Fostering Quality Participation for Athletes with a Disability
A Quick Guide for Program Leaders - STEP 1

Quality participation is built from an athlete’s positive experiences. The building blocks of quality participation are:

- **AUTONOMY**
  - Having independence, choice, control

- **BELONGINGNESS**
  - Feeling included, accepted, respected, part of the group

- **CHALLENGE**
  - Feeling appropriately tested

- **ENGAGEMENT**
  - Being in-the-moment, focused, absorbed, fascinated

- **MASTERY**
  - Feeling a sense of achievement, accomplishment, competence

- **MEANING**
  - Contributing toward obtaining a personal or socially meaningful goal; feeling a sense of responsibility to others

To foster quality participation in your next program or event, first learn about your participants’ priorities, and then ask yourself the following questions:

1. Which building blocks are MOST IMPORTANT for the participants in our program or event?
2. What are we CURRENTLY DOING to support these building blocks?
3. What can we START DOING to support these building blocks?
4. What can we CHANGE to support these building blocks?

The perceived importance of each building block may differ from athlete to athlete. For instance, one athlete may place the highest value on belongingness, while another may value feeling challenged above anything else.
ENDNOTES

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