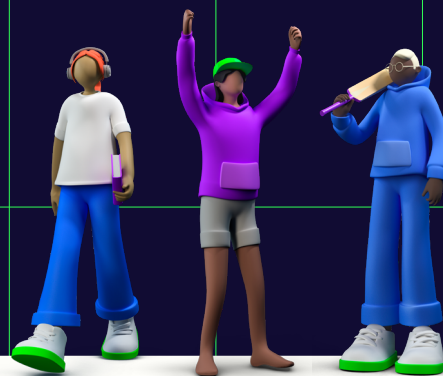




SMASH PLAY

YOUTH — RANGATAHI



HOW TO DEVELOP PLAYER LEADERSHIP



Associate Professor Barrie Gordon

He pukenga akoranga koiri
Health and Physical Education
Faculty of Education
Te Herenga Waka
Victoria University of Wellington
New Zealand

While the Smash Play youth-rangatahi game resources provide a great deal of support for coaches, you should also look for other opportunities to help players develop their confidence as leaders. There are many opportunities throughout a practice session this can occur. Leadership can develop in a much wider context than simply appointing a team captain for a match day.

Outlined below are two simple examples that can be incorporated into a practice session, but you should be always be aware of others.

- Develop a roster for the Players to run the warmup sessions. Ensure all the players get an opportunity to lead at some stage. If this would be a challenge for some players, then one idea is to run a simple warmup that remains the same every practice. This will help the Players be confident that they can be successful when it is their turn to lead.
- When you are introducing a new game into your session, put two or three Players in charge of leading the game. Give them the information to review, check their understanding of the game and then let them lead the game with the team.

- Throughout the season, select different Players to lead on different games.
- Be prepared to support the Players with their game explanation to the team if needed. But be wary of 'over supporting', allow Players the space to lead and make a few mistakes along the way.

Both these activities will provide ample opportunities for the Players to consider **Empathy, Communication** and **Trust** in real-world contexts. If, for example, Players, are impatient and rude with a teammate who is leading a warmup or game, this should be discussed and Players given the opportunity to reflect on how they acted.

