003).

The coach can improve the skills and abilities of an athlete, but has to comply with certain principles and rules during the process of sports training. He has to take into consideration the following principles: active and conscious inclusion into the training process, general development, individual approach, specialisation, cyclicity and variability, increasing strain, system and rationality. His training process has to follow the law of catabolic and anabolic phase, the law of homeostasis, the law of appropriate stimulus and the law of adjustment (Ušaj, 2003).

Swimming is a form of exercise which demands a lot of effort, concentration, patience, commitment, will and sacrifice. In order to achieve important results and visible progress, swimming demands a motivated and hard-working athlete as well as coach's abilities. In the process of athlete's development, the relationship between the swimmer and the coach is extremely, if not the most, important. Despite swimming being an individual sport, the coach is equally responsible for the athlete's achievements.

# 1. The coach

A coach is the person who holds key responsibility for understanding the psychological dimensions of the sport and is the most important part in an athlete's success (Lapuh, 2009). He complements his expertise and technical work with establishing an appropriate relationship with his swimmer.

The process of sports training includes planning of the training, implementation of the training, monitoring and the evaluation of the training process (Ušaj, 2003).

The work of a coach therefore includes (Tušak and Tušak, 2003):

- Planning of the training: probably the most difficult part of the process, because it demands the coach to possess knowledge in biomechanics, sports and developmental psychology, sports medicine and organisational skills.
- Implementation of the training: implementation of the physical, tactical and technical training, which demands the use of general and specific training methods. The training has to be structured in such a way to meet as many needs and motives of the swimmer as possible. It always has to start as an informative process, during which the athletes gain an insight into the technical and tactical aspects of the training as well as the goals set.
- Monitoring the success of the training: the coach enables the athletes to constantly monitor the effectiveness of an exercise, because it is important for their motivation and checking of their set goals.
- General concern for the athlete: the coach needs to ensure the well-being and good frame of mind for the training.
- Counselling and help: in training – correcting the mistakes, analysis of failure, improving the results; on a personal level – balancing the sports activities with other obligations outside the sports field.
- Important role in the competitions: a coach is responsible for encouragement, influencing the athlete's self-reliance and setting the strategy.

The role of a coach is not only to plan and implement the training. In order to achieve the best possible results and establish a solid relationship with his swimmer, the coach also performs other roles in the process of sports training. He needs to be a motivator, counsellor, critic, demonstrator, mentor, organiser, innovator, role model and a friend (Tušak and Tušak, 2003).

## 2. The relationship coach – swimmer

The multiple roles of a coach are related to the relationship he establishes with the swimmer. The development of this relationship can be explained through four important phases. In the initial phase the athlete respects the coach and trusts him (Tušak and Tušak, 2003). We can assume the coach gains the athlete's trust on the basis of his knowledge, personality and leadership style.

In the second phase a closer relationship between the coach and the athlete develops through the training, where the two parties bond by sharing common interests and setting up of goals. This relationship can be jeopardised in the third phase, where the swimmer can refuse the coach's advice and instructions, because he wants to enforce his own opinions and knowledge gained through the years. This phase can bring even more conflict if the athlete is experiencing failures in competitions. During this phase, the coach's emotional stability, persistence and understanding can be put to a test. In the case the third phase is resolved successfully, the relationship between the coach and the athlete evolves to the fourth phase, where understanding and cooperation between the coach and athlete becomes partner-like. In order to comply with his doubts and needs of improving the result, the athlete becomes receptive for the new information and expertise the coach passes on to him (Tušak and Tušak, 2003).

The relationship between the coach and the athlete is full of changes and grows from one phase to another. It is wrong to assume that one type of training, which is working with one athlete, can be transferred to everyone (Rushall, 2011). Therefore I think it is of key importance for the coach to develop an individual approach with every athlete when leading a group of young swimmers.

## 3. Working with different age groups

Gender and developmental differences in the adolescence period cause different physiological, biomechanical and psychological responses to a certain type of training (Rushall, 2011). The coach's knowledge and ability to develop an age appropriate training programme are very important.

The following chart represents a development model of swimmers in different age groups. The necessary acquired behaviour and competitive goals appropriate for a certain group age are demonstrated (Raleigh 2011).

CHRONOLOGICAL AGE	F: 5-8 M: 6-9	F: 8-11 M: 9-12	F: 11-14 M: 12-15	F: 14-16 M: 15-18	F: 16+ M: 18+
POOL TIME /hours of swimming	2-3	4-7	7-12	12-20	20+
MENTAL DEVELOPMENT FOCUS	- Enjoyment of water, movement - group dynamics	- Will to perform - dealing with failure - developing independence skills - goal setting - attention control - emotional control - identifying relationship between effort and performance	- Will to perform - dealing with failure - developing independence skills - goal setting - attention control - emotional control - identifying relationship between effort and performance	- goal setting - attention control - emotional control - self awareness - critical quest for perfection - cognitive understanding of training and recovery principles	- goal setting - attention control - emotional control - self awareness - critical quest for perfection - cognitive understanding of training and recovery principles
COMPETITIVE FORMAT	- club-based competitive events	- club-based competitive events - meets and time trials	- IM/Aerobic entry system (Regional/National)	- IM/Aerobic entry system (Regional/National)	- Individual event entry system
	FUNDAMENTALS	LEARN TO TRAIN	TRAINING TO TRAIN	TRAINING TO COMPETE	TRAINING TO WIN

The next chart represents training goals and knowledge that the swimmers must obtain at a certain age. A training process must also include elements which help the swimmer to develop and master certain skills in time (Raleigh, 2011).

	FEMALE (age)	MALE (age)
AGILITY	6- 13	6- 14
BALANCE	6- 13	6- 14
COORDINATION	6- 13	6- 14
FLEXIBILITY	6- 11	6- 12
SPEED OF LIMB MOVEMENT	6- 19+	6- 19+
BASIC TECHNIQUE	6- 12	6- 14
SPEED (max efforts of 8s and less)	6-9 and 11-14	6-9 and 13-16
AEROBIC ENDURANCE	12-19+	13- 19+
TACTICS AND DECISION MAKING	11-19+	13- 19+
AEROBIC POWER	14-19+	15- 19+
STRENGTH POWER	14-19+	15- 19+
ADVANCED TECHNIQUE	13-19+	15- 19+
SPEED ENDURANCE (max efforts of 8-40s)	14-19+	16- 19+
MAX STRENGTH	14-19+	16- 19+
MUSCULAR POWER	16-19+	17- 19+

A child usually takes up swimming for fun, new acquaintances and the love of water and sport. At the beginning it is important to teach the child basic motoric movement and adjust him fully to the water. Between the years 6 and 13 a constant development of technique and demonstration of basic moves are necessary. The coach ensures development of agility, balance, coordination and speed. He includes basic movements, turns, starting jumps, simple series and play into the training process and he explains the meaning of warm-up and stretching, introduces the rules and ethics of sport and helps them in developing a positive, self-confident attitude towards sport. He tries to get them interested in the competitions, helps them at setting goals and explains the concept of mental preparations to them.

From the age 12, the coach includes intensive interval series into the training programme, introduces the concept of speed and acceleration. It is important for the coach not to leave out the already mastered skills during the training. At the age of 14 gradually a concise training model starts to form. The technique is upgraded in a specific way and the process of specialisation begins. The number and intensity of trainings increase highly, more emphasis is given to competitiveness, tactics and development of responsibility for decision making. After the age of 16, swimming becomes a way of life. The mental preparation, regeneration and inner motivation, besides regular trainings, become increasingly important components, which help with winning at competitions or rather achieving set goals.

## **4. Conclusion**

In my opinion, being a coach is not just a job, it is a way of living. His leadership style displays his personality to the swimmers. The coach's personality is strongly connected with the general situation and atmosphere within the team. A coach must be an emotionally stable person who stays calm in stressful and critical situations. At the same time he needs to be realistic, flexible, responsible and reliable and has to know how to express thoughts and feelings (Tušak and Tušak, 2003). A coach has to establish a genuine, relaxed and mature relationship with the swimmer. Being easily accessible, the athlete finds it easy to trust his fears and problems with the coach, enabling him to predict the behaviour and prevent the consequences.

A coach's good organisational, didactic and psychomotor skills, a perfectly set up programme and implemented training alone are not enough for success. A swimmer must be committed to hard work and be prepared to adjust his lifestyle to achieving the desired goals.

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## 2.7. Sport psychology for instructors

Author: Dr. Tanja Kajtna, sport psychologists

This chapter describes several aspects of sport psychology, to which a swimming instructor should pay attention in order to work successfully with the swimmers. First it describes the sources of social power that can be used to get the swimmer to follow the instructions. The chapter also provides motivational aspects, goal setting rules and the description of motivational development throughout a swimmer's career, supported with a few rules for good communication. We will conclude the chapter with a few thoughts on parents and their involvement in sport of their sons and daughters.

Cartwright and Zander (Bečaj, 1997) describe 6 motivational areas, which trigger someone to accept another person's influence. In our case, this would mean that we have 6 "means" of getting the swimmer to accept the coach's instructions – these were reformulated and presented in the works of French and Raven (Bečaj, 1997) and named as sources of power:

- The power of the reward: increases the attractiveness of the coach/instructor, can eventually turn into a reference type of power. The promises we make must be fulfilled, reward can always be used, but should enhance internal mo-

tivation (not material reward). Use this power sensibly, short – term in nature. Examples of reward: praise, allowing them to choose activity, play-time introduced into practice etc.

- The power of coercion or punishment power – intensifies swimmer’s dependence and reduces coach’s attractiveness, can cause the swimmer’s wish to withdraw from sport. There are 2 types – give something negative or remove something positive. They are far more effective when in the form of rules. Fear can generalize into dislike for sport, nature etc. Extremely short – term!!! Some forms, such as physical punishment or verbal abuse are forbidden and ethically unacceptable. Examples: giving swimmers additional tasks, exposing a swimmer as a negative model, telling them that they’re incapable etc.
- The power of legitimacy – cultural values and norms determine authority (learned through upbringing) – one of the most frequent explanations to Milgram electroshock experiment; a coach is someone who can give orders, directions, who is supposed to lead...short-term, one has to be accepted as authority. Cases were reported where coaches caused burnout in athletes because they were afraid of telling them that they were tired.
- The reference power – power of good relationship, coach is an attractive person to the swimmer (even though the pupil might not even be aware of this attraction). A coach/instructor has to be a role model for sport and for a healthy lifestyle, i.e. if you set a rule and you don’t follow it yourself, the swimmers might not take it as a “proper” rule. Communication research shows that there is more non-verbal than verbal communication and that if we say one thing and act in another manner, the people we teach might follow our actions rather than our words.
- The power of expertise – the coach needs to be accepted as a good source of knowledge and information; the swimmer will use his/her information to change his or her thoughts, beliefs. The information is automatically accepted, because it comes from an appropriate source, which means that the coach has to be a good source of information and has to keep educating himself or herself.
- The information power – the person carrying the information is far less important than the information itself, the swimmer is affected by the strength and importance of information itself. This power is more stable and relatively independent of the situation, when compared to other types of social power. In sport this is not used very often, but this type of influence is frequently used when educating people about safe driving.

A few guidelines can be constructed for swimming instructors on the basis of the above described sources of power:

- Talk to your swimmers, let them know what and why you are doing, educate them.
- Give them a lot of information, which is modern, fresh.



- Be a role model.
- Reward successful activities and use punishment moderately, preferably not at all – this should only be used as consequence for disobeying the rules.
- When you make promises, make sure you fulfil them.
- Continuously educate yourselves, so that you can be a good source of information.

When we are discussing motivational aspects of a swimmer, we should know a few basic theoretical issues. The first one is Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1954, in Kajtna & Jeromen, 2013), where he states the importance of the progression of needs – an athlete, whose basic needs are not satisfied, will not be concerned with athletic results. Swimmers who are hungry, thirsty or don't feel safe in the environment, will not concern themselves with results or practice, but with getting fed, for example. This is important in several coaching situations, for example when the swimmers go on a training camp and the food in the restaurant where you are eating is bad. The coach has to concern him or herself with providing food, or else the swimmers won't be able to complete their practices.

Motivation in sport is also often misunderstood – coaches usually make three common mistakes. They think that precompetitive speeches increase motivation – all they do is increase activation. Positive thinking increases motivation, when applied sensibly – you should only encourage them in a realistic manner. The third mistake is that coaches sometimes believe that motivation cannot be changed – motivation can of course increase and decrease, later on we will give some tips on how to achieve high motivation.

Sport participation can be based on two types of motivation, motivation for practice and motivation for competitions. Successful athletes have high motivation for both practices and competitions, but usually require a lot of constructive feedback. This can be done through following a few rules of verbal communication:

- Keep your messages clear and direct.
- Include yourself in your statements – use the word “me” and “my”, define your emotions.
- Give all the necessary information, explain professional terms.
- Differentiate between facts and your opinions.
- Focus on one issue in one message.
- Tell everything immediately, don't hold back.
- Be careful with sarcasm, dark humour, insults.
- Give praise in front of the group, give criticism in private – PRAISE MORE!!!
- Point out progress!!
- Repeat important messages,
- Check for misunderstandings, look for feedback.

Motivation should be well understood also from the developmental perspective. We can speak of two types of motivation, which are intertwined through a career – internal motivation (swimming because we like it, because we enjoy ourselves, want to improve ourselves) and external motivation (swimming for money, success, fame). It is important that we start by developing and encouraging internal motivation, as it is the one that should be higher in the entire career.

It is interesting that with children, a poor result does not cause dissatisfaction, the only factor determining satisfaction is the evaluation of one's own performance; comparison to their own standards (Tušak, Tušak, & Tušak, 2003). It means that the importance of internal motivation is immense. In the following we provide some ideas on how to increase internal motivation (Morris & Summers, 1995):

- Create a relaxed atmosphere during practice and enable pleasure in practice.
- Practice should be interesting, not too long, should involve lots of exercises and elementary games.
- Practice should be individualized – when necessary.
- First competitions should be a pleasant experience.
- In competitions, reward personal progress, give „medals“ to all.

When we look at these rules more closely, we can see that they could just as well be used for practice of older swimmers, both on competitive and on recreational level. The children should however be especially protected.

Working with parents is an important aspect of every swimming instructor and some say that this is perhaps one of the most difficult roles of the coach (Smith & Smoll, 1996). The parents are often seen as a menace to coaches, but research shows that a very small percentage of the parents are actually problematic (Gross, 2003). When a coach establishes a good relationship with the parents, they will all work in the swimmer's best interest. The roles of the parents in sport should be (Loehr & Kahn, 1989):

- to encourage the children's interest
- giving emotional support and establish a feeling of trust
- showing their love also after bad performance in a competition
- teaching them to be independent – to show the swimmers how to prepare their equipment, to pack for practice; this will give them confidence to face even the biggest challenges
- to encourage them in all situations
- to insist that they are still the parents when it comes to upbringing – the parents have to be decisive
- teaching them to be confident.

We said before that children are happy with their performance when they give it their best effort (Bačanac & Škof, 2007). Often we see unsatisfied children in the

swimming pool because they were not the first or the fastest in their group. Such ideas often come from parents, but they can be prevented when a coach works hard and explains to the parents what the purpose of their children's swimming is, and that is always an individual progress, measured with time.

This brings us to the last issue of this chapter and that is goal setting. We can speak of two types of goals - outcome and performance goals. Outcome goals are typically focused on the result or more precisely the placement of a swimmer, i.e. getting into the finals, winning, while performance goals are focused on how to swim, on achieving a personal best time etc. This type of goals is more advised as it benefits establishing internal motivation and satisfies the characteristics of what is a »good goal« (Locke & Latham, 2006):

- they are specific
- the path for achieving it is well defined
- difficult enough
- the coach agrees with the goal and takes part in its setting
- constant feedback and reward is present
- a well structured environment to avoid stress and conflicts.

Finally, psychologists are often asked to test the motivation of athletes. There are several motivation tests (Gummerson, 1992), but we advise that the coaches test their swimmers' motivation through observation – look for athletes who listen to your instructions and always carry them out, who exercise regularly and do a stretching exercise at home when you tell them to, check if they bring their equipment to practice etc. Motivated swimmers will generally not be behaviourally problematic; when they are faced with obstacles, they start to think of how to overcome them and will even do more than necessary.

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## 2.8. Motivating people for change

Author: Tina Jeromen, bachelor degree in psychology

The aim of this article is to present a concept of change as an ongoing process and motivation interview technique, which can be used in recreational sport settings. We can use this knowledge when working as a coach of adults or youngsters, who are looking for a change in their lifestyle - to be more active. The first step is always to evaluate readiness for a change and to find out about the aims they would like to achieve or possible problems they have.

A stage model of behavioural changes by Prochaska and others (1992) gives a useful background and allows the understanding that each change is a process and not a dichotomous decision. With this model as a framework, we can evaluate where in the cycle of change a person is and therefore more easily and accurately start with interventions, techniques and exercises. Sport psychologists also use it in psychological interventions and in psychotherapy.

### A stage model and the process of change

It is important to understand the process of achieving change in a person's life. When working on an action plan with an athlete (or athlete to be), it is helpful to reflect on the difficulties that we all experience in trying to change our own behaviour.

Prochaska and Di Clemente (1986) outlines six stages a person must pass through in order for change to happen.

1. Precontemplation. The pre-contemplator needs self awareness.
2. Contemplation. The contemplator needs to feel that the advantages of change outweigh the disadvantages. The balance needs to tip in favour of change.
3. Preparation. At the point of determination, the person needs to sort out which of the alternative change strategies is most likely to suit him/her.
4. Action. At the action stage the person refines and carries out their change strategy. They need to establish new life skills and coping methods to maintain their change in the long term.
5. Maintenance. At the maintenance stage the person needs to be able to prevent relapse.
6. If a lapse or relapse occurs, the person needs to be able to swiftly return to the process of change and minimize the potential damage.

At the precontemplation stage, one doesn't think about possibilities and doesn't have any need for a change. This awareness starts to develop in the stage of formation of intention (contemplation stage), when a person shows an interest and readiness for some smaller change. More important changes occur during and after an action, when newly learned skills are being consolidated at the maintenance stage. Finally, there is the relapse stage, at which one may have to face possible reappearance of old problems, dysfunctional behaviour and inadequate cognitive processes (Stallard, 2005).

According to the model, how we talk to the person, depends on the stage he is at. Only when a person is prepared to actively co-operate (action and maintenance stages), we use demonstration or convincing talks (pep talk as coaches would say).

During the other three stages: relapse, precontemplation and contemplation, the work of a coach or instructor is focused on increasing motivation, interest and dedication to the aims. With the use of Motivational interview technique, one becomes aware of differences between where he is at the moment and where he would like to be. During this process a coach or an instructor tries to support every little improvement in self- efficiency or in behaviour, which indicates inner motivation.

## Motivational interview

Motivational interview is a psychological, client oriented technique and a direct way of counselling, which takes into consideration the changes in behaviour and helps to solve ambivalent feelings (Rollnick and Miller, 1995).

Principles of motivational interview:

- Motivation for a change comes from inside and is not achieved by encouraging and persuasion from outside.
- Possible ambivalence has to be clearly recognised and solved. We help a person to consider possible advantages and disadvantages of a certain decision and behaviour.
- A direct persuasion isn't efficient and increases resistance. We can begin with therapy when a child feels solid desire for change and has solved ambivalence.
- Readiness for change is a dynamic process and fluctuates over time. Therefore a psychologist has to pay special attention to any signs of resistance in order to appropriately adapt the tempo and direction of the interview.
- A psychologist actively helps by expressing ambivalence and points out any insecurity and talks about it.
- The process of motivational interview takes place within a partnership, positively oriented relation, where a child considers a psychologist as a co-worker and can freely express her/his own ideas, even if they are contrary to the therapist's.

With a motivational interview a psychologist evaluates the person's understanding of importance of behavioural changes, her/his willingness to undergo the process of change and belief that a possible change lies inside her/his own powers and skills.

Graham (2005, in Stallard, 2005) argues that it is important for a person to:

- accept a problem
- realize that this problem can be solved and changed
- recognize that certain ways of dealing with a problem can change it
- accept help in developing skills, necessary for changes, from the sport psychologist.

The process of integration or the change takes as long as it takes to discover the intentions, aims and priority interventions, until these are fully agreed on and prioritised. In the next part of the text we try to find some examples of using the stage model and motivational interview for the instructors and coaches.

## **Practical use of a stage model (how an instructor can help his/her athletes with the use of the stages)**

- Lack of intention (precontemplation stage)

At this stage the first contact rarely occurs. If they come to the gym or the pool, it is because of pressure from others. They feel bad; however they didn't really consider changing their behaviour. They can be angry or they are seemingly accepting the current state. It is also possible that the person feels he/she doesn't have any control over situation which he can't change.

With this kind of thinking it is obvious that one has no intention to change, therefore a search for the person's possible aims and possibilities of change are needed. It is important to research their knowledge about their problematic situation, since sometimes passivity is the consequence of lack of information. Placing the wishes in the context and encouraging other possible outcomes of the situation allows a person to receive new information with which he can re-evaluate possible changes.

Questions at this stage should strive to discover any discrepancy between the person's current position and where he would like to be. They should emphasize the coach's interest to learn more about the person, be positive, accessible and should accept that maybe this is not the right time to start some active changes. His objective is to emphasize the gap between the current situation and what a person would like to achieve.

- Formulation of intention (contemplation stage)

The goal is to thoroughly analyse the ambivalence and potential barriers in order to maximize the possible chances for success. The person has already recognized some potential areas, but there is still uncertainty about the possibility of its realization. Most often this is expressed with the following statements:

- > I believe that would be good, but ... it would take too long.
- > It would be nice, but it demands too much effort.
- > That would cause me less problems, but it simply won't work.

- Preparation

When talking to a person at this stage, the aim of the coach is to help him set small, realistic and achievable goals. He is ready to make a small change, has discovered potential goals, processed, solved ambivalence, removed potential obstacles and is willing to experiment. It can happen that he doesn't fully believe in success and will focus on past episodes, when such attempts have failed. The coach must continue to promote the self-esteem and motivation of the person and thus increase the chance for success, remind him of the positive previous experience and help him focus on the thoughts and behaviours that have already been useful.

- Action

This is the stage at which the person is ready to fully engage and secure a change, he or she is ready to actively participate and to build upon their early successes. The coach will provide explanations, enable a person to develop and learn. Goals that have been met and their achievements need to be regularly noticed and possibly rewarded.

- Maintenance

During maintenance stage people generalise their new skills to different situations and are able to monitor and reflect upon their practice. The coach has to encourage integration of these skills into everyday life, so that positive change is maintained. We have to consider and expect future difficulties and develop problem-solving skills that can be used to plan and cope with any future relapses. During the maintenance stage the person is helped to integrate his/her skills into everyday life and plan for future setbacks.

- Relapse

Inevitably he or she will experience problems and setbacks and encounter situations, when their old patterns and difficulties return. At times like these the person may question the usefulness and effectiveness of their new skills. The aim of the coach is to maintain the confidence and to encourage reflection about how they coped with previous situations and what they found helpful. It is also important to challenge any beliefs about the permanency of the setback and in particular, to emphasise that he/she had been able to positively change the situation in the past and probably can do so again. The coach remains hopeful and optimistic, as they help the person attend to information and skills that have proven to be useful.

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## 2.9. How to write a marketing plan; marketing strategies in promoting regular physical activities

Author: Erika Žlogar, marketing specialist

Marketing plan is a document in which you define objectives and tasks for a successful and effective implementation of a marketing campaign; it also serves as a communication tool between participants within the marketing campaign. Marketing plan must be easy to understand and read, but still professional, as you will identify all future marketing actions of your business.

In the introduction, define the background of your marketing plan, the reasons for its preparation and very important - instructions for use (especially with various results or market surveys).

The plan represents a quick overview of the entire project content. It shows how you will achieve your sales and overall marketing strategy for each element of marketing network:

- Pricing: make sure the set prices will allow: 1. acceptance from customers, 2. increase in market share, 3. profit.
- Determination of sales channels: distribution and sales methods (how many representatives etc.).
- Benefits and characteristics of the product/service.
- Marketing communications: describe advertising, forms of sales promotion - coupons and samples, personal sales opportunities, public relations (articles, interviews, social media and participation at festivals, events, exhibitions and direct marketing opportunities).

### Current state analysis

It includes following analysis and answers to the questions:

- Analysis of developments and trends in the business environment (with regard to the environment in a wider and narrower sense) in the economic, political, technological and social sphere.
- Sale of individual products in different markets over the past period by years and projections for the following years. It is also interesting to monitor the movement of costs and coverage.
- Strategies and results applied in individual markets.
- Key products and the proportion they represent in sales - sales areas with market shares.

## Form your business

- What are your products/services? Why would the consumers buy exactly your products/services? What distinguishes your business from the competition? Who are your customers? What benefits do your products have to offer to customers?
- What is special (exceptional) about your products/services when compared with the competition?
- Can your products/services provide some new forms of use?

## Analysis of buyers

Until you know your current customers in details, you will not be able to segment the market, set target markets etc.

- Who are your current customers? Describe the target market for each service, describe the ideal (key) buyer of this service, his buying behavior and what makes him/her an ideal buyer.
- Once you do this, it will probably turn out that some segments are very profitable and others not, which will affect your planning - The Pareto principle (also known as the 80/20 rule - the law of the vital few, or the principle of factor sparsity) states that, for many events, roughly 80 % of the effects come from 20 % of the causes (Wikipedia 2017).
- Why are your consumers buying your services (market research)?
- What is your market share? Is it growing, falling or remains unchanged?
- Is the market itself growing, falling or remains unchanged?

## Competition analysis

Competitors' analysis begins by identifying the closest competitors, but you should not forget or neglect less direct and potential competitors. It's useful to know about your competitors as much as possible.

- What are your competitors better at, why are you better than them?
- Analyse and compare yourself with competitors in terms of quality, exclusivity, low prices, varied assortment, product service, reliability, accuracy of delivery, location, customer lending, credit card usage, warranty, advice, friendly service, information etc.

## Sales prices

How do you design your sales prices?

- Set goals (note marketing objectives).
- Set the lower and upper sales price limits (answer questions: where is the profit threshold, profit targets, how does your product/service perceive the target markets?)
- Define a pricing strategy compared to your competition.
- Consider the impact of product life cycle, sales costs and maintenance costs.

## Marketing communications

First, you need to check all forms of market communication (advertising, personal contacts, public relations, sales promotion etc.) and evaluate their quality and how customers accept them. Review the effectiveness of each communication method when transferring the desired message, and on the other hand, the cost in this regard.

- What is your budget for marketing communications?
- How do you set funds for this purpose?
- What are the goals of marketing communication (informing, convincing buyers, encourage purchasing etc.)?

## Swot analysis

SWOT analysis (alternatively SWOT matrix) is an acronym for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats and is a structured planning method that evaluates those four elements of an organisation, project or business venture. A SWOT analysis can be carried out for a company, product, place, industry or person. It involves specifying the objectives of the business venture or project and identifying the internal and external factors that are favorable and unfavorable to achieve that objective (Wikipedia, 2017).

- Strengths (benefits) of your business: list only those that are perceived as such in the eyes of customers and which are very obvious on the market. Avoid phrases like "very professional", "quality service", "firm position". Perhaps your business also has certain hidden (latent) advantages, which for the moment do not explicitly show.
- Weaknesses of your company: in case of hidden disadvantages, the same logic of thinking applies as for advantages. Focus on the different effects that these weaknesses cause.
- Opportunities: Exist whether your business is on the market or not.

- Threats (dangers): It is possible that certain market conditions represent an opportunity as well as danger - identify the effects deriving from them and indicate the latter on either one or the other. Find out what is the so-called "discerning ability" of your business (these are the benefits that are specific to your business only). Your "Achilles heel" is your only disadvantage for your company.

## Objectives of the company

What are your marketing goals for next year?

What are your marketing goals by market segments?

When determining the order of priority of market segments, use the following criteria:

- Direction of market segment development, the current size of the market. The expected growth of the market segment and the competitive position.
- In determining the basic business orientation - in relation to an individual segment - you have approximately 6 available: test, develop, penetrate, conserve, reap and leave.
- What are the sales and profit targets?

## Market strategies

It is necessary to define marketing strategies and follow them in order to achieve the set goals, for which certain conditions must be met.

- Differentiation strategy: positive product image, trademark, patent, innovation etc.
- Low cost strategy: experience, minimize errors, labour costs etc.
- Focus strategy: focusing on niche, geographic area, limited series etc.

## Action plan

It needs to show measures - what, when, how to conduct individual actions. If possible, it is also necessary to identify responsible persons.

## Capital

It is necessary to define resources for carrying out the project and the financial projections of the implementation of the actions.

## Control

Who, how and when will hold the control over the actions, comparison with the planned results and measures in case of deviations.

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## 2.10. Intercultural dialogue

Author: Maja Isaković, bachelor degree in ethnology and cultural anthropology

Intercultural dialogue is, essentially, the exchange of views and opinions between different cultures.

Unlike multiculturalism, where the focus is on the preservation of separate cultures, intercultural dialogue seeks to establish links and common grounds between different cultures, communities and people, promoting understanding and interaction.

People are different in many ways. Some of these differences appear due to personality, socioeconomic class, age or education, but the most profound differences may be cultural.

Many people think that if they just treat others with respect, they will avert most cultural problems. But that is not always the case. Some knowledge of cultural customs can help avoid misunderstandings and provide better communication.

The danger in considering cultural differences is that of stereotyping people. All of us are unique. To say, for example, that "Russians do this" and "Vietnamese believe that" is both foolish and possibly dangerous. First, it is important to distinguish between stereotypes and generalizations. They may appear similar, but they function

differently. For example, if I meet a Roma woman and assume that she has a large family, I am stereotyping her. But if I say to myself, "Roma people tend to have large families; I wonder if she does," then I am generalizing. A stereotype is an ending point, and no effort is then made to ascertain whether it is appropriate to apply it to the person in question. A generalization, on the other hand, serves as a starting point. Knowledge of cultural customs can help avoid misunderstandings.

A generalization is a statement about common trends within a group, but with the recognition that further information is needed to ascertain whether the generalization applies to a particular person. Therefore, it is just a beginning. Because differences always exist between individuals, stemming from a variety of factors such as, in the case of immigrants, the length of time they have spent in a foreign country and their degree of assimilation, even generalizations may be inaccurate when applied to specific persons.

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# 3. Practical Part: the Differences in Approaches to Teaching Different Abled People

## 3.1. Social inclusion through sport

Author: Katarina Praznik, university graduated sport teacher

### What is social inclusion?

Social inclusion is the process that ensures that everyone, regardless of their experience and circumstances, can achieve their potential in life. Poverty is the core

of social exclusion, but there are other factors such as class, gender, ethnicity, disability, location (rural or urban) etc.

Social exclusion describes the process that leads to individuals or groups being fully or partly excluded from normal exchanges, practices and rights of modern society and therefore from full participation in that society.

In Slovenia, we distinguish between integration and inclusion. The first is a process of adapting the child to the rules and environmental standards to which he is involved as much as possible. Inclusion means adapting the environment and accepting the special features of the child so that the child is able to develop to the optimum.

To be inclusive means welcoming everyone to your club, regardless of factors like ability, gender, sex, background or age. Everyone has the right to be involved, and it's beneficial to everybody when club membership represents and reflects the whole local community.

Inclusion in sport has been defined as "increasing access to participation within, and reducing exclusion from any arena that provides sport and physical activity." Our goal should be for all children and youth, no matter what type of degree of disability they have, to take full part in sport and leisure, according to their choice.

### **The types of barriers in sport activities are:**

1. Physical barriers: children with disabilities need physical rehabilitation accessories (prosthetics, orthotics, mobility aids etc) to enable them to play sport. Sports facilities need to be accessible, equipped with ramps and rails, smooth surfaces and access routes.
2. Social barriers: there may be a number of unhelpful attitudes and opinions surrounding children with disabilities in sport, which leads to exclusion. That is why some children and youth may lack the self-confidence to take part in sports activities. They may be shy or embarrassed, worried about being humiliated or bullied by others, or afraid of experiencing defeat. Sport clubs, which focus on competitive sport, may see it as a waste of time having youth with disabilities as members as they will not be able to compete anyway.
3. Economic: Sport is a leisure-time activity and many disabled are living in poverty and do not have the luxury of free time or money to spend in sport or they are busy in livelihood activities. There are always some financial costs when participating in sport, most notably transport. Other costs include the cost of sports equipment and clothing.

Local authorities and schools need to recognise the important role of instructors and sport clubs in the process of social inclusion of disadvantaged children. Some coaches and sport clubs expressed their needs to acquire more theoretical and practical knowledge about social inclusion of children coming from disadvantaged backgrounds. But sometimes they don't want to work with disadvantaged kids. A coach is the person who determines the kind of experience children and adolescents will have in sport. He or she has to recognise, that a positive sporting experience can help develop self-confidence and self-esteem and social inclusion goes hand in hand with that.

When working with children in sport (Jowsey, 1992), there are some general principles to keep in mind: focus on ability, encourage independence and responsibility for their own learning, be patient, be aware of specifics for each child and practice close observation.

## **Swimming as a socially inclusive sport and the Halliwick Concept**

We believe that there is a great need in Slovenia to have more seminars and trainings for instructors and coaches related to the pedagogy, social inclusion, integration and promotion of social inclusion. Swimming as a sport has many advantages, as it is a sport suitable for everyone aged from 0 to 110 years.

The Halliwick Concept is a method for all people: with disabilities, with Parkinson's, mute, blind, mental disorders, cerebral palsy, head damage, tetraplegic, paraplegic, multiple sclerosis, amputees, muscles dystrophy etc. It is based on playing in the water and other activities to enhance the feeling of the water.

It was originally developed by fluid mechanics engineer James McMillan in the late 1940s and 1950s to teach physically disabled people independence in water. Based on fluid mechanics, McMillan developed teaching and therapeutic approaches to enhance their sense of balance (equilibrioception) and core stability (Wikipedia).

There is an organised Halliwick Society in Slovenia, which carries out necessary training courses and recurring seminars. So far these trainings have produced enough instructors capable of teaching swimming to people with all kinds of special needs and who obtained further knowledge of teaching the Halliwick method.

## **What is the Halliwick approach?**

The first objective is the swimmer's safety and complete trust and confidence in water. This is followed by learning swimming techniques. The required time



it takes the person to adopt each goal is completely irrelevant. The swimmer is encouraged to his individual pace and to be as active as he can be in adaptation to the dynamic forces of water with the help of the instructor. The swimming learning programme consists of 10 points, which are to be gradually mastered by the person, before moving on to learning swimming techniques.

## Our experiences

We have been running swimming courses for people with different disabilities (26 swimmers) integrated in the Swimming Club Velenje for the last 15 years. The majority of participants learnt to swim or at least independently move in the water, as well as showed improvement in physical and mental abilities.

Courses are based primarily on the voluntary work that strengthens civil society. The kids are in the pool at the same time as other swimmers, so they have a chance to meet others, to talk, to make friends and even swim together. They all like to swim unified relays, in my opinion the most exciting and powerful activity for both swimmers and swimmers with disabilities.

People with special needs typically require an individual approach, tailored to their developmental abilities.

- The programme for children must support proper development of the child in all areas.
- Instructions should be given clearly, simply and directly.
- Exercises should be demonstrated and, if necessary, swimmers are assisted to assume proper positions.
- Progress is achieved through 10 systematic activities.
- The instructor should exhibit consistent, predictable, respectful care and friendly attitude, with the ability to adjust the teaching methods to each individual's abilities.
- Award the participants with sport activities, participation in various competitive activities (for example, a local swimming competition).

It is important to share positive results and popularize swimming among people with special needs, to promote importance of an active lifestyle. Swimming classes and events allow learning, social interactions and social inclusion that school alone cannot offer. We have implemented individualized swimming learning programmes so that each swimmer can achieve success and be included in the group. The results show that anyone, who regularly attends practice, regardless of their physical and mental ability, using the appropriate methods, can master this important skill.

## Inclusion in sports competitions

We have so many differences between disabled people and presume that swimmers with intellectual disabilities cannot compete equally with other swimmers. But they want to compete like other children. Through the Slovenian Swimming Association we have connected with other clubs and started to participate in swimming events on a regular basis in 2005. Today, in 2017 we are seeing results as we organise joint competitions.

Children with intellectual disabilities can participate in the Special Olympics (only swimmers with large intellectual dysfunctions can compete). The changed rules in 2014 enabled that competitors from different sports clubs (judo, football, table tennis etc.) can be involved in SO competitions. Disabled people are getting more integrated in regular sport clubs, not only in institutions, and their free time is spent in different everyday types of environment.

In the 2012 London Paralympics games the swimmers with IQ lower than 75 could compete in group S14. The first time this group was included in national competition in Slovenia was in 2015, when the Slovenian paralympics committee accepted people with intellectual disabilities. But it is still not open for people with Down syndrome. Since Slovenian Paralympics committee become an INAS member, we can compete regularly in international competitions. They are doing the classification for paralympics world committee. INAS now has a special group of swimmers for Down syndrome and autism and we are going through the process to classify them too.

Recommended reading and watching:

- <http://eswimming.eu/eng/index.html>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dA-DC1SMjqw>
- [http://www.halliwick.net/images/pdf/10\\_p\\_eng.pdf](http://www.halliwick.net/images/pdf/10_p_eng.pdf)
- <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Halliwick>

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## 3.2. Coaching methods and tricks - my experience

Author: Pia Hočevar Mucić, swimming coach

### About my class

I worked at the swimming pool for 6 months with swimmers who participated in the Swili project. My group consisted of five swimmers, all with different capabilities to learn swimming. I had three younger swimmers (in their twenties, thirties) and two swimmers in their forties and fifties who only learned to swim as grown-ups. All five of swimmers were previously inactive in sport. It's quite important at what age you learn to swim, so my teaching methods and goals for the younger swimmers were different from the methods for the older.

My goal for the younger swimmers was to teach them how to swim all four main swimming disciplines: butterfly, breaststroke, backstroke and freestyle and also to improve their speed and endurance. My goal for the older swimmers was firstly to make sure that the two became more relaxed in the water and to make sure they start to love swimming; secondly, to teach them the three elementary swimming techniques: backstroke, breaststroke and freestyle.

### How to begin the learning process

I started my swimming lessons with the most vital part of the swimming: properly exhaling into the water. For one month the swimmers had to repeatedly practice exhaling into the water every time they swam a lane. They all managed to learn this by the end of the month. Of course that's not all we did the first month.

At the beginning of someone's learning process, I always make sure they learn how to kick. The swimmers first practiced breaststroke kicks with a kickboard. It's very important that the swimmers keep their feet outwards before straightening their legs. This is the key component of the breaststroke kick and if it's not fulfilled, the effect of the kick, regarding the speed, is very minimal. When they mastered that, we added one exhale per one breaststroke kick. The most important thing with this exercise is that the swimmers master the art of continuous exhaling and inhaling, without having to stop to make breath for a while. They also have to figure out the coordination between swimming kicks and breathing.

The swimmers have to learn proper timing of when to inhale and exhale, so that they can swim for a longer time without stopping.

Before we started learning different techniques, we began to practice freestyle kicks as well. With freestyle kicking it's very important that the swimmer's feet are not stiff, but more relaxed, especially around the ankles. If that's not the case, the swimmers can even swim backwards or they don't move at all. This problem often occurs with swimmers that start to learn swimming later in life. Freestyle kicks are usually pretty tough to learn, because you have to kick continuously. At the beginning the endurance of the swimmers is very low and they get tired of kicking after a few meters. I like to use swimming fins to strengthen the swimmer's legs and build kicking endurance. The fins also help the swimmer to maintain his/her body position and because of that they can also practice kicking for longer periods of time. Their legs are not holding them back anymore.

One of the things I also start teaching very early in the process is kicking while floating on the back. This is a very important exercise, if the swimmer wants to learn backstroke any time soon. After the swimmer masters freestyle kicking, he really needs to learn how to float relaxed on the back and kick at the same time. Once the swimmers learnt these basics, we were able to begin our swimming lessons for real.

To summarise the basics: at the beginning I always start with teaching proper breathing technique, which is the basis for all swimming disciplines. While they learn to exhale in the water properly, I start to teach the students breaststroke and freestyle kicks. I use the following swimming equipment at the beginning: kickboard and fins. A kickboard serves as a support and the fins are great to strengthen the swimmer's legs. That way they can kick longer and faster. At the beginning, the swimmers have to master the body position as well. They need to be relaxed in the water, otherwise they start to sink.

After the swimmers learn the basics, I start to teach them the two disciplines that are the easiest for beginners to learn: backstroke and breaststroke.

## **Learning breaststroke**

In my opinion, one of the most useful exercises for learning breaststroke looks something like this: the swimmer starts the exercise floating on the belly, arms are stretched above his head and the legs are straight. The swimmer's face is in the water. Then the swimmer makes two breaststroke kicks following with one breaststroke arm stroke that lifts him above to water for an inhale. This exercise forces the swimmer into gliding and improves his breaststroke coordination immensely.

From these exercises I continue with a simple exercise of breaststroke gliding. The swimmer makes one arm stroke and inhale, followed by one breaststroke kick. After this cycle the swimmer glides in a stretched position.

At the beginning of a learning process I always make sure each exercise is repeated often. I use only a few different exercises and try to make sure the swimmers perfect these exercises before moving on to other, more complicated exercises. I also make sure that my swimmers practice strokes and kicks separately. As mentioned before, the kicks are practiced with the help of a kickboard. For arm stroke practice I give them a few exercises like making only breaststroke arm strokes with a pull buoy or practicing arm stroke while kicking freestyle kicks. That way a swimmer can also improve on a specific area that is causing him problems.

I made a very detailed video on learning how to swim breaststroke step by step, you can find the link bellow:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fyFilrqHhFM>

## **Learning backstroke**

Learning the backstroke discipline starts with kicking while floating on the back. At this point the swimmer usually has a kickboard in their hands for support. Than we start with simple arm strokes, while the swimmer still holds a kickboard with the other hand. When he is confident enough, he tries to swim the same exercise without a kickboard. First we separate the movement of each arm, while still maintaining the flutter kicks. When the swimmer masters this, he tries to rotate his arms continuously, while still maintaining his body position and flutter kicks.

I made a detailed video on backstroke learning process as well and you can check it out on the link below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Uk5d8BTopU&list=PL7XzKr09uUm-geVEDtZb821KG-2igWJILU>

## **Teaching freestyle – when is the appropriate time to start?**

When the swimmer can swim 100 meters in both breaststroke and backstroke technique, he is ready to start learning freestyle. Breaststroke prepares him for the breathing challenges of freestyle and backstroke teaches him how to maintain the right body position while continuously kicking.

I always start teaching freestyle with a simple exercise. The swimmer has to kick while keeping his body position sideways. One arm is extended above his head and

the other arm rests on his hip. When the swimmer learns this, I add simple head rotations, so that the swimmer has to exhale into the water and inhale when he is floating in the water sideways.

I continue with simple exercises such as “hand waiting for the other hand”; swimming freestyle with the help of a kickboard, the arms alternate in swimming. First you make a stroke with one hand, then you hold on to the board and make a stroke with the other hand.

At the beginning I also like to give my swimmers freestyle without breathing, because it’s easier for swimmers to learn the simple arm strokes that way.

Freestyle coordination is very difficult for beginners, so I try to teach breathing sideways separately from the whole technique. Breathing is also the thing that causes the most problems to swimmers at the start of their learning process.

I made a video on how I teach freestyle and you can check it out on the link below:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TiX5GPh6MUA&index=16&list=UU69dVxOo-e4qu5PBWGYTJVBQ>

Overall, it is very important to show your swimmers very explicitly how they should swim each exercise. While I’m explaining each individual exercise to them, I’m also showing them how the exercise should look like.

I started teaching the younger three swimmers the butterfly technique just a few months later than the other three disciplines. I wanted to make sure the swimmers became really relaxed in the water and they also had to improve their strength in the water, as well as endurance for them to be able to swim the butterfly properly.

The reason I started teaching the butterfly only with the younger swimmers is because, in my opinion, they were prepared for it. The two older swimmers did learn backstroke, breaststroke and freestyle quite good as well, but I still saw they were far too stiff and not completely relaxed in the water. Because of that I felt it would be better they improve elementary disciplines first, before we continue on with more difficult lessons.

I prefer the swimmers to learn fewer disciplines, but swim them properly.

I always start teaching the butterfly with butterfly kicks. First the swimmers practice them underwater (this is especially effective with adults, because they are more stiff than children), because it’s easier for grown ups to achieve those smooth, soft and continuous movement underwater. Next step is practicing butterfly kicks while floating in the water sideways. After that, I start teaching them to coordinate two butterfly kicks with one breaststroke arm stroke. Only when the swimmers learn to coordinate both movements, I begin to teach them simple butterfly arm strokes. My swimmers managed to learn a simple butterfly technique in two months, but still their technique is far from perfect. It takes quite a lot of time to really master the butterfly.

## The results of Swim to Live swimming classes

If I summarize our swimming classes during the Swim to Live project, I would say my swimmers achieved a lot. They came to me with only the ability to swim the simple “frog” technique and in less than six months all of them learned how to swim breaststroke, backstroke and freestyle. When you take into consideration that these swimmers were all very inactive before enrolling into the swimming club, this is a huge accomplishment.

They even participated in the Swim to Live competition, which took place in June. I was very proud of them, because they found the courage and took on such a big challenge in their swimming career. I think that it is very important to encourage your swimmers every step of the way. We often forget to compliment the adult swimmers and we should definitely do it more often. I’ve noticed how much it means to every swimmer in my class, if I tell them how much progress they made in the past weeks.

I think the climate of the swimming class is important as well. Every coach should create a relaxed and fun environment for their swimmers, because especially with adult recreational swimming, a lot of people participate for reasons such as socializing in good company. If they feel good in our company, they always come to the pool with a smile on their face and everybody feels a lot better.

When it comes to learning a new sport a bit later in life, there are a lot of factors you have to consider. Firstly, it’s a lot easier to learn swimming if you participated in sport activities previously in your life. That way you learn faster and with ease. Secondly, you have to have a lot of patience. Many people come to swimming classes and expect to learn freestyle in one hour. Unless you are a natural talent, the odds are you will need at least 1 month to learn freestyle and start enjoying while swimming it. Of course this varies from person to person, so you shouldn’t be too hard on yourself if you need more time.

And finally, you have to be determined. Don’t give up after one month, thinking swimming is not a sport for you. Everyone can learn how to swim and at the end people really start to enjoy swimming after they learn the techniques properly.

### **3.3. Good examples of teaching swimming to disabled people**

Link 1: webinar »Para swimming exercises« by Jana Čander  
<https://swimtolive.org/swimmers/webinar/4/>

Link 2: webinar »Good practices in teaching swimming to different groups of people« by Jana Čander  
<https://swimtolive.org/swimmers/webinar/5/>

Link 3: »A brief introduction to teaching freestyle to visually impaired swimmers« by Emese Agnes Mani  
<https://swimtolive.org/swimmers/video/16/>

## **4. Swim to Live Experience**

### **4.1. Results, survey analysis and conclusions of the Swim to Live event**

At the end of the Swim to Live event in June 2017, we wanted to get feedback from participants of the licence seminar and project participants. We sent all of them a survey about the project and the event.

For participants of the project the whole experience was good, they learnt new strategies, new internet and marketing skills, they improved their swimming knowledge. The results of the survey show that it would be even better if swimmers would have more swimming lessons. Another important feedback is a wish of instructors to communicate more with other participants and to organise tasks in a different way.

At the event itself, the most popular part was sports psychology; the participants were also very satisfied with learning about training disabled people and new psychology strategies. For more than 50 % of participants, the least relevant workshop was sports marketing, 75 % of them also didn't like the marketing workshop.

The first step after the seminar for 54.5 % of participants is to apply new knowledge into their work. For project participants, the first step will be going on with other projects and to keep on practise swimming.



We made a few mistakes with the marketing workshop. For instance, we closed the blinds and windows on a very hot day and there wasn't enough air in a very crowded lecture hall. Before the seminar, we had asked the participants to ask one question to each lecturer and gave the questions to them, to make a more focused lecture. The questions were very good and we expected a lot from the participants, but in the end most of them did not want to speak up in the interactive workshop. We made the mistake of asking too much from the participants. Next time it is better to stick to a more basic level. Also this was a licence seminar for swimming instructors, where most of them have never had to deal directly with marketing before. It is very possible that most of them do not feel that they will need this kind of knowledge in the future.

## **Swim To Live evaluation results**

### **1. Event**

We asked all the participants to answer some questions about the event: how was/were the accommodation, food, logistics etc.

In general, all participants were satisfied with the event. The survey answers tell us that that swimmers were most satisfied with accommodation and places, the instructors said that the organisation and the project was good, they liked their group and food, but the free time could have been better organised. Club leaders graded best their activities and organisation of the events.

### **2. Competences and experience**

We asked the participants whether their competences changed during the project and what they liked or disliked about the event activities and the project as a whole.

#### **Instructors**

Results of the survey shows us that all instructors feel their competences changed for the better.

Table 1: Instructor’s evaluation of the project.

Survey questions	Answers (not edited)
HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE WHOLE EXPERIENCE IN THREE WORDS?	Very good for participants. Interesting, good experience. A good experience. Intensive, instructive, great!
WHAT ARE THE NEW PERSPECTIVES THAT THE PROJECT BROUGHT TO YOU?	Learning about myself. New strategies to work in the Club and with athletes. The importance of sharing and the opening about new cultures and projects. Better inclusion through adaptive sport activities.
WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED ABOUT THE PROJECT?	Knowleges. Just a bit more of communication with the participants. Organizaton about the task Maybe the whole main activity should be a little bit longer.
WHAT IS THE FIRST STEP YOU ARE GOING TO TAKE AFTER THIS PROJECT?	Rest. Reflect on what I learned . Try to make a new project. I'll plan another one.
WHICH OF THE ACTIVITIES DID YOU LIKE THE MOST? PLEASE EXPLAIN.	Psychology Workshop. Interesting and productive. Dinamic speaker. team building in the city The practical ones. These were the best opportunities to learn and experiment.
WHICH OF THE ACTIVITIES WAS THE LEAST IMPORTANT FOR YOU? PLEASE EXPLAIN.	Administration tasks. Take a lot of time. Marketing. Not a lot of strategies to work marketing seminar I liked all the activities
WHICH OF THE ACTIVITIES WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT FOR YOU? PLEASE EXPLAIN.	Social part. Sport Psychology. O can use it in my daily job. all the groups activities The practical ones at the swimming pool. Best opportunity to practice and learn
WHICH WAS THE BEST MOMENT OF THE PROJECT?	To met new people. Teambuilding exercise. All the groups activities. The contest.
WHICH WAS THE WORST MOMENT OF THE PROJECT?	Writening tasks. Short time for lunch in Friday. Nothing so worts. No such a moment.
OTHER COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS, ADVICE, OPINIONS, IMPRESSIONS	Be patience with voloneters. Good opportunity to meet and share other culture and opinions. Thank you, I'm not depressed at all :)
WRITE SOME WORDS FOR THE TEAM.	Thanks. Thank you for providing tais experience. Thank you! Good Job. I love you all :)

## Club leaders

Club leaders’ evaluation of the project: we asked them how their competences changed during the project and to rate the change from 1-5. Implementing changes in their organisation and sports marketing both improved (the average grade was 3,50).

Table 2: Club leaders' evaluation of the project.

Questions	Answers (not edited)
HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE WHOLE EXPERIENCE IN THREE WORDS?	Really GREAT! Interesting, happiness, open mind to others and others situation.
WHAT ARE THE NEW PERSPECTIVES THAT THE PROJECT BROUGHT TO YOU?	Keep your eyes wide open, you can always learn something New. To work a lot with european partners to improve not as professional-istes but as persons
WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED ABOUT THE PROJECT?	We need to know if there are some special needs for people who are comming. That is more easy to learn when there are a lot of people with their experiences.
WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THE TASKS? PLEASE EXPLAIN	New skills of using internet (link, surveys...) I learn the importance of marketing and promotion of all activities.
WHAT IS THE FIRST STEP YOU ARE GOING TO TAKE AFTER THIS PROJECT?	Going on with other projects. talk about it with all others colleagues
WHICH OF THE ACTIVITIES DID YOU LIKE THE LEAST? PLEASE EXPLAIN.	Marketing because is very important but I know about it not much
WHICH OF THE ACTIVITIES DID YOU LIKE THE MOST? PLEASE EXPLAIN.	Everything. It was educational. I most like sport psicology because is very interesting
WHICH OF THE ACTIVITIES WAS THE LEAST IMPORTANT FOR YOU? PLEASE EXPLAIN.	Everything is important for the club, but in my case marketing is the most important. There aren't activities not important.
WHICH OF THE ACTIVITIES WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT FOR YOU? PLEASE EXPLAIN.	Marketing. We need to move forward, use other ways to promote. Practice activities because is important compare the different methods thats are used by the istructors come from different nations
WHICH WAS THE BEST MOMENT OF THE PROJECT?	All free time (lunch, dinner) with other people from the project. It was fun :) The competitions of the swimmers because is realy a moment of happiness
WHICH WAS THE WORST MOMENT OF THE PROJECT?	Silence in marketing seminar There isn't durig the days when we staid in Ljubljana, before during the organization of travel there were some difficulties in the comunications.
WRITE SOME WORDS FOR THE TEAM.	Enjoy & keep swimming! Thanks for all you are all very nice and professional
OTHER COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS, ADVICE, OPINIONS, IMPRESSIONS	Just keep going! :) I think allways we can improve by new experience.

# Swimmers

Table 3: Swimmers' evaluation of the project (answers were not edited)

Survey Questions	Answers (not edited)
HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE WHOLE EXPERIENCE IN THREE WORDS?	Great fun, proud. Vse dobro. Very nice experience. Achieving, trust, fun. Muito bom. Relaxing, novelty, joyful. Fun, beautiful, super. Nice, multicultural, healthy.
WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED ABOUT THE PROJECT?	More lessons. Nimam pripomb. Mais treinos um acompanhante eficiente com os praticantes e explorar a parte cultural do país. At this moment, I have no ideas. Sorry! The free time. On the day of the workshops, the swimmers were ignored.
WHAT DID YOU LEARN AS A RESULT OF THIS PROJECT?	I can achieve everything, Leta niso pomembna za dosego ciljev. To swim, i can do it if only i want to, Desporto da qualidade de vida! I learn to swim. first to swim correctly, to be patient and to scale my effort in 100 meters contest specially. To have more confidence in my abilities.
WHAT IS THE FIRST STEP YOU ARE GOING TO TAKE AFTER THIS PROJECT?	to keep on practise swimming.
WHICH OF THE ACTIVITIES DID YOU LIKE THE LEAST? PLEASE EXPLAIN.	Conhecer outro país outras culturas e fazer desporto! Everything was ok for me, nothing for here. I liked them all.
WHICH OF THE ACTIVITIES DID YOU LIKE THE MOST? PLEASE EXPLAIN.	Plavanje pod strokovnim vodstvom. Poder prática desporto num outro país sem custo (the swim competition, the visit of Ljubljana). Treasure hunting was merveilleous. I will always recall our tasks and the feeling of freedom to do and to say everything, without caring what somebody will think of. All the activities because they were moments of conviviality with various people and cultures.
WHICH OF THE ACTIVITIES WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT FOR YOU? PLEASE EXPLAIN.	To learn how to swim. Plavanje in pozitivna energija skozi celoten program. Os treinos porque se aprende novas técnicas, the most important was the swim competition. It was very important to take part in the swimming contest. I am a looser but I took part and that's much more better than regretting a better performance. The swimming competition and the treasure hunt, because it allowed me to break my limits.
WHICH WAS THE BEST MOMENT OF THE PROJECT?	Vsaka ura je bila nekaj posebnega. Ko sem prvič zaplaval. The swimming part; when something just comes together after a period of time. O convívio entre os praticantes do projeto. When I finished my swim. Treasure hunting had its special feeling and was really funt. Thanks to all my team, the Riba Fish Prize! All moments of conviviality and have managed to exceed my personal goal in the competition. When i start to swim on my own.
WHICH WAS THE WORST MOMENT OF THE PROJECT?	Prva ura. None. No dia da competição. A little too worm temperatures. I think it's not un to you. Isn't it? I can not say that there was a bad moment.
WRITE SOME WORDS FOR THE TEAM.	Keep working. Najbolsa ekipa. Keep moving. Muito sucesso para o futuro. The best! Everything was well prepared so there is no problem. I appologize that I can't offer some new ideas. I really enjoyed participating in the project. There are things that can and should improve, are on track. In an upcoming event, I recommend that you bother to get to know the culture of the participating peoples a bit.

### 3. Swim to Live seminar evaluation

We can see how participants evaluated their experiences with the seminar in general, the organisation, their contribution and the group (33 answers).

Table 4: The most frequent written answers from the evaluation of the seminar (33 participants).

Questions	The most frequent answers in percents
WHICH WORKSHOP DID YOU LIKE THE LEAST?	marketing 72,7 %
WHICH OF THE ACTIVITIES WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT TO YOU? PLEASE EXPLAIN.	workshop at the pool 39,4 %
WHICH OF THE ACTIVITIES WAS THE LEAST IMPORTANT TO YOU? PLEASE EXPLAIN.	marketing 54,5 %
WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED ABOUT THE WORKSHOPS?	marketing lecture 24,2 %
WHICH WAS THE BEST MOMENT OF THE SEMINAR?	workshop at the pool 39,4 %
WHICH WAS THE WORST MOMENT OF THE SEMINAR?	marketing lecture and seminar conditions (language, heath) 21,2 %
WHAT ARE THE NEW PERSPECTIVES THAT THE SEMINAR BROUGHT TO YOU?	Knowledge about disabled in swimming and psychology strategies 27,3 %
WRITE SOME WORD FOR THE ORGANIZER AND THE TEAM.	thank you, good organisation 78,9 %
WHAT IS THE FIRST STEP YOU ARE GOING TO TAKE WITH THE NEW KNOWLEDGE?	to apply new knowledge into work 54,5 %

## Some words of encouragement for the organisers:

Enjoy and keep swimming!

Thanks for everything, you are all very nice and professional.

I love you all!

Thank you! Good job!

Thank you for providing this experience.

Keep working.

Best team.

Keep moving.

Much success in the future!

Everything was well prepared so there was no problem. I apologize I can't offer any new ideas.

More seminars like this. :-)

I gained some new experience.

Continue developing and promotion of swimming.

All the best to you, I hope you will organise more projects like this.

Good job, beautiful.

My compliments to the organisers that the seminar was organised at this time.

## 4.2. Swimmers' results

Here are the results of the swimming lessons. We have graded participants' swimming from 0 to 6. In the table we can see a change in the swimming knowledge at the beginning of the project and at the end of the lessons (after 6 months). In average the grade at the beginning was 1.27 and at the end 4.24. Only one person decided to end his participation.

Table 1. Raw results of swimming knowledge before and after the project

Name and last name of the swimmer	Before	After
Pauolo Figueira	1	3
Pauolo Pereira	1	2
Claudio Botete	4	5
Silvia Arantes	1	2
Pedro Valadas	1	Quit
Jure Jerman	1	5
Urška Pintar	2	5
Špela Jevišek	3	5
Željko Jojič	0	4
Brane Gams	0	5
Alessandro Levrero	1	5
Francesca Moretti	1	5
Giorgia Ghione	6	6
Silvia Durante	5	6
Matteo Auoro	4	5
Luca Capanna	4	6
Laura Rossi	1	3
Martin Kastelic	0	1
Stojanka Pavlovič	0	2
Jurij Peternel	0	1
Catalin Linteanu	0	5
Andrei Asofiei	0	5
Stefan Halus	1	5
Niculae Burulela	0	4
Adina Odobasa	0	4
Rodica Halus	0	4
Timea Palacean	0	5
Marius Tiala	0	5
Ionela Racatau	0	5
Carmen Trasca	1	5

## Meaning of the grades:

- 6 A person can swim 50m or more in 4 different techniques at the basic level
- 5 A person can swim 50m or more in 3 different techniques at the basic level
- 4 A person can swim 50m or more in 2 different techniques at the basic level
- 3 A person can swim 50m or more in 1 technique at the basic level
- 2 A person can swim 50m or more, but in none of the acknowledged techniques
- 1 A person can swim at least 25 m, but in none of the acknowledged techniques
- 0 A person swims less than 25 m.

Table 2: Results for men and women:

	Men	Women
Before	1.13	1.43
After	4.07	4.43

## 4.3. An example of good practice

### Pilot project to teach children swimming by using storytelling

Author: Anna Gelli, swimming instructor

MySport society's primary focus is to spread the message that participating in sport activities is one of the most important things for both physical and mental wellness of all people.

Because small children (younger than four) can often be forced into taking swimming lessons by their parents (at least in the beginning), have an existing fear of water, don't want to be away from their parents for so long etc, we have come up with a new way of teaching them how to swim.

We want them to play as much as possible during the lesson and feel safe. So we came up with the idea of combining teaching swimming with fairy tales. Preschool children are still full of imagination and through playing they learn a lot of new things.

### So how will we go about it?

One of our swimming instructors likes to write poems and stories and she wrote them especially for this pilot project. Every story has an animal as the primary



hero, for instance a dog, who has to face different situations in order to improve himself or to win over his fears. The swimming lessons will take place twice a year, in fall and spring, and they will consist of 10 lessons for each cycle. In every lesson specific motor skill will be developed. The goal is that after the 10 lessons, the children will have learned all basic skills (adapt to water) and to be able to enjoy themselves in the swimming pool freely.

Every lesson will be divided into two parts. In the first part the swimming instructor will tell a story to the children and they will speak about what will happen in the swimming pool. In the second part they will go into the water and do specific exercises that will reflect upon the told story. We will do this in warm swimming pools and use a lot of floating devices (floating carpets, tubes etc.) for the children to play with while they are doing the exercises.

The lessons will take place on Saturday afternoons, so the swimming pool is empty and the children are well rested and therefore come more willingly.

The project is suitable for fully abled and disabled children from two to five years old. We want them to come willingly and eagerly to every lesson and to have not only a physical experience, but also an emotional one - as they are using their imagination, they will be on a journey within their conscious and subconscious minds.

## **5. Organization of Events Related to Swimming**

### **5.1. Practical guidelines**

Swim to Live has been created with the goal to spread not only throughout the EU, but also around the world. We want it to create a snowball effect in the way we teach swimming and in the increase of an active lifestyle.

In this chapter we want to show new swimming clubs or sports associations, who are interested in such programmes, how to manage the planning and execution of teaching swimming to previously inactive people.

The goal is to increase the number of physically active people.

## Guidelines for starting a swimming organisation

First, find the people, the swimmers. For start, you can invite people you know and you will get the link to their friends and family, who will be eager to join when they see how satisfied their friends are.

Find the swimming pool. The pool has to be properly heated and not too far away from the swimmers' homes, otherwise they might not want to commute. Keep in mind that the number of swimmers in one lane has to be limited (6 - 8 in 25 m pool, 10 - 12 in 50 m pool). And when your organisation grows, spread - find different locations, make good schedules and spread them throughout the day (different classes during different times of the day - early morning, late morning or midday, afternoon, late classes for night owls etc.).

If you are not an instructor yourself, find a swimming instructor with formal qualifications and possibly enough practical experiences to work independently. For a successful realisation of any endeavour you need qualified staff and experts, working together for the same goal. The club leader, instructors and swimmers need to have the same goals. They have to be ready to work together and sometimes make compromises to reach good results and to achieve noticeable change. This takes a lot of hard work and dedication. The results are not seen at first, so everyone involved needs to be patient and trust in the process as a whole.

Try to include more people into the trainings by inviting friends and families of swimmers to "open-house days", where they can join in the activities. For example, organise swimming tests for everyone interested.

Showcase your organisation and work at various different local and global sporting events, like the International Week of Sport, Day of Water Sports (Dan vodnih športov Slovenija 2017), where you can address the people directly, answer any questions they might have, organise a pop quiz with some awards you can get for free from different sponsors, go on radio shows in your local area, get some of the (online) publications to write something about your organisation.

Keep educating yourself and the people who work with you. New knowledge can be gained from various seminars and webinars, and it can reach very widely, like psychology and sociology.

Co-workers and their roles: keep in mind the areas certain people are good at and don't force them to do tasks they are not good at, even if they agree to do something. Have regular brainstorming sessions to help you gain a wider viewpoint and to help achieve

set goals. Devote plenty of time to talk to your co-workers and staff. Every person involved in the organisation has a different role that needs to be addressed. It is important to look at the big picture. Possible roles: team leaders, instructors, teachers, lecturers, filmmakers and photographers, judges for the swimming competition, other helping hands, which are needed to keep the organisation alive and going. It is important to branch into other fields and not be limited to only one box - it is great to have other skills like photography, different technical knowledge, a swimming judge licence etc.

Promotional activities are very important, not only when starting out with a new organisation, but also when you are already established. Your organisation needs a constant inflow of new swimmers (customers) and you have to try to keep the ones you already have. Don't keep your focus on just one focus group, venture outside of your comfort zone. If you started with masters swimmers, add a children's course, add competitor swimming after you have established a good basis of children's swimming, add special needs children to your programme.

## **How to engage more people in the organisation's activity and how to prevent dropouts?**

Monitor and measure the satisfaction of swimmers: talk with them regularly, set goals for each swimmer, collect data etc. Be resilient and solve problems as they arise, give advice and clear instructions to swimming instructors and keep them informed about future tasks. If dropouts occur, try to find out why and see if you can prevent them in the future. Give out regular surveys, checking for feedback from swimmers and then use the information, carefully read the answers and open discussions within your team.

Incorporate different tests in the process of training, Cooper's endurance test for instance, at the beginning, middle and end period, to monitor the physical progress. Organise competitions like the Swimming challenge - real swimming competition with official timing and swimming judges that is open for everybody. Demonstrate swimming yourself - go to the water with your swimmers and demonstrate different tasks and exercises to them.

Final analysis - keep track of progress for each swimmer, encourage feedback from swimmers, instructors, co-workers, take it seriously and see what needs to be improved next time. Schedule a swimming video analysis for members.

Spread the word around through different media, social and other, to reach the widest possible audience. Also try to include academics into it. A student can write a bachelor's degree about this topic and include your organisation's survey results and analyse it with a look through literature. Be seen at the events not connected with swimming. Be a volunteer at a running event, help out at the local community center.

Be creative in offering different discounts: for family members, big families, regular customers, or if they pay for the whole year in advance, free (or inexpensive) classes for the unemployed (find a sponsor or local call for proposals).

Encourage people to bring their friends to the classes or organise an open house day for friends and family of the swimmers. Regularly invite parents of the children on your swimming courses, to concluding ceremonies at the end of the season or at the half year assessments.

Educate teachers, find the best instructors, build constant knowledge.

Organise events outside of the pool; create a social event for the whole club, possibly on the same day every year. Give members' team gear: shirts, hats, bandannas, stickers etc.

## **Lessons learned (communication, intercultural dialogue and differences)**

We have learned a lot during the last year, about the work itself, about our partners and about ourselves. It is a never ending process and you can never know everything.

One of the important things we know now and didn't know before are the factual intercultural differences between us and our partner organisations. For instance, here in Slovenia we have a more germanic way of doing things - when we say we will start with something at a certain hour, we respect the timetable. But for our partners from Italy and Portugal this was not the case - it is normal for them to come a little bit late.

When we booked the sleeping arrangements, we didn't think about what sex the people sharing the rooms will be and if they will have to share the same room with the opposite sex. We were more concerned if the rooms have bathrooms and can host maximum 3 people. But our Portuguese partners had a problem, because they had 4 men and 1 woman. For each partner we booked 2 rooms, one for 2 people and one for 3. In our culture it is totally acceptable for a man and a woman to be sharing the same room, but not the same bed. But in their culture, members of the opposite sex are not allowed to share a room if they are not married or at least a couple. So they booked another room, just for the woman.

For us it is normal to have short lunch breaks - in Slovenia most employees get a 30 minute lunch break. So we planned for one hour lunch breaks during the seminar and thought that was plenty, but our partners felt rushed.

In our country usually the drinks are not included in a free meal, but our partners would have preferred that they were.

One of the really important things we forgot to mention to our visitors was that the water in our country is not only safe to drink from the tap, but also very good. We only noticed this after we walked together to the hotel and they went to a shop and bought loads of bottled water.

Communication is another big factor in international projects. If everyone is talking to each other in English, but it is not their mother tongue, you can have problems; but they can easily be dealt with if you communicate also via Skype or some other free calling application. Only e-mailing is not the best way to do it, as people can't see the tone you are writing in and can see things out of proportion. We have also had a lot of problems because one of our partners speak very poor English or in some cases no English at all - we were receiving google translated e-mails during the project. But this can be avoided if you choose your partners very carefully before submitting a project and not rush just before the deadline.

Don't have unrealistic expectations. It is much easier to sleep at night. It is better to expect less from people and be pleasantly surprised, than to expect too much. We put a very high workload this year to our swimming instructors and they didn't know it from the beginning of the project. This was partially our mistake, because we didn't make it more clear in the beginning, when they signed up for it, but also the mistake of our partners, who didn't explain much about the project to the instructors at the start.

We made a mistake not to include all of the Slovenian swimmers in the 3 day events when we hosted our foreign guests, they joined us just for certain parts. But as a result, they never bonded with the rest of the group and probably felt a little bit excluded from what was going on.

Before you book something, like a restaurant or lecture hall, make sure to see it in advance and prepare the staff. Our first dinner with the guests was held in a place too small for everyone and the staff did not prepare tables and chairs for such a big group in advance, even though we booked the restaurant weeks ahead. Always assume the worst.

Don't keep things too serious all the time. You have to play and relax too, not just work all the time. Include various games, icebreakers, fun activities in the work that you have to do. And alcohol always helps. Add enough free time between activities so that people can do more on their own - for instance explore a foreign city.

Before you choose your co-workers, tell them very specifically what their tasks are going to be. Explain what they will be compensated for and what will be done voluntary. Give them an option to say no. Don't force people into projects, just because you are excited about them. After you have chosen your co-workers, try to make them fall in love with the project as much as you have. Give them very specific and detailed instructions

but let them know, that they mustn't rely only on you giving them tasks throughout the project - they have to find their own assignments and expand their role in the project inside of their area.

Be careful when writing questions for surveys. Try to be very specific in the questions. It is better not to leave open answers, but to give more common options and add other for people who can't find themselves in them. It will be much easier for survey analysis.

To conclude, we learned a lot and it was stressful when things were happening, but overall, we had a lot of fun and we met new, interesting people, which is basically the goal of international projects.

## **5.2. Swim to Live experience**

### **How to organise a one day swimming competition**

Organising a swimming competition requires a few months of working action. First, envision the event: what would you like to achieve with it, why you are doing it, for whom and when.

With that in mind, develop the event: find a proper facility and book the place, select disciplines and their order, make the schedule for disciplines, think how much time you have for each start, take into consideration the number of people and starts. Then define warming up time, start time of competition and breaks, opening and victory ceremony schedule, closing ceremony. Prepare a protocol how to sign up for the competition (an entry form for competitors) and send invitations, first to swimmers who are already on your mailing list, then start with the next step.

Calculate your expenses, set an entry fee and determine how the participants pay the fee. It has to be reasonable compared to other similar events. Most likely you will not be able to cover all the expenses just with the starting fee at first. This is why you have to find other options of income - donations, sponsors, public funds for sporting events, calls for proposals.

Advertise as much as you can, use local advertising companies, magazines and all accessible social media. When sponsors give some monetary or practical awards for competitors, you have to thank the sponsors and keep them included in your posts and activities. Let the swimming society know about the competition: post an invitation on-line, make it visible on your club web page, Facebook page etc.; send an invitation to the national swimming federations, to swimming clubs and invite swimming colleagues and friends.

Invite friends, relatives and parents of swimmers, ask them to promote your event and to help find more sponsors or donors and with the organisation of the event.

With advertising you promote your competition to the wider public; you want to share the event with many different social and sporting circles. Some will come with an interest to just watch the competition, so prepare grandstands and a good presenter, who is able to comment on the competition.

### **To do list:**

- Select and order the medals, diplomas and cups for the winners,
- Book timing, invite referees,
- Be active on social media, answer the questions, keep invitations open,
- A week before the competition:
  - Collect all entry forms and send them to timing (to ensure a list of participants and a start list).
  - Collect and arrange awards and order food and water.
  - Give thanks and express gratitude to the sponsors and invite them to VIP lounge at the event.
  - Check the facility (lane ropes, backstroke turn indicator, speaker system, tables and chairs, baskets for swimmers' clothings).
  - Hold a meeting with referees and staff (to determine tasks).
  - Organise who will be the photographer of the event and which pictures your organisation will need as a proof of event.
- A day before the competition, check the list of teams, participants and the list of payments.
- On the day of the competition:
  - Be there early, set up the swimming pool and the area around it. Help the timing team to set up the swimming pool (scoreboard, touchpads, backup buttons, backstroke ledges, starting system for the referee and speakers).
  - When the start list is ready, publish it in a well seen area.
  - Welcome participants at the entrance and show them where to enter the dressing rooms and the swimming pool.
  - The warm up session and competition should start on time.
  - When the competition is finished, you must publish all the official results at the swimming pool and on-line, thank everybody and invite them to next event.
- Keep in mind and do not be surprised, if nothing goes as planned, be positive and resilient.

## How to organise a swimming school

When you are about to organise swimming lessons or a swimming course, there are a few basic guidelines we think are important to follow.

Before you start with the swimming school, write down the guidelines: the number of children in one group and what they are going to learn in specific groups; steps for teaching (for example: adapting to the water, teaching basic swimming technique and exercises, different swimming techniques: breaststroke, backstroke, freestyle). Determine time for warming up, learning swimming and play time, use of swimming props.

You need to hire enough people with swimming instructors licence, preferably with previous experience. They need to have the know-how to teach children, they should be communicative, responsible and inventive, plus be capable of teamwork. Choose the leader; it should be a skilled person with experience in teaching, good sense for communication and leadership. This person will be the bridge between the parents, swimming instructors and club administration.

It is important to talk to each other, be open, solve problems, keep good atmosphere during the practice, pass the information about the progress to parents and listen to the wishes of the participants.

The rules of behaviour at the swimming pool are: no running, no unsupervised jumping in the swimming pool, staying with your group, the teachers have to watch over the kids at all time.

Advertise your activity to help attract more people, use the power of social media. This way you can reach a lot of people easily. Advertise through the whole season, not just at the beginning. Keep people informed about what are you doing, how your practices look like and what is happening.

To keep up good work and high standards of the swimming practices, swimming instructors need to exchange their knowledge and manner of the realisation of swimming exercises. Organise an internal education seminar twice a year: talk about current themes, work in smaller groups, give each a task or a problem to solve, discuss it and share ideas and experience. Try to organise a teambuilding day for good atmosphere within the team. This is a good way to relax, get to know each other better and to connect.

A very important part of having a good, happy and connected team is to have clear instructions and rules that both sides stick to (working time, payment, con-



tracts etc.). Try and give instructors opportunities to work in different swimming groups (non-swimmers, advanced swimmers, competitors), which leads to better motivation and maintenance of higher standards.

It is important to connect with other swimming organisations in order to organise different events or to have mutual swimming props to save money and time.

Try to include all kinds of different people in your activities - have classes for children and adults, people with special needs, masters, seniors and socially disadvantaged people.

## **5.3. New ideas on how to promote an active lifestyle**

### **Swimming instructors and club leaders as role models**

Whether they realise it or not, swimming instructors and club leaders are the first role models in their community. Their actions and behaviors count, they send the messages to organisation members and other people in the local community. How do they value their own health and wellness? Many Europeans are not as fit as they would like to be. Perhaps you struggle to find time to go for a walk, or your hectic days leave you with no time to make a healthy dinner in the evening. You and your organisation members and staff share the same struggles. You can take the first step toward helping them know your programme prioritizes wellness. Walk down the hallway to talk to someone instead of sending an e-mail. Bring in fresh fruit for participants instead of doughnuts. Organise an hour of exercise each week for instructors and other members of your club. Do not make negative comments about yourself or talk about the new diet you are trying. Be confident, positive and accepting of who you are, both inside and out.

### **Identify and redirect negative or inaccurate thoughts**

If you overhear someone calling himself or herself stupid or make fun of his or her own appearance, help by redirecting the negative comments. Focus on something positive, or help set goals. Give appropriate praise: make an effort to recognise people you come across every day. Having an adult who is proud of them and believes in them can mean a world of difference to children who have self-esteem issues. It can also make a difference for your members. Have open discussions about accepting yourself for who you are. Help people around you understand the difference between the characteristics or features that they can-

not change about themselves, such as their shoe size or ethnicity, and the features they can change, like reaching a healthy weight or improving athletic skills.

## **Training on wellness**

If you have questions, invite experts to come talk to your staff and members. Invite a colleague from the medical center or health organisation, a mental health professional to provide some tips for healthy living, yoga instructor from the local workout facility to come do an hour-long session for members and families. Plan an organisation party to try something new, new sport or an outdoor activity.

## **Creating opportunities for physical activity**

These don't have to be formal events. They are just moments when you make an intentional effort to incorporate physical activity. Here are a few examples:

- Store a few large balance balls in your office. Sit on those instead of chairs when you have meetings.
- Have walking meetings, when appropriate. Walk while talking to members about your latest observation.
- Post something silly or encouraging above your office door and encourage visitors to reach up and touch it on their way out.
- Begin and end meetings with a few stretches or breathing exercises.
- Encourage members to wear pedometers and track the steps they take at work. Have a workplace challenge.
- Participate in community events as a staff. You can get involved in running, swimming or jump-rope events in your community almost every weekend.
- Brainstorm fun or silly ways you could incorporate movement into your workplace over the next 30 days. You'll be surprised how quickly a movement becomes a habit.

## **Involve the whole family**

Let families know what is going on in your programme. Then help them get involved and encourage them to have fun while staying active. Many families struggle at being active, especially together. So try to offer a lesson for children and adults at the same time. Parents drop off their child or children, go for an hour training session, pick up the child after and continue in their day. It is a great way to relieve the parents from feeling like a taxi service and do something positive for themselves at the same time as creating something very beneficial for their children. It is also a very bonding experience if you share a physical activity in the family, as you have a lot to talk about afterwards.

## Motivating children, youth and adults to engage in physical activity

The key to motivation is feeling supported and rewarded by your efforts. Make physical activity a part of your community's culture. Start by creating a sense of fun and excitement: sport is a game, so play it - try to lessen the importance of competition. Give a free pass to the class, a T-shirt or a water bottle; this could all help to motivate members, children or families to join and keep going. How can you help members be aware of their activity levels? Sometimes the simple act of tracking your activities can be motivating. Have a good way of presenting and measuring their activities and accomplishments.

Recommended reading:

<https://www.virtuallabschool.org/tcs/physical-development/lesson-4>

### 5.4. Transformation

We asked our swimming instructors about the change they saw in themselves since they joined the project. Here are some of their answers.

#### **Deborah, Italy (swimming instructor)**

"Usually we work individually with our own groups and are not in the habit of debating a lot with our colleagues. But during this project we have been working together as a team with other instructors, when we were doing the tasks, when we were preparing the lessons, when we compared our ideas and different methods used to teach swimming and this was something new for us. I began to understand the importance of communicating with other instructors. I didn't have the chance to visit the seminar in Ljubljana, but my colleagues told me about the workshops that took place. This project has been a great opportunity for me to improve myself, to learn new things, to compare work and talk about our experience that we had during the project and to see how other European organisations work. Thanks a lot."

#### **Marta, Italy (swimming instructor)**

"I have learned to compare myself and my knowledge with other swimming instructors. After this experience I would like to go abroad more often and improve my relationships with other swimming professionals. My wish is to do a staff exchange for a few months in a different country, which could be very useful for me, my organisation and my colleagues. Our swimmers feel better in the water, they have more confidence with the water and with their own body and during

this experience became friends. They found strength and motivation to do exercises and things together.”

**Anna, Italy (swimming instructor)**

“I think this opportunity has been very important for me not only as a professional, but also as a person, because it has given me the possibility to challenge myself in new experience. It was not always easy, since I was used to working alone and now had to start to share my job with others. I have found out a lot about some new interesting topics, which I hope to incorporate in my job from now on. During the project there was a lot of emphasis on teamwork, which is a very important lesson in life, since all of us can improve because of other people’s advice, ideas and opinions. Another thing I will take with me from the project is also the planning of a good lesson in a lot of detail and to write a teaching log after each lesson. Thanks for all.”

**Joao, Portugal (swimming instructor)**

“Through this project I have learnt more about swimming, swimming techniques and exercises and how to teach swimming. I researched the Web, my college documents and asked for opinions from other swimming professionals. I am definitely a better teacher now, because I had to teach swimming to adult beginners. This forced me to find new strategies and to be even more careful with the feedback that I use. This was a really good experience for me as a teacher and I was grateful to see how my swimmers evolved their swimming abilities and also felt very happy and motivated to swim more.”

We also asked our instructors about how their swimmers felt at the end of the project and what kind of changes they saw in themselves and in their swimming abilities. This is what they said.

**Emese, Romania (swimming instructor)**

“I work mainly with blind or visually impaired swimmers. They told me that they managed to escape their fear of water. They started to love the sport and we have already decided to continue with the lessons after the project ends. They also said that they became physically stronger - in the beginning they only managed to swim a few lengths and now they can easily swim for at least half an hour at a good pace. They developed better orientation and self-perception. They learnt at least two swimming techniques and they have become more self-confident and started being more active in their life.”

**Joao, Portugal**

“After talking with my swimmers, they told me that their physical and emotional state had indeed improved during the project. They feel that they have more energy

and they were enjoying the routine of practising swimming on a weekly basis. Regarding their swimming abilities, they mentioned an increase in their coordination of movements. One of them even told me that his swimming technique used to be very sloppy and not synchronised and that he realised this after he started the classes. All of the swimmers said that they would like to keep on swimming after the end of the project. One of the swimmers, Miguel, is even practicing three times a week.”

### **Giorgia, Italy (swimmer)**

“My goals at the beginning of the project were to improve my swimming technique, to try new exercises, to correct myself and to swim in the right posture and to increase my ability to swim the medley. I use swimming before I practice other sports, it is a good way to prepare the body. Swimming also helps me to relax the muscles after learning new movements. During this project I have improved my physical strength and my lung capacity. I want to keep swimming and now I want to learn some other water sports like waterpolo, synchronized swimming and swimming rescue. I talked about the project a lot with my friends and family as well. They were very interested, since I talked with such joy about this experience, to try a course like this.”

### **Alessandro, Italy (swimmer)**

“At the beginning of the project my goals were to correct my freestyle and to learn breaststroke and backstroke, which I have managed to do. During the project my self-confidence has improved, because I was the oldest swimmer in my group, but I always tried all the new exercises and managed to do everything that the others did. Swimming is also helping me a lot with my joints that are feeling more free in the water. I also feel an improved lung capacity, I am managing my breath better and have less fatigue. This project was a challenge for me and also a great opportunity. I have learnt that there isn't a fixed age to try new things; if there is a will, there is a way. I am very happy and proud of myself. I would like to continue with swimming, because I have discovered that I like to be and move in the water. This experience has given me a lot of positive moments and I know now that there are still many new things I would like to try. I want to get as many friends as possible involved in swimming, because a group physical activity is challenging and fun. All those who heard me talk about my sporting experience during this last year were fascinated with what I did.”

### **Laura, Italy (swimmer)**

“At the beginning of the project my goal was to win over my fear of water and learn how to float. After the project I have more self-confidence, because I managed to overcome a fear of mine - now I am not afraid to swim alone in shallow water, but I want to become autonomous in every situation regarding water. After the project I am more determined to get what I want in life. I talked a lot about

the swimming course to my friends and family, because I was very enthusiastic about it. The instructors really love what they do and they transmit their positivity to the swimmers so everything is easier to do. Some of the people I have told about the course would like to try the lessons that I have experienced.”

### **Mateo, Italy (swimmer)**

“My goal at the beginning of the project was to improve my freestyle, breaststroke and backstroke techniques. Before this I have never attended a swimming course. I had no idea I loved swimming so much. After the course I feel I can relax during breaststroke and that my muscle tone has significantly improved, also my lung capacity. I feel very grateful for this project, because I have learned a lot of new things and have changed my opinion about swimming. Before I thought this was a very boring activity, but now this is a fun sport and I feel very good when I’m in the water. I think I have found a new passion in life. I want to improve my techniques and keep learning new things. When I tell my friends about this experience, they asked me how they can join and begin the experience.”

### **Luca, Italy (swimmer)**

“During the project I have changed my mind about this sport, I never thought I could love being in the water so much. Swimming relaxes me, it de-contracts my muscles after a long day at work. I feel very grateful for this experience, because I learned new things, I feel better physically and mentally. Since I was a child, I had fear of swimming pools and would vomit after I entered it. I decided it was time to finally get over this fear and now I am capable of swimming all four techniques. I am very happy and proud of myself, because this was a very big victory for me. I have talked about this course to my friends and family and some of them were very surprised about how well structured and well organized it was.”

### **Silvia, Italy (swimmer)**

“I used to think that swimming was boring before the project started, but I actually enjoy myself when I go to the swimming pool, because there is so much variety in swimming exercises. I am physically much fitter now, my muscles are much more toned, since I have been training regularly. I am very grateful because I have tried new movements, now when I go swimming, I can enjoy and relax myself. I like that during swimming we communicate more with the physical movement and not just use verbal language. It is just like speaking a different language. Physical contact and the attention to observe an exercise before performing it gives me an opportunity to communicate in a different way. And I can also use this in other situations in my life. I have told about this experience to my parents, my boyfriend and my friends and I hope to continue this experience with some of them.”

## 6. Conclusion

This manual has taken us the last year to write. Maybe we can even say it has taken us years to write, as it is a combination of practical and theoretical information that we have been gathering for a long time. Everything that is written or described in the previous chapters is based on actual experience and is to be used as a helping hand for swimming instructors worldwide or for sporting clubs dealing with swimming.

We want the reader to receive a guidebook for the “Swim to Live” way of practicing swimming - we have gathered practical advice and theoretical knowledge that supports it, so that all swimming clubs should know and use it, no matter which group of swimmers they are focusing on.

We have learned a lot during this past year and we still have a lot to learn. We are continuing to grow on our Swili path and intend to keep revising this manual, if need arises. What we have learnt will not stay only in this project; we will carry it with us in all our future professional endeavours.

The road was long and hard and we know that there is always room for improvement.

If you want to learn more in theory and practice, visit our web portal for more information [www.swimtolive.org](http://www.swimtolive.org)

### 6.1. About the authors

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A series of 25 horizontal lines for writing.