

There Is Only Ahead and Behind

A practitioner-researcher-entrepreneur's reflection on technology and the changing shape of performance science

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This is a reflective piece, written in the first person. It is offered not as an empirical report but as an honest reflection: a practitioner, researcher and entrepreneur thinking aloud about a problem he can no longer un-see. Its aim is not to provoke but to check and to challenge: to invite fellow practitioners to reflect, to think more deeply about what is happening to our field, and to be honest and transparent with one another about the route forward.

Prologue: The game I thought I understood

I ended my doctoral thesis with a borrowed idea. Drawing on Carse's (1986) distinction between finite and infinite games, and the version of that work later popularised by Simon Sinek (2019), I argued that sports nutrition is an infinite game. The players (practitioners, researchers, and the people building the tools) come and go. The rules (the published evidence, and the tacit knowledge that practice runs on) change. There is no defined endpoint and, unlike almost everything else in elite sport, there are no winners or losers. There is only ahead and behind (Dunne, 2023).

I still believe that. I wrote it, though, as someone who had not yet spent half a decade building a technology company, and there was something I had sensed without ever making it explicit, something that is more evident now than ever. The formal evidence has always trailed the play, and the field has long lived with that lag. What I had assumed, however, was that the lag would always close in the end, that the evidence would eventually catch up with the practice it described. I have learned that it will not. The builders and the practitioners now move at the speed of the technology they ship and adopt, while the published record moves at the pace of peer review, and the gap between them widens every year.

This is a reflection on what it means to practise, to research, and to build inside that widening gap. It is also, I should say plainly at the outset, a piece written by someone with skin in the game. I co-founded Hexis, the global nutrition operating system for human performance, and I have declared that interest in my published work (Dunne *et al.*, 2021). I am not a neutral observer of the trends I am about to describe; I am implicated in them. I have tried to make that conflict a feature of this reflection rather than something to apologise for, because the view from inside the gap is precisely what I think is missing from an open conversation about how the discipline moves forward.

Three places I have stood

This is written as a self-narrative: a first-person reflection on my own practice and development, an approach with an established place in reflective scholarship (Morton, 2009). That tradition asks the writer to make their standpoint explicit, so I should say plainly where I have been standing when I noticed the problem.

I came to research as a sports nutrition practitioner who never intended to become an academic. My strengths were in applied practice and, if I am honest, in the art of conversation: listening, observing, empathising. Around 2014, like many of my peers, I started using social media platforms as an informal extension of my service provision. Engagement flourished. Athletes responded. Then

the ground moved: platforms shifted, features changed, what worked last season stopped working. None of these tools had been designed for nutrition; I was effectively product-hacking, and my skill lay in figuring out how to bend consumer technology to a purpose it was never built for. I felt the gap first as a practitioner, as the disorienting sense that the very tools I depended on were changing faster than I could work out how best to use them.

I became a researcher to explore what I had experienced. My doctoral work set out to understand how digital technology was being absorbed into applied sports nutrition (Dunne, 2023), and what the opportunities for innovation were. What I found was telling. The adoption of these tools had been an entirely bottom-up movement (Dunne *et al.*, 2019). Nobody had decided these tools should become part of practice; it simply happened, with mass uptake, little formal training, no agreed method for capturing effectiveness, and remarkably few practitioners questioning the process at all. What I was watching was not, at root, a technology story. It was a shift in how people seek information and where their attention lives: across society, the search for knowledge had already migrated away from institutionally created, authoritative content and toward whatever lived in your pocket. The channels people trusted to carry knowledge, and deliver interventions, had changed beneath us.

This reframes an old debate. The familiar academic worry is one of knowledge-to-practice translation, of sound evidence failing to make the journey from journal to field (Bartlett & Drust, 2021). Naming a translation problem, however, assumes the route from evidence to practice is simply too slow or too leaky. What I was seeing was different: the route itself had been rebuilt, and the traffic had moved to it before anyone studied it. It was an early glimpse of the decoupling I would name only later, the channel already moving at the speed of consumer technology while the study of it stayed bound to the journal. The frustration was immediate during my doctoral studies: by the time I had surveyed and interviewed practitioners on the tools they were using, new ones had arrived, and I wished more than once that I could run the study again. I learned, instead, to stay agnostic to platforms and features and to focus on

knowledge that might survive their churn. Naming a problem, though, is not the same as doing something about it, and that distinction remained top of my mind.

I decided to take action, although I did not set out to become an entrepreneur. What I cared about was understanding the problem and designing a solution that might genuinely make a difference, and Hexis began life as a PhD that got wildly out of control, in the best possible way. I ended up living inside the gap not by design but by temperament: curious about how we might do better, and frustrated enough by the status quo to keep pushing until the pushing became Hexis. Today I lead a team building technology for athletes, practitioners and organisations, which means I no longer observe the mismatch of clock speeds from a safe distance; I operate inside it, every day. I make decisions on timescales the evidence cannot always validate in advance, knowing that the literature describing whatever we build will arrive several product generations too late to be of use to the person reading it. Increasingly, I suspect, it will be teams like mine, rather than the universities, that have the opportunity to produce the relevant evidence first, and that should give all of us pause.

Three vantage points, then, on a single phenomenon: a practitioner who lived and felt the gap every day, a researcher who tried to name and understand it, and a builder who chose to stop describing the gap and start working inside it. I will return to each of them, because each lends a different lens on the problem. What follows is what they have led me to conclude.

The mismatch of clock speeds

Here is the uncomfortable observation, stated as plainly as I can manage.

In a field that is increasingly mediated by technology, the peer-reviewed evidence base is structurally incapable of keeping pace with the tools it seeks to evaluate. The publication cycle in our discipline runs in years. Conception, ethics, recruitment, data collection, analysis, writing, submission, review, revision, and finally print. For an applied technology study, three to five years from idea to citation is ordinary, not slow. The technology

cycle, by contrast, now runs in months, sometimes even weeks. Models iterate, products ship, and entire interaction paradigms turn over inside a single calendar year.

Put those two clocks side by side and the conclusion is hard to avoid. By the time a rigorous study of a given intervention reaches print, the intervention it describes has frequently moved several generations on, in some instances beyond recognition. The paper is not wrong. It is describing, with great care, a world that no longer exists: a meticulous map of territory that has already been redeveloped. I felt the first tremor of this during my own PhD, and that was before the current generation of artificial intelligence compressed the cycle further still.

I should be precise, though, because not all evidence is affected equally. Some of it is seminal: the foundational science, hard-won over a century, that will still hold decades from now. A great deal of applied, tool-specific evidence, however, can be dated by a single new model or product generation. It is this second kind that the publication cycle can no longer keep pace with, and it makes up a growing share of what practitioners are now asked to evaluate. Put simply the technology outruns the evidence.

I want to be careful here, because this is the point at which a reflection like this can curdle into the lazy and corrosive sport of academia-bashing, and I have no interest in that. This is not a failure of science. The slowness of peer review is the same slowness that makes it thorough; the care that makes it lag is the care that makes it count. I say all of this, genuinely, as someone who lives in the literature and owes it a significant contribution to how I think, alongside my own experience and tacit knowledge. The problem is that we have two essential systems running on radically different clocks, and we have not yet been honest with ourselves, or with the practitioners who depend on us, about what that means for how knowledge actually reaches the field.

This has real consequences. When the formal evidence cannot arrive in time, practitioners do not stop making decisions; they cannot, because the athlete is in front of them this morning. They make those decisions instead by inferring from the

evidence that does exist, by drawing on adjacent fields, by trusting their own lived experience, by listening to athlete feedback, and by weighing the recommendations of peers they respect. This is reasonable, and it is also unsystematic: a private, improvised method that every practitioner reinvents alone. They need better ways to reason in its absence.

We are not the first to face this

Other fields have already confronted this mismatch, and it is worth borrowing from those who are further down the road as success continues to leave cues.. Medicine has spent the better part of two decades wrestling with exactly this problem, as digital health tools, algorithms and connected devices began to evolve far faster than randomised controlled trials could evaluate them. Its response is instructive, because medicine did not abandon evidence; it built new kinds. Real-world evidence draws on data generated in routine use rather than waiting years for a trial to close (Sherman et al., 2016). Adaptive and platform trial designs allow a study to evolve as the intervention does. An entire regulatory category (software as a medical device) was created on the explicit assumption that the product will keep changing after it is approved. Although things may still not be perfect,, it is a serious attempt to keep rigour and pace in the same room, and sports nutrition has barely begun the conversation.

The devices are already in our athletes' hands. Companies such as WHOOP and Oura sit squarely in the gap I am describing: their hardware and algorithms iterate constantly, they live in the grey zone between wellness product and medical device, and both have responded not by waiting for someone else to study them but by publishing research of their own. That instinct (to generate the evidence rather than merely gesture at it) is exactly the behaviour a practitioner should be looking for, and it points directly at a test I will come to later.

Lenses for the gap

If I only had the diagnosis, this would be a complaint. What makes it, I hope, a reflection worth your time is that several existing bodies of thought

illuminate the gap and suggest a way through it. I want to borrow three lenses: one from each of the places I have stood.

Lens 1. The Practitioner. Diffusion outrunning evidence

As a practitioner, I felt the ground move beneath me long before I could explain it. The Diffusion of Innovations theory (Rogers, 2003) is the closest thing I have found to an explanation. In my thesis I drew on it to warn practitioners against becoming “laggards”, specifically against falling behind the practitioner who can evolve to combine the essential role of being human with the computational power of technology (Dunne et al., 2021). I stand by the warning, but I have come to see a tension inside it that I did not fully appreciate at the time.

Diffusion of innovations describes how a new idea or tool spreads through a population: innovators first, then early adopters, an early and a late majority, and finally the laggards (Rogers, 2003). Adoption, in Rogers’ account, runs ahead of proof; early adopters move on signals other than completed evidence, which is precisely why they are early. Now lay the evidence curve over the adoption curve. In a slow-moving field the two stay roughly in step: by the time the majority adopts, the evidence has more or less caught up (figure 1). The two decouple, however, when the adoption curve accelerates to the speed of consumer technology while the evidence curve stays bound to the publication cycle (figure 2). The majority has adopted, moved on, and adopted again before the first robust study lands.

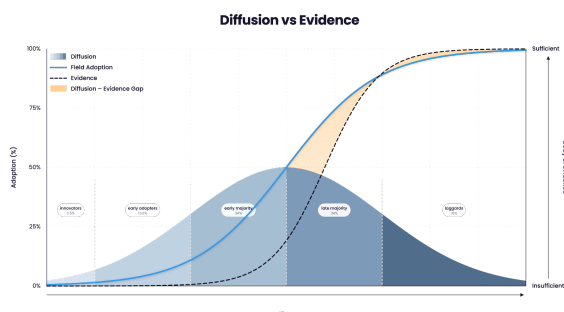


Figure 1. Diffusion vs Evidence. Field adoption and the body of evidence advance roughly in step; the gap stays small (adapted from Rogers, 2023).

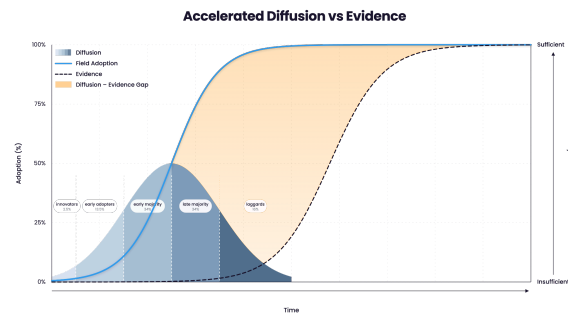


Figure 2. Accelerated Diffusion vs Evidence. Field adoption races ahead at consumer-technology speed while evidence stays bound to the publication cycle, opening a large, persistent gap (adapted from Rogers, 2023).

This puts the conscientious practitioner in a genuine bind. We tell them to be evidence-based. We also tell them not to be laggards. In a decoupled field, those two instructions point in opposite directions. You cannot wait for the evidence and remain an early adopter, because the evidence arrives after the window has closed. This is not a problem the individual practitioner created, and it is not one they can solve by trying harder to read the literature. It is structural, and it demands a structural response.

Lens 2. The Researcher. Vertical depth and horizontal reach

As a researcher, I came to see that the shift I was studying was one of reach, not discovery, and Thiel and Masters’ (2014) distinction between vertical and horizontal progress gives that conclusion a sharper name. Vertical progress is going from zero to one: doing something genuinely new, deepening what is known. Horizontal progress is going from one to n : taking what already exists and spreading it more widely.

Sports nutrition has spent more than a century making vertical progress, and magnificently so (Grivetti & Applegate, 1997). We have gone deeper and deeper into metabolism, into the physiology of fuelling, recovery and adaptation, into the periodisation of intake against training demands in sport (Impey et al., 2018). That vertical work is hard-won, peer-reviewed, and genuinely a century in the making. It is the seminal, enduring science I described earlier: the kind that does not date with the next model.

Much of what technology has produced, by contrast, is horizontal. The science did not change; what changed is who can reach it and how it can be engaged with. Knowledge that previously lived in journals, accessible only through the scarce and expensive channel of one-to-one practitioner contact, now lives in athletes' pockets. This matters acutely in a profession where a single practitioner often works across multiple teams each with large squad numbers in a single organisation, making genuine personalisation through human contact alone arithmetically impossible. Technology did not discover the science; it distributed it.

However, there is a genuine vertical frontier here too, though, and it is the one that excites me most. Data now flows continuously, whether its from power meters, wearables, training calendars or other sensors or sources, that data can be integrated and acted upon in real time, enabling a level of advanced and adaptive, personalised prescription that no human practitioner could ever deliver at scale (Jonvik et al., 2022). That is not the redistribution of old knowledge; it is something new: a move from zero to one, not one to n . It is also, candidly, what Hexis has developed: not to repackage what already exists, but to create a capability that did not exist before. The reframing matters, and I will return to it, because the anxiety in our profession largely stems from mistaking horizontal progress for vertical, from fearing that the machine has learned something we have not, when in truth it has mostly learned to deliver, at scale, speed and efficiency, what we already knew, while the truly new work remains as hard and as deep as it ever was.

Lens 3. The Builder. Think deep, not different

As a builder, and an entrepreneur, I have felt the constant pull toward novelty: the urge to do the new thing nobody has seen. The third lens is the conviction I reached instead, one I hold personally and one we have made a core value at Hexis: "Think Deep". It is written on our wall, and it shapes how we make decisions. The defining slogan of the technology industry's romantic period was Apple's exhortation to "think different". For a long time, many of us in sports technology absorbed that

ambition uncritically: the goal was novelty, disruption, the new thing nobody had seen.

I have come to believe that for a field like ours, built on a century of vertical science, the more honest and more valuable ambition is to think *deep*. Our defensible advantage was never going to be that we thought differently from a hundred years of physiology. It was going to be that we took that physiology more seriously, understood it more deeply, and refused to flatten it in the act of distributing it. When distribution itself becomes cheap and universal, when anyone can vibe-code an app over a weekend, depth is the thing that remains scarce. Depth is the moat.

The role is not disappearing. It is being redrawn.

I want to directly address the fear that sits underneath all of this, because it is the fear I hear most often from the practitioners I respect: *will technology take my job?*

My honest answer is no, but it will change it, and more profoundly than most of us are prepared for. The economic literature broadly suggests that automation tends to reshape and redistribute work rather than eliminate it wholesale (Autor, 2015), a point I have made before in the specific context of sports nutrition (Dunne *et al.*, 2021). The clearest way to see how the role changes is to look at what has already happened in the industry I now work in.

In technology, the boundaries between roles have blurred almost beyond recognition. Everyone in the organisation now has the capability to ship design and code to production; with each new wave of tooling, the person who once needed a specialist can increasingly do the work themselves. The old demarcations (*this person knows things, that person builds things*) have collapsed. In the modern technology team, in a real sense, everyone is a builder now. The unique value is no longer in holding a specialised body of knowledge that others lack, because the tools have distributed that knowledge. The value is in what you do with it.

The parallel for our field is exact: everyone is going to become a coach.

For a long time, the value of a sports nutritionist lay substantially in being a knowledge base: in knowing what the athlete did not, and dispensing that knowledge across scarce contact time. Knowledge alone, however, was never the constraint; my own and others' work has repeatedly shown that athletes often possess sufficient nutrition knowledge yet still struggle to translate it into improved behaviours (Birkenhead & Slater, 2015; Dunne et al., 2022). When the knowledge moves into the athlete's pocket, being a knowledge base stops being a defensible role. What remains, and becomes more valuable rather than less, is coaching: the deeply human work of conversation, of building relationships and shaping culture, of motivating and supporting autonomy, and of building skill and ownership over time (Deci & Ryan, 2008). The practitioner is not displaced by the distribution of knowledge. They are freed by it to do the part of the job that was always the hardest and the most human.

I want to go one step further, because we are heading somewhere more specific than "everyone becomes a coach". The defining competency of the next decade will be *design*, not in the cosmetic sense, but as the disciplined practice of shaping behaviour, systems and experience toward an outcome, the behavioural design thinking that sat at the heart of my doctoral work (Dunne, 2023). We may even need a new title for this person. I have come to think of them as a **human performance architect**, and I choose the word deliberately. Drawing on Aristotle's account of architectonic knowledge (*Metaphysics* I.1) and practical wisdom (*Nicomachean Ethics* VI), an architect is an agent of prudence and systemic direction; by definition, they possess the overarching vision to orchestrate complex, interconnected systems while exercising the practical wisdom and foresight necessary to navigate real-world risks and structural constraints. Guided by this, such an architect in human performance does not only design; they understand how a thing is built, work within real constraints, coordinate the resources around them, and remain accountable for how people

live inside what they create. Design, building, and the integration of the two: that is the work, the mastery of two systems at once, a coaching system and a technology system, and the interface between them.

Hybrid Coaching: A dual-mastery model

This is the model I keep returning to, and I offer it as the central proposition of this reflection and to our discipline moving forward: the part I most hope the field will take up, test, and improve. It extends the notion of hybrid coaching I first proposed with colleagues (Dunne et al., 2021): a dual-mastery system that combines the best of being human with the power of technology to maximise human performance.

Picture it as an infinity loop (figure 3). On one side sits the human: conversation, relationship, culture (the territory of coaching mastery). On the other sits the technology: personalisation, efficiency, scale (the territory of systems mastery). Neither side is sufficient alone. A practitioner with only coaching mastery cannot scale their care beyond the few priority athletes their contact time allows, which was always the central constraint my research identified (Dunne et al., 2022). A practitioner with only systems mastery can scale, but delivers personalisation without the human understanding of autonomy, motivation and personality to drive changes in athlete beliefs and behaviours. The two loops feed each other continuously, and the question that drives the whole system sits at its centre: where is the organisation on their journey, and what immediate problem the practitioner needs to solve?

The human performance architect is the person who can hold both loops at once. They are not threatened by the technology system, because they are fluent in it; and they are not replaced by it, because they own the human system it cannot touch. This, I think, is what "ahead" looks like for our profession. Not resisting the machine, and not surrendering to it, but mastering the interface between the two.

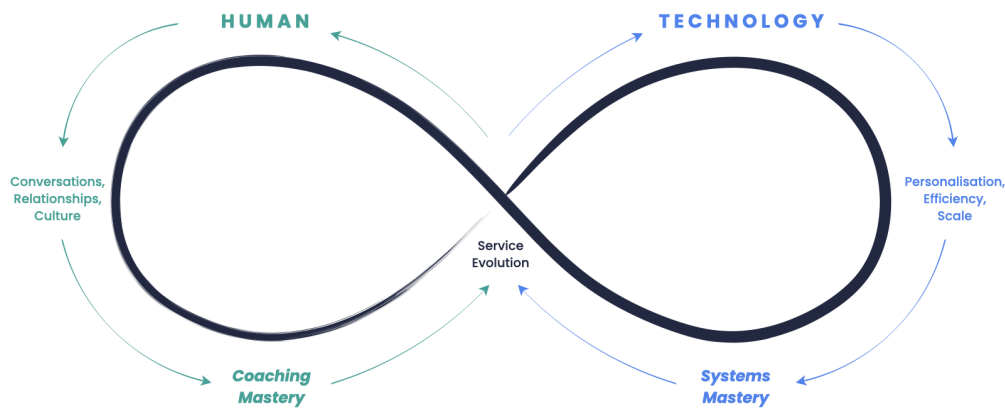


Figure 3. *Hybrid Coaching. A dual-mastery system that combines the best of being human with the power of technology to maximise human performance.*

Evaluating what you can't yet prove: Direction, Evidence and Trust

We return, then, to the gap, because the redrawn role forces a hard question. If the practitioner is to become a human performance architect fluent in technology systems, on what basis do they choose those systems? We have already established that the formal evidence cannot arrive in time to help them. The traditional answer (*wait for the research, then adopt what the research supports*) is no longer available in a decoupled field.

This requires a genuine shift in the practitioner's relationship to evidence, and it is the most difficult thing I am asking of my peers. We have to move, at least partially, from *consuming finished evidence about tools* to *evaluating tools and the people who build them, ourselves, in real time*. This is not an abandonment of rigour. It is the relocation of rigour to the only place it can still operate at the speed the field now demands: into the practitioner's own judgement, and into a framework for exercising that judgement well.

A good evaluation framework lets you judge any tool on its merits, for yourself, when the evidence cannot do it for you. Over years of building and assessing these tools, I have come to rely on three questions: one about yourself, one about the science, and one about the people. I think of them as a test of Direction, Evidence and Trust. They will not give you certainty (nothing can, at this speed), but they let

you reason rigorously in the absence of a finished literature.

Direction. Where are you trying to go, and does this tool take you there? Define the destination before you evaluate the route. Which capabilities must be native to your service rather than simply bolted on? How many separate "sources of truth" will your athletes' data end up living across, and is that a choice you have made or one you have inherited? What do you want your department to be known for in five years that it cannot be known for today? A point solution may patch a problem in front of you this week; a technology infrastructure reshapes what you are capable of. Be clear which one you are investing in, and why.

Evidence. Does the tool rest on seminal, enduring science (the kind that will still hold decades from now) or on a finding that the next model or product generation can quietly date? Know which of the two you are leaning on, because only one of them will still be true by the time you have rolled it out.

Trust. Did the people behind this tool produce the science the field relies on, or do they merely cite it? When the product changes (as it will), do you also trust them to steer it toward your athletes' interests? More rests on this question than on almost any other, for reasons I will come to.

None of these requires you to wait three years for permission. Every one of them is answerable about a tool today.

A framework, on its own, is not enough, and this is where my own thinking has changed the most.

Find the builders you trust. Then build with them.

The single most important decision a practitioner now makes is not *which tool* to use. It is *whose tools* to trust.

When the evidence cannot keep pace, the tool itself is a moving target: this version, then the next, then the one after that. What is far more stable, and therefore, far more reliable as a basis for a professional decision, is the character and competence of the people building it. Do they understand your world? Have they done the work (the actual practitioner work, the actual science) or are they distributing depth they do not themselves possess? Do they care about your athletes' needs, or only about their growth metrics? When the product changes, as it will, do you believe the leaders making those decisions are aligned with the priorities of your athletes?

There is a test for this that I find clarifying, and it is more demanding than it first appears. Do not ask merely whether an organisation can *cite* evidence for its product: anyone can assemble a bibliography, and the citing of others' work to decorate a product is one of the most common and least meaningful signals in our market. Ask instead whether the organisation has *produced* the evidence that the rest of the field now cites. This is the real distinction, and it maps almost exactly onto what genuine thought leadership means. There is a meaningful difference between a team that references someone else's seminal work to lend authority to a product, and a team whose own work *is* the seminal contribution: who surfaced the problem before others had named it, thought more deeply about it than anyone in the field, and proposed the frameworks that others now build upon.

The former have read the literature. The latter have written it. The thought leaders are the ones who have demonstrably pushed the field forward, because the surest evidence that someone understands a problem

deeply enough to solve it well is that they were the ones who defined it in the first place.

I can hear the obvious objection, and it is the right one to raise. Is "trust the people, not just the evidence" not exactly how a field gets captured by charismatic founders and slick marketing? It would be, if trust meant the loose thing: likeability, confidence, a polished demo. That is precisely why the bar has to be producing the evidence rather than citing it. Marketing is cheap, and a bibliography is cheaper; a decade of peer-reviewed contribution that others now build upon is neither. It is close to the only signal in this market that is genuinely expensive to fake, because the sole way to fake it is to actually do the work. The produced-versus-cited test is not a softening of rigour but a sharpening of it: it puts the weight on the verifiable track record of the people, rather than the not-yet-existent study of the product.

This is why, in a field where the formal evidence cannot keep pace, backing the genuine thought leaders is not loyalty or sentiment; it is the most rational position available to you. The people who are actively leading the research, whose published work the discipline now builds on, are the closest thing to a substitute for the evidence that has not yet arrived, because they are the ones generating it. Trusting them is, in effect, getting as close to the leading edge of the evidence as it is possible to get before that evidence is formally published. It is the difference between buying the map and knowing the cartographer.

My recommendation to every practitioner reading this is a sequence, and the order matters. Find the people you trust first. Prioritise their technology to test, second. The relationship is the thing that endures across versions; the version is temporary.

Then comes the part I believe most strongly, and the part that is genuinely new in my thinking since the thesis: do not stop at consumption. *Build a relationship and invest in them, because they are invested in you.* The practitioners who will move our field forward fastest are not the ones who passively wait for better tools, nor even the ones who shrewdly select among existing ones. They are the ones who form genuine, reciprocal relationships with the people building the technology: who feed back what

they see in the field, who shape the roadmap, who become collaborators rather than customers.

Here is what that reciprocity actually solves. The clock-speed problem this entire reflection has been circling is, at root, a problem of information transmission. Formal publication is one transmission system for knowledge, and it has become too slow for the technology layer of our field. The trusted, reciprocal relationship between a practitioner and a builder is another transmission system, and it operates at the speed the field now moves. When a practitioner who understands athletes deeply is in genuine collaboration with a builder who understands science deeply, knowledge moves between them in days and weeks, not years. This is the same move medicine made when it built real-world evidence: a faster channel set alongside the literature, not a replacement for it. The literature remains the slow, durable backbone of what we know; the relationship becomes the fast layer it cannot be, and the field moves forward on both clocks at once.

This is the infinite game made collective. The practitioner and the builder are not on opposite sides of a transaction. They are players on the same side of a game with no endpoint, and the relationship between them is the mechanism that keeps them both ahead.

Ahead and behind, together

I want to end where my thesis ended, because the phrase means something more to me now than it did when I first wrote it.

There is only ahead and behind (Dunne, 2023). I wrote that about a discipline whose evidence and tacit knowledge change, and whose people come and go, and I meant it as a quiet call to keep pushing. I understand it differently now. The two clocks of our field (the fast clock of the technology and the slow clock of the evidence) are not going to resynchronise. The gap is the new permanent condition, and pretending otherwise helps no one. “Ahead” is not a place where the gap has closed. It is a way of working that remains effective despite the gap.

For the field as a whole, being ahead means being honest, far more honest than we currently are, about what the publication cycle can and cannot do in a technologically mediated discipline, and then building the faster, trusted, collaborative channels that can carry knowledge in the meantime. For the individual practitioner, being ahead means refusing the false choice between being evidence-based and being an early adopter; it means investing in depth, the thing that stays scarce when everything else becomes abundant; it means becoming a human performance architect, fluent in both the human and the technology systems; and it means choosing, very deliberately, the people whose tools you will trust, and then building something real with them.

Technology will not take our jobs. It will redraw them, and it will redraw the jobs of every discipline around us, until the lines between roles blur the way they already have in other industries. The practitioners who thrive will not be the ones who held on hardest to being a knowledge base. They will be the ones who let that go, learned to coach and to design, and found the builders worth trusting.

I do not know exactly what our profession will look like in ten years. I know which way I am pointed, though, and I would rather be a few degrees ahead and honest about the gap than comfortably behind and pretending it is not there. It is an infinite game. There are no winners. There is only ahead and behind, and, I continue to believe, we get there faster together.

Dr David Dunne a performance science practitioner, researcher and technology entrepreneur. This reflection draws on his doctoral research at Liverpool John Moores University into digital technology innovation in applied sports nutrition and on his subsequent experience building Hexis, the global nutrition operating system for human performance.

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