

NEWS FROM:



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Emotional intelligence smartens up sports success, finds UCT study

Success on the sporting field is as much about being sensitive to fellow teammates' needs as it is about physical preparedness, according to research done by Exercise Science PhD graduand David Thomas Crombie at the University of Cape Town.

Crombie's thesis, *The role of emotional intelligence in sports performance*, explores whether an individual's sensitivity to the needs of others – a non-cognitive intelligence described as emotional intelligence (EI) – might influence sporting success.

He concluded that EI would likely be particularly important in team sports, cricket especially, that impose high emotional demands, and where individuals are in each other's company for protracted periods.

After extended negotiations Crombie gained access to a cohort of professional South African cricketers competing in the national cricketing championships. He was able to show that each team's success in that competition was predicted by the sum total of the EI present in all the members of each team. Next, using a prospective intervention study, he established that EI is not improved by conventional cricket training but can be enhanced by a programme of specific EI training.

This study opens a novel field of investigation to understand better how EI might contribute to the success of athletes competing at all levels of sport.

Crombie completed his BA and BA Honours degrees in Industrial and Organisational Psychology at UCT between 1984 and 1987. In 1994 he received his PhD in Management/Organisation Theory from the Pacific Western (California Miramar) University in the US. His PhD was supervised by Professor Tim Noakes in the Department of Human Biology.

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Please note: Information in this release is based on the supervisor's citation for the PhD thesis. UCT advises journalists to obtain a copy of the thesis and/or interview the PhD graduate to verify and expand on this information.

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