

ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT BLUEPRINT

BREAKING DOWN THE IDEAL DEVELOPMENT
MODEL FOR A MIXED MODAL ATHLETE

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MODAL

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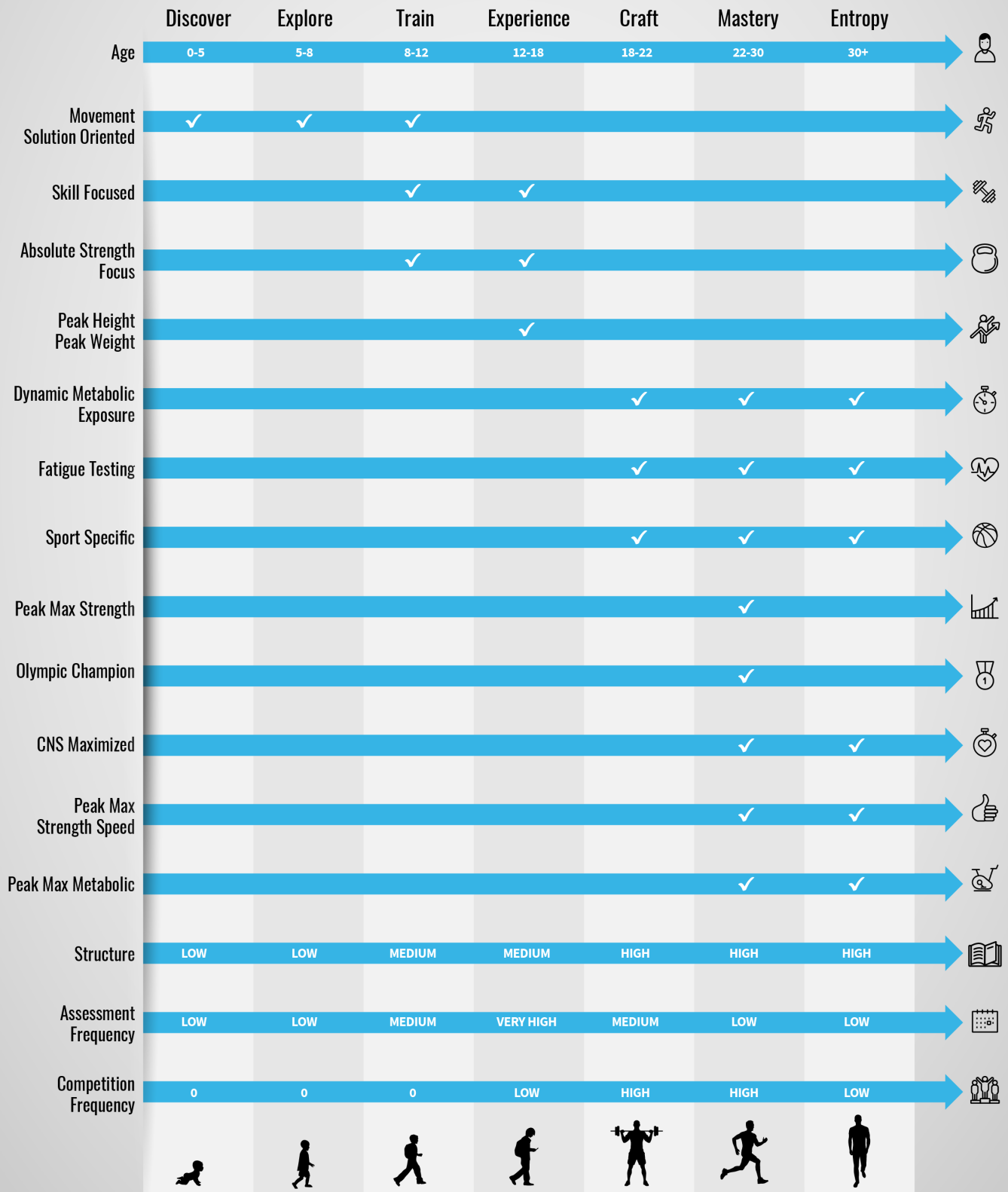
[Mixed Modal](#) is James FitzGerald's latest education contribution, providing coaches with the tools to create structure out of chaos and build podium-caliber athletes. This course is designed specifically for coaches with competition-level clientele and functional fitness athletes.

Within the course, James has developed a blueprint that suggests the ideal journey for an athlete to take in Mixed Modal: from the earliest of phases to the maximum level of expression. With each phase James breaks down what's optimal for development and the necessary associated skills. While each phase has corresponding ages, this is for guidance and is not absolute. His intention with the blueprint is to create order around the development of athletes, given order in the sport doesn't currently exist.

Important Reminder: This blueprint is not meant for all people. Those who choose to base their training on this blueprint must be focused on maximal expression within competitive functional fitness, for as long as possible.

ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT BLUEPRINT

The ideal development model for a Mixed Modal athlete



THE ATHLETE LIFE CYCLE BLUEPRINT IS THE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OF OPEX FITNESS

DEVELOPMENTAL FOCUS

FOR EACH LIFE CYCLE PHASE

DISCOVER

0-5 years

Discover is focused on movement solutions and natural human development, with the goal being to discover all forms of movement, with purpose and structure. During this phase, a child is growing from the fetal position, to lying prone, to lifting up their head. As the child ages, they will learn to roll over, crawl, walk, run, etc. By the end of the Discover phase, a child should begin to climb, play rough, dance, throw, and develop hand/feet coordination.



EXPLORE

5-8 years

Explore is made up of continual, consistent height and size development with the introduction of various locomotion activities like swimming and jumping rope. In order to develop motor control, gymnastic-style activities and absolute strength work must be introduced. Various forms of tension can create long-term positive changes for this age. Body weight and external resistance with a focus on all patterns such as hinging, squatting, lunging, upper pushing and pulling and core work, should be exposed and learned here but *not* maximally expressed.



TRAIN

8-12 years

Train is a critical period of motor control, memory and skill development. It is also a critical period for compensatory patterns and specialization to begin at too early in development. At this stage, cyclical locomotion is continually challenged, along with more exposure to various tensions in body weight style activities and continued experience in absolute strength activities. The focus on absolute strength here is position and tension over maxes. Strength speed as skills are introduced here with a focus on skill expression, not 1RM's, maxes and highest potential. Moderate levels of assessment are required in this stage to create programming based on development and ability.



EXPERIENCE

12-18 years

As an athlete moves through this stage, they will experience rapid growth and peak their weight and height. This factor alone is a key consideration in mixed modal development that needs to be taken seriously so as to not push an adult model expression onto a developing human. The goal here is to create multiple movement solutions in training that expose the athlete to all expressions of Mixed Modal while continually monitoring adaptation and development speed. This period should consist of the most assessments. Dynamic skills can be tested in a non-fatigued state and the athlete in this stage can practice high exposure to athletic skills in a controlled setting. The athlete can begin competing in events that focus on skills and proper expression; not adult events that are scaled to the young adult.



CRAFT

18-22 years

Craft is the first opportunity to begin experimenting with maximal physical expression. The athlete will be focused on progressing absolute strength and strength speed, with training focusing on sport specific improvement. Training will include more dynamic contractions and be as sustainable and repeatable as possible. During this phase, the athlete must move away from constant practice, and begin pushing maximal expression. The individuality of design and progression towards quick adaption is heightened. The strategy of sport, tactics, and perception are all being expressed and learned at each opportunity - the athlete is being an athlete. Structure of training and competition frequency should be high. Assessment phases should begin fatigue testing and significantly less often than Experience.



MASTERY

22-30 years

Mastery is the peak of physical abilities. This means recovery time between intense competitive settings must be increased. The athlete's potential should be reaching its height. Dynamic contractions are to be made as sustainable as possible in these years. At this point, the athlete is also finding ways to leak less energy in movement and create the highest efficiency. This is the phase when nearly every system is maximized, assessments are minimal and further apart, training is highly structured and competition is frequent.



ENTROPY

30+ years

The final stage of the athlete life cycle is entropy; the gradual decline of all systems. Training should be hyper focused on resisting entropy and holding on to a lifetime worth of contractions and expressions that have been experienced. Skills are peaked and training is focused on refinement rather than intensity. Metabolic training must be reduced, as the athlete cannot recover as effectively as before, due to biological processes. While physical training must be scaled at this stage, social and psychological growth can be optimized. Training structure must remain rigid as the athlete attempts to delay the decline of systems. With competition volume being heavily reduced, the number of assessments can also lessen.



The ability to identify which developmental stage an athlete is currently in can only be mastered through *Mixed Modal*. The digital course teaches athlete assessment and progression for maximal expression.

[PURCHASE MIXED MODAL](#)

SAMPLE PROGRAMMING

FOR EACH LIFE CYCLE PHASE

DISCOVER

0-5 years

-
- A. Double-Leg Hops, 5-10 min total
 - B. Monkey Bar Play, 10-15 min
 - C. Kickball with friends, 15-20 min

This session may just look plain silly, but lays out what a typical recess or day at the park would look like. The goal of this program is to play in an unstructured environment and practice jumping, hanging, kicking and running. This is designed for the latter portion of **Discover**.

EXPLORE

5-8 years

-
- A. Jump Rope play, 5-10 min total
 - B. Upper Body Gymnastics play, 10-15 min
 - C. Tee Ball with friends, 15-20 min
 - D. Isometric Plank Circuit

This program continues to build on the focus of **Discover**. Jumping patterns, upper body gymnastics, and hand/eye/feet coordination are emphasized. These sessions must continue to feel like play as the child is not yet focused on training.

TRAIN

8-12 years

A. Upper Body Gymnastic Skills x10 min

B. High Hang Snatch, singles x5-10 min

*light, speed high, skill-focus

C. Jerk Footwork Drills x10 min

D. Goblet Squat, @3121, 3x8-10 reps ; rest 2-3 min

E1. Single Arm Kettlebell Carry, 3x40m/arm; rest 90 sec

E2. FLR on Rings, 3x30-45 sec; rest 90 sec

Movement solutions are key during **Train** as the pre-teen builds great motor patterns. All dynamic skill work is merely practice and conducted in an unfatigued state. This phase builds the base for all future growth to be built upon.

EXPERIENCE

12-18 years

A. Upper Body Gymnastic Skills x15 min

B. Snatch, 3,3,3,3,3; rest 2-3 min

*submaximal loading, do not push loads to compromise positions

C. Jerk Balance, 3x3; rest as needed

*light, speed high, skill-focus

D. Front Squat, @30X1, 5x3-5 reps; rest 2-3 min

*building as positions allow

+

15 min AMRAP @ 80% aero

20 calorie AirBike

10 Burpees w/ overhead clap

The motor patterns built in **Train** allow for dynamic reps and increased skill work. While still conducted in a non-fatigued state, Snatch intensity, Jerk technique work, and working Front Squat sets have been added. This phase allows for the highest variation in resistance.

CRAFT

18-22 years

-
- A. Ring Muscle-Ups, 10 min EMOM, 2-3 reps
 - B. Snatch, 3x3 @ 85%, 2x2 @ 90%, 1x1 @ 92%+
 - C. Split Jerk, 5x1.1.1; rest 20 sec/2-3 min
 - D. Back Squat, @30X1, 5,5,4,4,3,3; rest 3-4 min
*85%+
 - +
 - For Time @ hard effort
 - 21-15-9
 - Power Clean 135/95lbs
 - Box Jump Step Down 24/20"
 - Kipping Handstand Push-Up

Craft focuses on the final ascent before maximal physical potential. Training is now sports specific with progressions for absolute strength and strength speed. Training percentages based on 1 rep maximums, neuromuscular efficiency, etc. The athlete is focused on making skill work sustainable and locomotive activities are being increasingly challenged.

MASTERY

22-30 years

-
- A. 30 rMU for time
 - B. Every 2 min
5 Touch-and-Go Snatch 155/105lbs
400m run
x5
*build 10lbs per set
 - C. Push Press+Push Jerk, 4x3+5; rest 2 min
 - D. Back Squat, @20X1, 10x3 reps; rest 60 sec
*65% 1rm, speed-focused
 - +
 - 6 Sets @ sustainable pacing
 - 10 calorie Ski Erg
 - 20 Heavy Double Under
 - 10 Burpee Box Jumps 24/20"
 - rest/walk 90 sec-

Mastery is the peak of maximal physical potential. Metabolic dynamic reps are moving toward sustainable expertise and adaptations for new variations in movement are being perceived as easier. The athlete is able to train at this pace due to the ability to recover quickly and not "leak" as much energy as in previous stages.

ENTROPY

30+ years

A. Strict MU + Kipping MU, 10 min EMOM, 1+2

B. High Hang Snatch+Snatch, every 2 min, 2+1 x6 sets

C. Push Press, @30X1, 5,3,5,3; rest 2-3 min
*waveload

D. Front Squat, @30X1, 3x6-8 reps; rest 3 min
+
3 min AirBike @ 10 min rpm
3 min rest
x4-6

The long-term training plan laid out from Discover allows the the maximization of athletic potential during **Entropy**, rather than causing the athlete to burn-out and decline quicker. Coaches must decrease total metabolic intensity, allow for longer recovery times, and focus on refining skills instead of raising them.

These are just a few examples of what programming should look like at each developmental stage. James FitzGerald provides detailed sample programs and teaches the principles of Mixed Modal program design in his digital course, Mixed Modal.

[PURCHASE MIXED MODAL](#)

IMPLEMENTATION

The Athlete Development Blueprint is not a template. Coaches must identify where an athlete sits within the model through assessments, consultations, and empirical data.

Mixed Modal provides the principles and tools needed to personalize the Athlete Development Blueprint and implement each concept.

In the course, you'll learn how to maximize each of the systems laid out, how to assess athletes to understand what phase they are in, and what characteristics to train to seamlessly progress.

Each developmental phase is not an exact science and will fluctuate based on individual biology and outside factors. Understanding how to identify where an athlete currently is will allow for optimization of each training session.

Start developing podium-caliber athletes today with a Mixed Modal education.

[PURCHASE MIXED MODAL](#)

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