Talent

(Related words: talent scouting, talent selection, talent promotion).

In ordinary language talent means an individual who possesses a specific aptitude which is amenable to further development.

Talent denotes an individual's special, not yet completely developed aptitude or above-average ability for a specific function or range of functions. Physical talents may be functional, expressive, or athletic.

It can be assumed that in an athletically talented person particular neurophysiological and anatomical structures and specific motor and psychological abilities are optimally developed at birth. A non-specific motor aptitude, which can be detected at an early age, is developed in a more specified direction during the socialisation process under the influence of social and situational factors. An environment encouraging movement plays a prominent role. The readiness for learning and achievement motivation develops with an ever-growing movement experience including highly differentiated movement patterns.

In training, talent is expressed in a greater learning capacity and better movement efficiency.

Dimensions of talent

General motor talent denotes a great motor learning ability that leads to an easier, more reliable, and quicker mastery of movements and a larger and more differentiated repertoire of applicable movements.

Athletic talent denotes an above-average potential to accomplish great achievements in sport and the readiness to do so.

Sport-specific talent denotes specific physical prerequisites for a certain sport, combined with the psychological factors enabling an individual to achieve outstanding performances.

Related terms

Talent scouting: the organisational measures for detecting individuals who show signs of talent. Talent scouting results in the selection of those individuals who are suitable for carrying out a training programme that leads to high performance in sport.

Talent selection: the assignment of talented individuals to an environment in which their talent can be developed. For the selection of athletic talent at an early age, specific aptitude and stress tests must be developed for predictive purposes. While, at the beginning, talent selection places more emphasis on general motor qualities, in the course of the training process the selection criteria are increasingly related to performance norms that are specific to a certain sport.

Talent promotion: the use of training procedures and other measures aimed at helping talented individuals to reach their expected high performance. Talent promotion requires the combined efforts of different supporting institutions such as schools, clubs, and sports associations. Talent promotion not only includes athletic development, but also medical care, physiotherapy, and psycho-social guidance.