

The Toilet Roll

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Analyse This!

It has long been understood amongst people who partake in our sport that running provides many things. From fitness and health benefits, through to camaraderie, competition, a place and time of reflection, ego enhancement, identity.....the list goes on. But there is another benefit my colleagues and I believe is completely under-rated. It's running as the tool to comprehend our world, and as the guide for making complex and brain hurting decisions. Running methodology can be used to explain and decipher all that is in our world.

An understanding of training and racing gives insight into the broader machinations of our universe. It provides us with a set of rules for choosing the appropriate path when decision time hits. Any issue, from the purchase of a new car to deciding whether or not the person you are seeing is

allows consideration of options. But if enough speed work is not completed prior to racing, decisions may see a large amount of lactic before the finish line is reached.

Distance runners: make slow, painful, carefully considered decisions, analysing every detail. Sometimes when they act it's too late because the issue was over last week.

So, how does this all work in practice? I asked one of my middle distance running colleagues to provide specific examples of how they employ running philosophy to make decisions in their daily lives.

1. To date the co-worker?

When deciding if it was a good idea to date a co-worker, the athlete in question,



hard in the first 800m, meaning the latter reps will more than likely be slower and inconsistent. Correspondingly, using too much paper to wrap the first Christmas presents may result in not having enough wrapping paper to cover all of them properly.

Conversely, if the early 800m reps are taken easily and the last few are run

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a potential marriage candidate, can be reasoned out successfully through understanding running principles. There are of course varying types of running. As such, there are various methodologies to choose from. The difficult question always is, do we choose the decision making technique or does it choose us? To put it in running terms, are you born to be a distance runner, or do you choose your event? I once heard a national class marathoner say, "We all want to be 100m sprinters, but you just gotta keep moving up until you find something you are competitive at!"

So below are three defined methodologies, divided into event group like at a track and field meet!

Sprinters: make quick, snappy, high-risk decisions, having complete confidence that they are right all of the time even when they are wrong. They are quite happy to ignore objective evidence, preferring to go with the hype.

Middle distance runners: take time to do the slow plodding during winter and this

did not go in like a sprinter, blazing with both barrels, showing off his 6 pack and beating his chest. Nor did he take the distance running method of pretending that the girl wasn't really there for 2 years before making his move.

Being a middle distance runner, the athlete in question employed a middle distance runner methodology. He did his base work (homework), came up with a suitable race strategy, i.e. lined up and raced before he and the situation went stale. (Unfortunately it turned out that the girl was an event not appropriate for the athlete - but the running mind can't always help you detect this)

2. Christmas Gift Wrapping

The athlete in question likened wrapping gifts to doing a tough session on the track (eg 6x800m with 1min recovery). Each 800m rep was seen as a gift that required wrapping. It's necessary to make sure each 800m rep is done consistently well to complete a successful work out. Similarly each gift needs to be wrapped with enough paper to conceal it. But there are pitfalls all along the way. It is easy to go out really

significantly faster than the session as a whole suffers. The energy left at the end of the work out is just a waste. Similarly, skimping on paper when wrapping the first few gifts results in poorly concealed gifts and leftover paper.

3. Pacing your day

Running methodology can help you pace your day. The athlete in question divides tasks throughout the day into intervals and breaks, similar to a thoughtfully programmed training session. A 20 minute surge can be undertaken at your desk, followed by a suitable 5 min recovery, before backing up for another repetition. In the afternoon 5 min efforts might be scheduled with 10 min email recovery floats. This pacing can also allow you to be a machine at the disco! So, use what you are to make decisions and comprehend the world around you. You're a runner, so think like one! And remember, a well planned set of Christmas wrapping will save you from the angst you'll receive from relatives and friends if you hit the start line unprepared and ill focussed.



"Being the best means you're always pushing the limits, constantly setting the pace."

Haile Gebrselassie

Haile Gebrselassie

PowerProfile

Haile Gebrselassie: 2 Olympic Gold Medals, 9 times World Champion, 17 world records. PowerBar user since 1998.



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