



***Know Your Customer***



## *Active Black Country*

Active Black Country is one of the network of 44 County Sports Partnerships. The Active Black Country Board advises the Black Country Consortium Limited, a not for profit company limited by guarantee of the strategic priorities, partnerships and actions needed to get more people taking part in sport and physical activity.

*Know Your Customer*

**“We need a sector that welcomes everyone - meets their needs, treats them as individuals and values them as customers.”**

**Sport England - Towards An Active Nation Strategy: 2016**

## **What is Know Your Customer?**

**Know Your Customer is an interactive coaching aide that can help coaches design and deliver quality sessions.**

The Active Black Country Partnership conducted research with communities across the area, talking to people who currently do and don't take part in sport & physical activity.

The 'Know Your Customer' resource is based on the findings of that consultation. It refers to participants as customers and is designed to help you as a coach, helper or activator place the customer at the heart of the journey, meeting their needs and motivating them to join in and take part in physical activity on a regular basis.

## **Why do we need to view participants as customers?**

To get more people active the sport & physical activity sectors workforce need to understand individual customers' needs and motivations, this is particularly important with people who currently don't take part in sport & physical activity as we need to shift their thinking to see Sport & Physical activity as a viable option and change their behaviours.

The graphic below gives an idea of the cycle of thoughts we all may go through when taking up a new activity or changing existing behaviours.

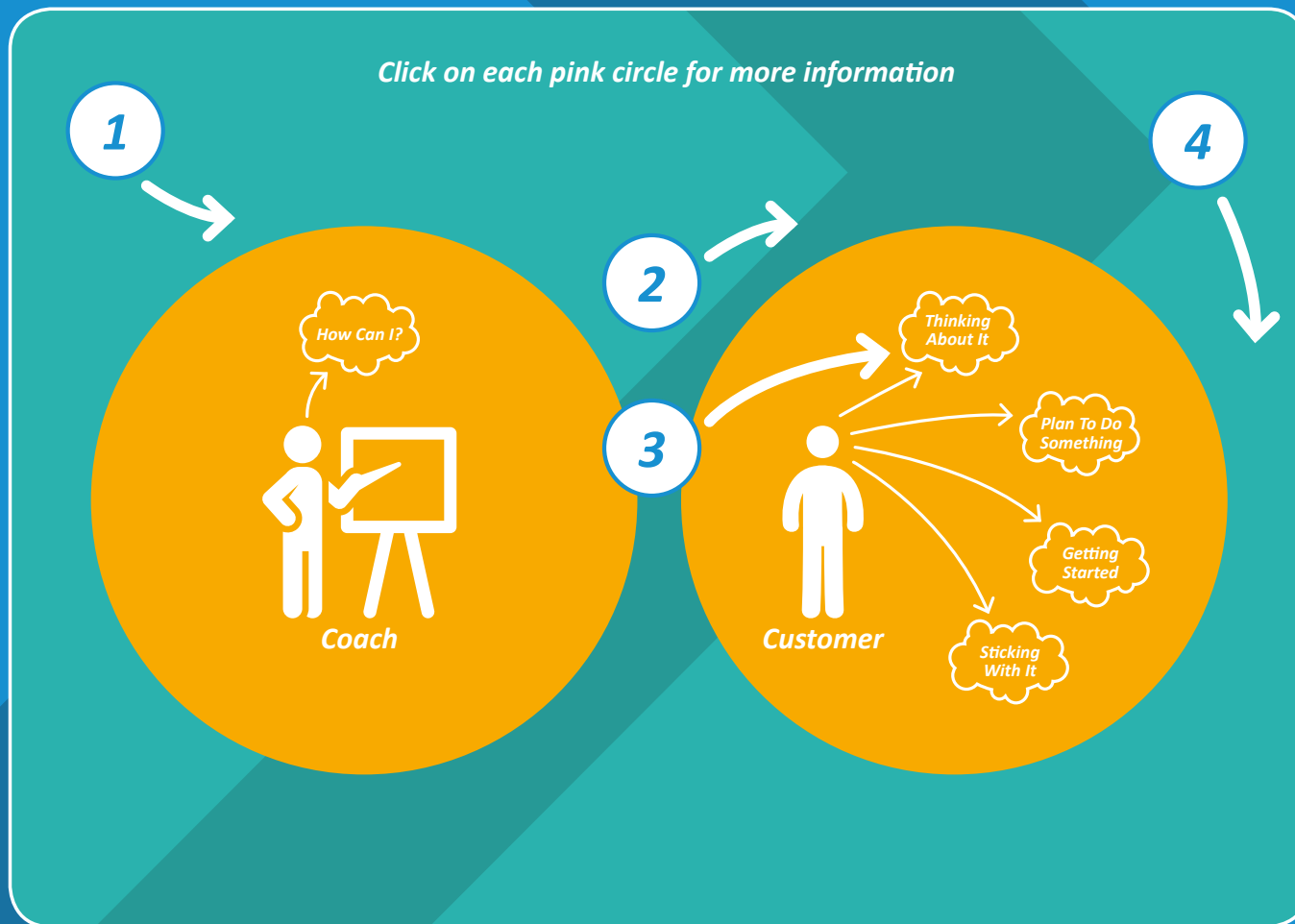
The different motivating factors contained in the 'Know Your Customer' resource have been applied to different stages of the cycle. The research identified certain motivations were most powerful when people are initially starting a new sport or activity and how the motivations can alter as people change their behaviour as they continue taking part.

It is important to note the stages are a guide and not a linear step by step process, people can and will move between different stages at different points of their life - this is especially true of sport & physical activity.



## How to Use it

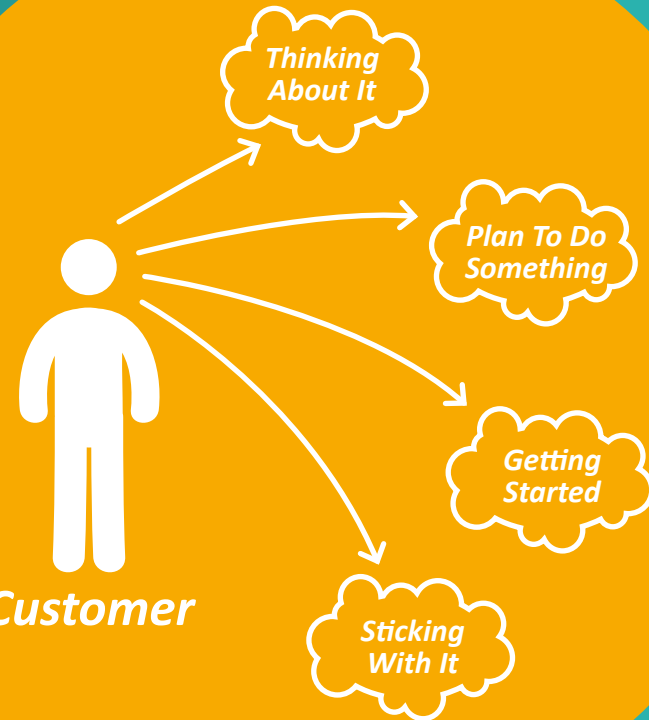
1. Start by clicking the interactive links above the coach icon, these provide guidance on how important it is to engage and understand customer motivations.
2. The range of individual motivations highlighted through the research can be accessed by clicking the interactive links surrounding the customer icon.
3. Each motivation has been positioned next to a relevant stage of the behaviour change cycle. The range of motivations apply when people initially think about starting a new activity through to when they act on their initial motivation and get started. The motivations are linked and often promote one another.
4. Those motivations highlighted from the 'Getting Started' stage have a set of design principles relating to each motivation that can be used to design sessions. The positive impact of applying these design principles effectively can be seen by clicking the 'Positive impact this approach can have' tabs
5. There are options throughout this resource to access the Active Black Country workshop calendar, watch videos, or make notes. Please look out for the icons:



*Click on each pink circle for more information*



*Coach*



*Customer*

## Ability of Coach to engage

It sounds fairly obvious but in order to understand a customer's specific needs excellent people skills are required. The more you engage with a customer the clearer things become and the easier it is to determine what you should be doing.

This has been identified as one of the strongest motivating factors to take part in sport or physical activity.



Coach

## Design Principles

The skills, knowledge and behaviours outlined below have been identified as essential for a coach to possess to effectively engage with their customers.

- **Communication** - Open communication and establishing expectations from the start. Take the time to understand motivations, fears and worries of participants. Always be approachable if the participant has a question and be prepared to offer an answer or a timescale when you are able to provide an answer. Always make time to speak on a one to one basis to each participant, therefore increasing your engagement with individuals.
- **Kindness and empathy** - Understanding the fears and worries of participants.
- **Flexibility** - Ensure there is variety in the sessions and participants are given tasks that suit them.
- **Reliability, drive & commitment** - Give participants someone to aspire to build faith, trust and meaningful relationships.
- **Motivation & Influencing** - In large groups where a range of motivating factors may compliment or conflict, explain the variety in the activity and focus on specific parts of the session that will provide benefit to individuals.
- **Cultural Awareness** - The need to be aware of different cultures that can impact on participation. Some participants may wish to break for prayer in the middle of a session.



Workshop Calendar



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**Customer**

*“The high regard in which the coach is held by the kids is down to how she spends time with them, talking to them, understanding them. She recognises my daughter Khale is different from her friends in how able she is and coaxes her along. This makes a huge difference.”*

*- Black Country Parent of young participant*



Workshop Calendar



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## Ability of coach to understand Motivations

**Possessing excellent people skills to engage and understand individuals motivating factors is critical and especially important for those who lack confidence or don't see themselves as sporty.**

Understanding of participants' motivations and knowing that participants did not want to necessarily get better at the sport but had other goals such as personal well-being/ confidence which the coach could address.

The 8 motivating factors surrounding the customer icon have been identified through the research but they are not exclusive.



## Design Principles

### Understand the individual customer:

- Identify and understand a participants reasons for taking part and most importantly their point of view.
- Place yourself in the participant's shoes and actively start open conversation. It is important that you don't assume all participants are there for the same reason.
- Accept that some participants may not be fully honest with you the first time they meet you as to why they are at the session. For example, participants who are there to develop their self-esteem may not be willing to share that information with you as a stranger.

### Need to understand the Customer as a whole:

- Understanding initial motivations is not enough on its own
- Participants point of view throughout their participant journey – What is their experience? Have their motivations been met?
- Go the extra mile. Create lasting relationships
- Track customer sentiment – this is a very emotive driver and can indicate whether or not customers' needs are being met - remembering that motivations may change over time.





*“The coach at the club asked me exactly what I had wanted to get out of the session. I wasn’t sure myself but after a chat I realised that I was there because I had wanted to follow my friends. The coach then used this a way of making me feel welcome by getting me to meet more people. I enjoyed the sessions and have kept going back as the coach set me a target of introducing me to a new person each week.”*

*- Black Country Participant*

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## Fun & Enjoyment

The activity has to be fun & enjoyable, people want the chance to take part in new fun activity.



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## *Interest in a particular sport or activity*

Passion for a particular sport or activity that is different from the norm - people want to try new activities or a variance of the activity. People identified this as a strong motivating factor with the perception a new activity is maybe one others haven't yet experienced and is more of a level playing field.



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## Improve Fitness

Of those participants who identified physical fitness for function, image or health related benefit as a significant motivating factor, the majority hadn't done any activity before joining the session or programme.



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## Friendships & Peer Groups

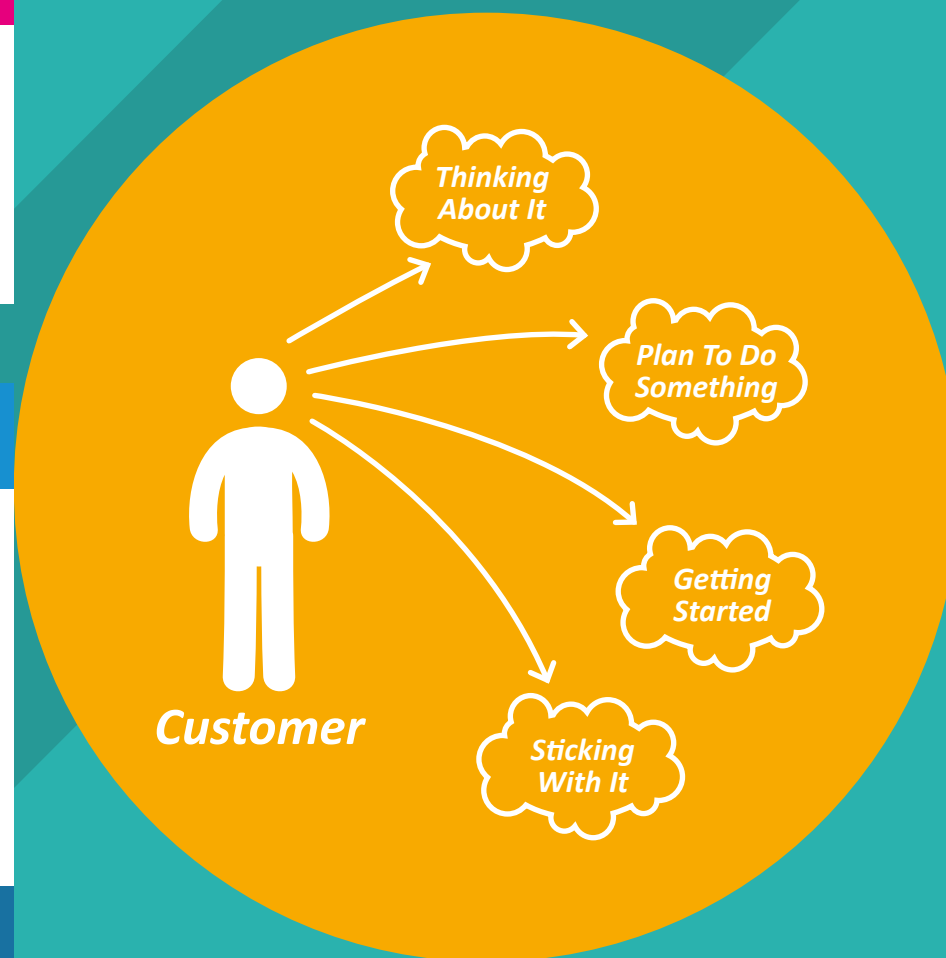
Peer influence and sense of belonging are emotive motivations for young people to take part in sport & physical activity initially. People are inspired to take part by their friends, either to provide strength in numbers.

The opportunity to make friends through activity is a significant factor in any decision to continue taking part. Those young people who initially participated with existing friends expanded their friendship group. The impact of which can be really positive.

## Design Principles

Being aware of people's different backgrounds and actively brokering friendships between people.

- Make sure that sessions have an element of focus on interaction between participants as opposed to focussing on Individual Skills.
- Make sure that an outcome of the session focusses on group success, for example, setting the group a challenge that they have to achieve an outcome.
- Be aware that the main fear of this group will be personal conflicts occurring within the group.



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Customer

*"If my friends hadn't gone then I wouldn't have gone."*

*"I didn't know anyone when I first started...and now I've got loads of new friends and I go all over the place playing at different football clubs."*

*- Black Country Participant*



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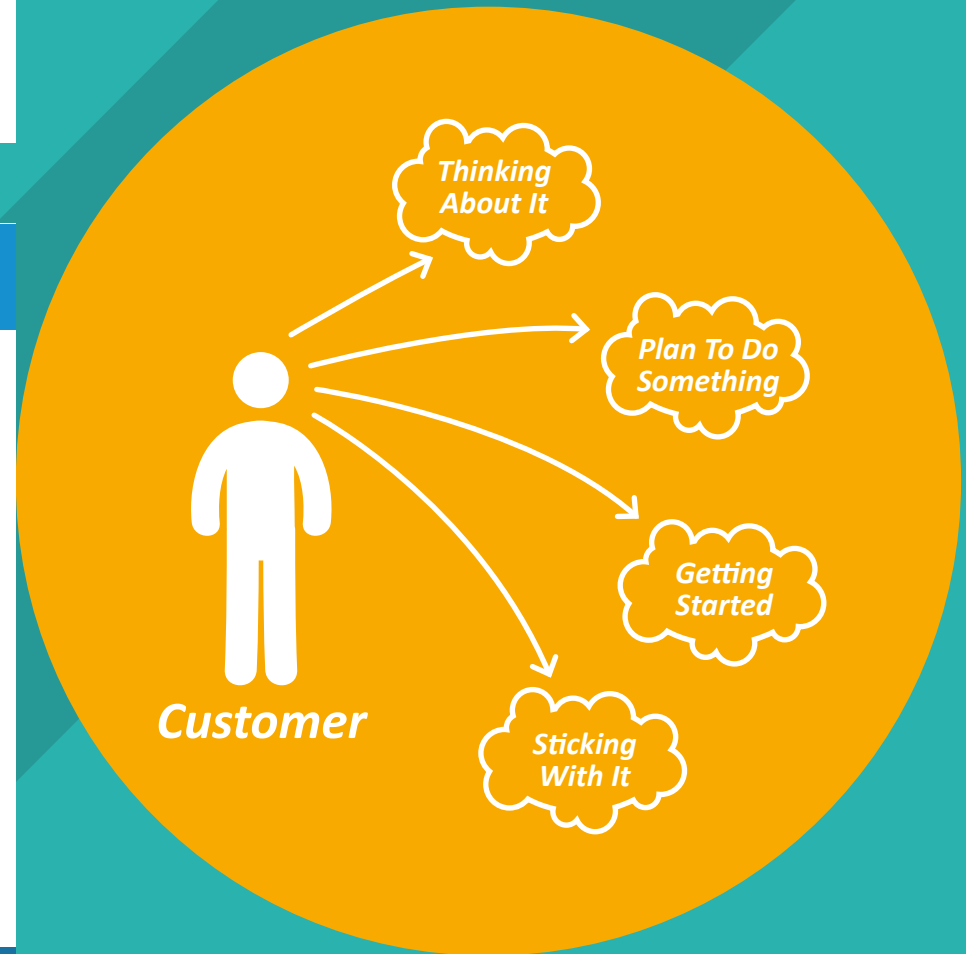
## Sense of Belonging

Participants liked to join in individually or with friends to form part of a wider group. The activity providing a sense of belonging that attending a session or club provides. A sense of belonging is closely linked to providing an opportunity to be social and the influence of friends and peers.

## Design Principles

Be creative when designing tasks - ensure they continue their interest in the activity.

- Making new friends can add to the sense of belonging which can positively impact on confidence levels. For those participants who may have been motivated by increasing self-efficacy and confidence it is a big step in itself, recognising that is critical.
- Design activities around group identity with opportunities for everyone to succeed as a group, whilst competition is important, making sure that this isn't the only activity for participants to represent the "badge".
- Be aware that the group have as much influence over each other as the Coach will have on participants.
- Make 'a big deal' of the group, club or session being proud of the collective participants with regular opportunities for reward and recognition both in the sessions and outside.
- Consider building in other opportunities to increase the sense of belonging within the group.
- Be aware that the main fear of this group will be letting the group down or feeling like an outsider.



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**Customer**

*"I've made loads of new friends here and they are the main reason I keep coming back. It is the highlight of my week."*

*- Black Country Participant*



[Workshop Calendar](#)



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## To Achieve

**Young people identified ambition to progress their skills, confidence, ability or fitness. Sport or the physical activity was the stepping stone for them to do so.**

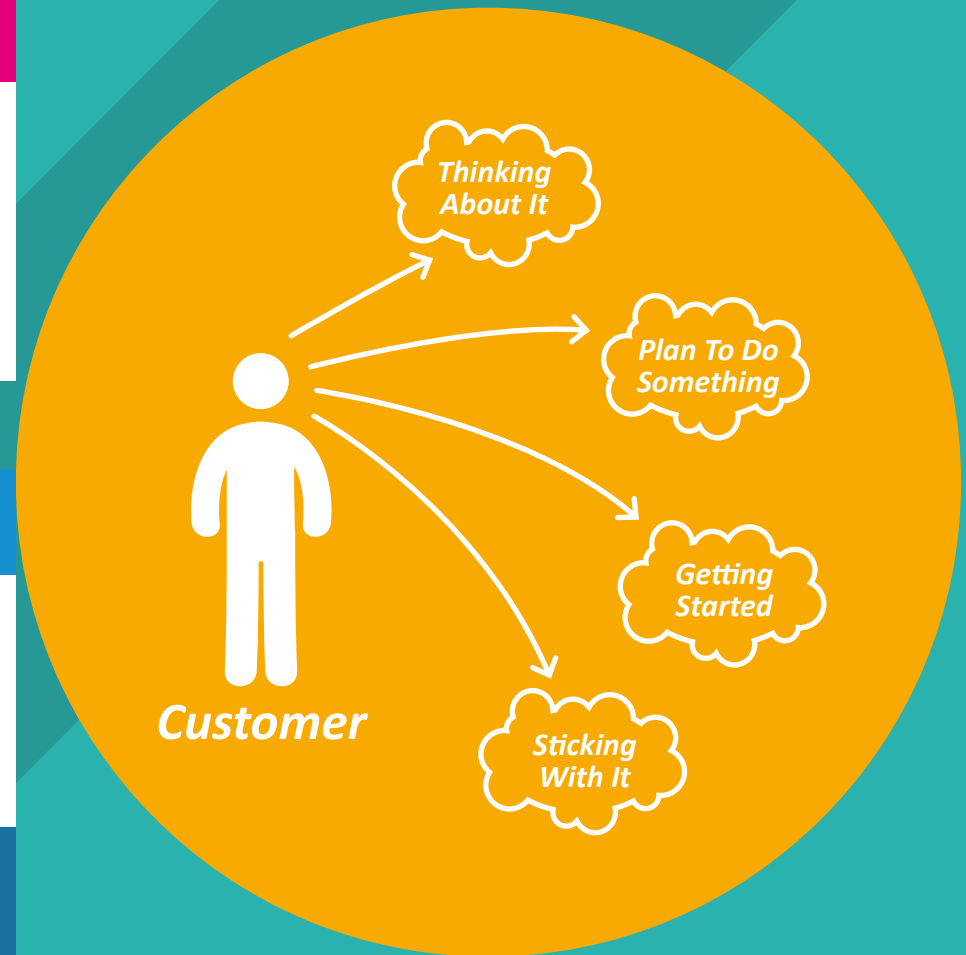
Participants may have ambitions to progress and a clear structure and ability to work towards different levels provides them the continued motivation to seek improvement.

The sense of achievement can extend to progression at a sporting ability, improving fitness levels, or gaining new skills.

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**Coaches have traditionally been advised to set goals for their participants and this does not change, it is just an understanding that in many community and informal settings the goals are individual and varied.**

Make expectations and intended outcomes clear - allow participants to understand the goals of each sessions collectively and individually.



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*Customer*

*"I've really got into this now. I have learnt a lot but I know there is much more to do."*

*- Black Country Participant*



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## To Gain Confidence

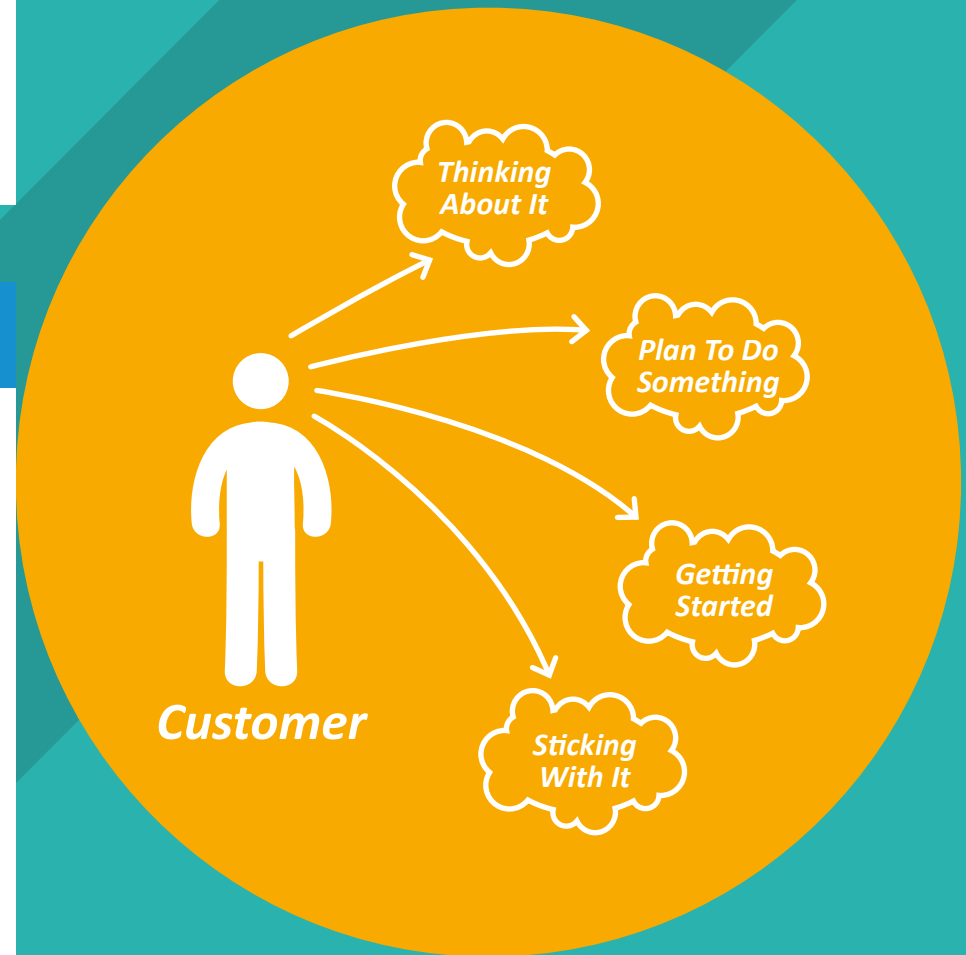
The ability of sport and physical activity to build confidence and develop self-esteem is a strong motivating factor in customers continuing to take part and is often related to one or a number of other motivating factors. Increased self-confidence can be realised a number of ways – new friends, joining a club, gaining new skills.

Most of the participants pointed to improved self-confidence as a result of taking part. The gaining of new skills promotes further confidence and realises progress for participants.

## Design Principles

Understand an individual's strengths weaknesses and any problems that participants face when completing tasks and how this may affect their confidence and ability to gain new skills, which can affect their sense of progression.

- Be willing to change a session mid-way if it's not working and you can sense participants are struggling to overcome a specific problem.
- Explain how the activities can benefit the participant and incorporate this into your sessions.
- Be flexible in session design and have a range of tasks that suit them and provide them with the best chance of progressing against their individual motivation.
- Promote resilience as a core value, its application in school, society and the workplace. Don't allow setbacks to prevent participants reaching their goals.
- Be patient and allow participants to develop at their own pace.
- Keep the playing field level so participants with the goal of developing confidence don't feel judged or like they are falling behind.



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Customer

*"I was petrified. I hadn't done any sport since school. Would I like it? Would my fear show? The support of the coach put me at ease by putting me with others of my own ability that allowed me to develop my confidence."*

*- Black Country Participant*



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## Gain New Skills

Some participants have traditionally taken part to gain leadership and technical qualifications and this still motivates some but is largely restricted to those who take part in sport or physical activity.

For those who are inactive the chance to develop their individual soft skills is a significant motivating factor especially when linked to an initial lack of confidence.

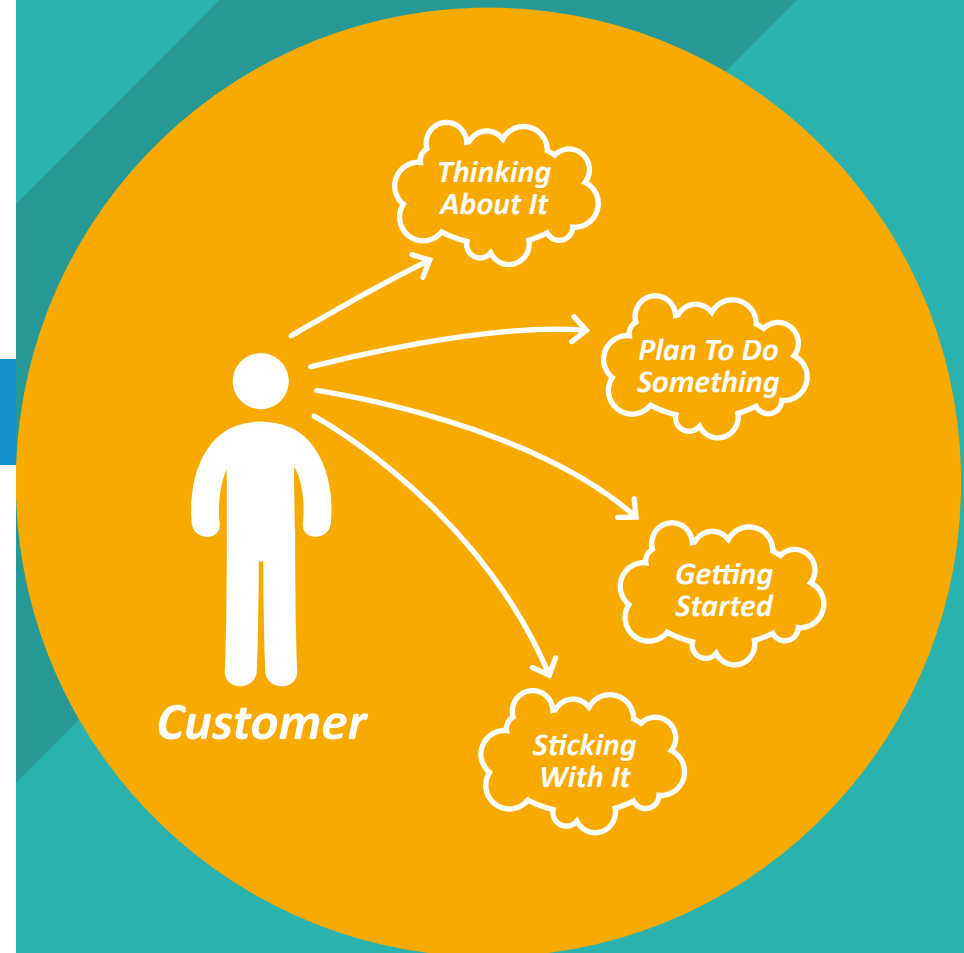
The skills identified have more universal application in school, society and the workplace:

- Communication skills
- Leadership
- Team Working skills
- Problem Solving & Resilience
- The ability to work under pressure

## Design Principles

Don't refer to the skills in corporate terms or language of employers, but do acknowledge the benefit in improved communication skills, being a better team player or developing leadership skills. Embed the acquisition of skills through participation almost as a by-product of the technical coaching.

- Allow students to make decisions – don't force them down a certain path but open up different learning options for them over a range of sessions. This will help them realise different outcomes.
- Be clear when explaining individual benefits and provide variety in sessions that will embed the skills individuals wish to gain.
- Get to know which skills participants need to improve and design activities where they are challenged. Where participants fail initially, always offer another opportunity once the skill has been developed further, to provide an opportunity for success. This will evidence the development of new skills.



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**Customer**

***“The coach is brilliant he really helped me understand all the techniques and what the sport is all about. This has helped me develop my own skills not just with sport.”***

***- Black Country Participant***



**Workshop Calendar**



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**Notes**