

ACTIVITY 2 – EFFECTIVE ATHLETE OBSERVATION

Key Reference Information

Effective observation involves understanding different viewing perspectives and when each plane provides optimal information.

Planes of Movement and Viewing:

- 1) Sagittal Plane – View from the side.
 - Best for: assessing posture, limb reach, rein use, vertical alignment
 - Example: observing rider's upper body alignment and hand position during a posting trot.
- 2) Frontal Plane – View from the front or back.
 - Best for: evaluating lateral balance, symmetry of aids, adduction/abduction.
 - Example: assessing rider symmetry on a centerline or over a vertical fence.
- 3) Transverse/Dorsal Plane – View from above or assessing rotation.
 - Best for: analyzing rotational control, torso twist, rein tension during turns.
 - Example: watching a rider's ability to rotate during a roll-back or half-pass.

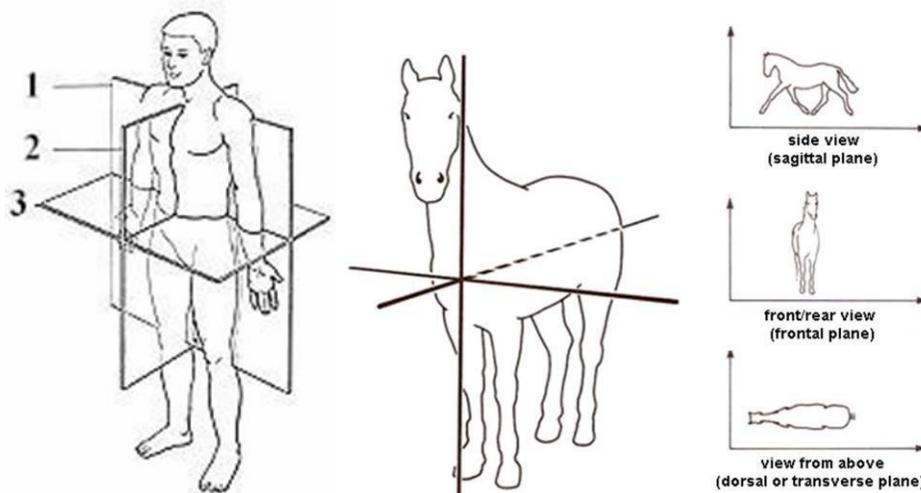


Image by Dr. Hilary Clayton



Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

- **Definition:** Observable and measurable outcomes or results that indicate whether performance is meeting the required standard.
- **Purpose:** Used to assess or evaluate performance based on observable actions or outcomes.
- **Example Use:** A coach watches a rider's dressage test and notes whether the trot rhythm is consistent, transitions are fluid, or horse stays on the bit.
- **Equestrian Example:**
 - *Jumping:* Number of knockdowns or refusals.
 - *Dressage:* Accuracy of circles and transitions.
 - *Vaulting:* Synchronization of team movements.

Key Performance Factors (KPFs):

- **Definition:** The underlying technical, tactical, physical, psychological, or environmental elements that influence an athlete's ability to achieve the KPIs.
- **Purpose:** Used to explain or analyze *why* performance is or isn't meeting the standard.
- **Example Use:** A coach notices inconsistent rhythm in trot (KPI issue), then identifies that the rider's lack of core stability and poor rein contact are the KPFs contributing to that issue.
- **Equestrian Example:**
 - *Jumping:* Rider's lower leg instability or horse's incorrect take-off point.
 - *Dressage:* Lack of engagement from the hindquarters or tension in the rider's seat.
 - *Vaulting:* Limited flexibility or balance in the vaulter during a mount.

Both KPIs and KPFs are essential:

- KPIs help spot the problem or success,
- KPFs help understand and address the cause.



Summary Table for KPIs & KPFs

Feature	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Key Performance Factors (KPFs)
What it shows	Observable outcomes or benchmarks	Root causes or influences on performance
Purpose	To assess if performance meets the standard	To analyze why performance succeeded/failed
Used for	Evaluation and comparison	Diagnosis and correction planning
Example	“Rider maintained canter rhythm throughout test”	“Rider’s stable pelvis helped maintain rhythm”

Key Performance Indicators and Associated Key Performance Factors in Equestrian Sport

Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Example in Equestrian Sport	Related Key Performance Factors (KPFs)
Posture	Neutral spine in trot or canter; no hollow or rounded back.	Rider’s body awareness, core strength, pelvic alignment, proprioception.
Core Stability	Minimal upper body movement over fences.	Trunk strength, muscular endurance, correct lower leg position, rider breathing.
Rein Contact	Elastic, steady contact in flatwork or transitions.	Elbow elasticity, independent hand use, shoulder stability, understanding of rein aids.
Symmetry	Even stirrup length, leg pressure equal on both sides as shown in horse response.	Rider muscle imbalances, scoliosis/postural issues, equal weight distribution.
Coordination	Synchronized aids during flying lead changes resulting in smooth changes.	Motor planning, bilateral body control, independent use of aids, practice repetition.
Balance	Upper body control in no-stirrup canter or two-point position.	Ankle flexibility, lower leg stability, core engagement, visual-spatial awareness.



Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Example in Equestrian Sport	Related Key Performance Factors (KPFs)
Timing	Effective aid applications in half-halts or transitions.	Ability to feel rhythm, understanding of gaits, timing of rider's cues, awareness of horse's body.
Focus	Maintain attention through a pattern or jumping course.	Mental discipline, emotional regulation, pre-performance routine, anxiety control.

Learning Objectives

- Apply the WHAT? SO WHAT? NOW WHAT? model to identify and correct rider performance gaps.
- Use KPIs and appropriate planes of view to observe technical and physical aspects of rider skill (e.g., posture, balance, rein contact).
- Determine possible KPFs and strategies to overcome these factors.

Step-by-Step Activity Plan

Step 1 - Observation Goals and Planning (10 mins)

- Select performance indicators (KPIs) such as posture, coordination, rein contact, etc.

Step 2: Live Observation (20 mins)

- Observe riders from the selected planes.
- Record strengths and areas for improvement using the worksheet provided.
- Focus on rider biomechanics, technical skill execution, and mental presence.

Step 3: Formulate Feedback (10 mins)

- Identify possible KPFs and select a corrective strategy (Teaching interventions/Activity Modifications/Competition Interventions).
- Discuss using the WHAT? (What did you see?), SO WHAT? (What was the effect?), NOW WHAT? (What next?).

Step 4: Group Reflection (10 mins)

- What did the plane of view reveal?
- What KPF most impacted your athlete?
- How will this affect your future observation habits?



Athlete Observation & Feedback Chart

Rider Task	KPIs	Plane of View (Sagittal / Frontal / Transverse)	WHAT? What did you see?	SO WHAT? Impact on Performance (Possible KPFs)	NOW WHAT? Correction Strategy (Teaching / Activity / Competition)	Comments / Follow- Up Notes
Leg Yield Right in Trot/Jog						
10 m Left Canter/Lope Circle						
Simple Change of Lead Through Walk						



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