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Development of desirable sport management competencies

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Abstract

Sports management is the art of managing sports-related organizations and events. It encompasses a wide range of activities, including event planning, marketing, sponsorship, and media relations. Sports managers work with athletes, teams, and organizations to help them achieve their goals. They also play a role in developing new sports initiatives and programs. In this blog post, we will discuss the growth of sports management in India, the role of sports managers in driving this growth, and the skills and qualifications needed for a career in sports management. We will also discuss the career opportunities available in sports management and the future of sports management in India. Research suggests that sport management competencies are universal and have remained relatively stable over time (Cuskelly & Auld 1991; Danylchuk & Boucher, 2003; Horch & Schutte, 2003; Lambrecht, 1991; Quain & Parks, 1986). In addition to emphasizing competencies required to perform traditional tasks such as personnel management and planning, today's business world places increased importance on communication skills, communication technology, and the ability to interact in a global and multicultural society. (Ammon, 2000; Danylchuk & Boucher, 2003; Li, Kanters, & Ammon, 2002; Masteralexis & McDonald, 1997). Infact, with respect to competencies expected of sports managers, Horch and Schutte noted, "Interpersonal communication, information tasks and external representation as well as social tasks are central components of their activity. This is why they should be given equal consideration in basic and advanced training frameworks".

Although competencies required for specific settings depend on the assigned tasks and the type and size of particular organizations (Horch & Schutte, 2003), the sport management tasks (Budgeting accounting, coordinating, managing personnel, managing facilities, controlling, directing, evaluating and leading; marketing and sales, correspondence, public speaking, community relations, record keeping; and writing, selling, working with media, developing publications, keeping game notes and statistics, interviewing, promoting advertising and fund raising) provide an overview of sport industry expectations. Most of the competencies required for these tasks are transferable, which means that you should be able to use them in a variety of vocational settings that include, but are not limited to sport organizations. To prepare sport managers, the institutions of physical education and sports with the help of management institutions, the training programmes would be required to design to develop desired managerial competencies.

Keywords: Sport, sports, management, sport management, management competencies, bureaucratic model, competency approach

Introduction

At the outset, it might seem unnecessary to define sport because you probably already know through experience and intuition what the word means. For most of us, sport implies having fun, but it also can be work for a professional athlete/player; a means of employment for a sport director; or a business for a sport marketing agency. It means sport takes many forms. On the other hand, if one wishes to classify sport, it relies on varied configurations-individual sports, dual sports, combative sports, team sports. Further, sport includes a combination of these configurations when it involves team competitions, tournaments, or matches dual sports (Wrestling) or individual sports (Shooting). There are many debatable issues pending which find specific answers. For example what criteria qualify games or activities to be classified as sport? Is horse racing a sport? Is dog racing a sport? Is bull fighting a sport? Is cock fighting a sport? Is motor race a sport? What about cycling, billiards, and other table games? Everybody knows that football, basketball, field hockey, ice hockey, volleyball, tennis, cricket and softball are sports. Are they different from sailing, marathoning, video gaming and scuba diving? If so, how are they different? And, if not, how are they similar?

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To find amicable solution and to resolve this debatable sport related issues. The Council of Europe (2001) ^[6] defines sport as “all forms of physical activity which, which through casual (informal) or organised (formal) participation, aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental well-being, forming social relationships, or obtaining results in competition at all levels”. Similarly, Pitts, Fielding, and Miller (1994) stated that sport is “any activity, experience, or business enterprise for which the primary focus is fitness, recreation, athletics, and leisure related”. According to these definitions, sport does not have to be competitive, nor does it always require specialize equipment or rules; in fact, sport includes activities such as working out, swimming, running, boating and dancing. In sport management, therefore, the term sport will include an expansive variety of physical activities and associated business.

Many people who are employed in business endeavours associated with sport are engaged in a career field known as sport management. According to Pitts and Stotlar (2002), the term sport management refers to “all people, activities, businesses, and organisations involved in producing, facilitating, promoting, or organising any product that is sport, fitness, and recreation related”. This broad definition of sport management includes an incredibly wide variety of sport-related careers. The General Assembly of the United Nations had gone step ahead of sport related career, when it publically recognised the power of sport “to promote education, health, and peace,” and declared 2005 the International Year of Sport and Physical Education (United Nations, 2000-2005). Further, noting the role that sport can play in promoting the UN goals of peace, dignity, and prosperity, the executive director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) stated, “The way sports events are run, the sporting goods companies do business, and the way sports stars conduct themselves on and off the field can have profound effects far from the financial bottom line”. Clearly, the immense power of sport mandates that sports managers are required to understand the social implications of their actions. Hence, sport enterprises need well prepared sport managers who can make sound management decisions. Therefore, it is very important to identify and develop sport management competencies for the development of our profession and creating more and more job opportunities as sports managers in different capacities. To achieve the twin objective one has to understand the bureaucratic model approach and the competency model approach as well and the underlined skills and their development programmes. Our institutions of physical education and sports are required to take necessary steps to bring about desired changes in a graded manner in all the programmes of physical education specially reference to sport management and finally should lead to super-specializations and MBA programmes in physical education/sport management so that the desired competencies of sport management are developed to its fullest.

Desirable Sport Management Competencies

Bureaucratic Approach: Bureaucratic processes and emphasis on job specialization characterize contemporary sports organizations. In these organizations, job descriptions define the requirements of various positions, and the organizations hire people to perform the jobs as described.

Competency Approach: Some scholars have predicted, however, that the organization of the future might focus more on competencies of individual employees as well as the ability of those employees to learn new competencies as market place demands and organizational cultures change. With this approach, people would be hired “for organizational membership, not to fill a job”, and the reward system within the organization would be based on how well employees demonstrated the required competencies. The competency approach to hiring and managing an organization will require you, as a prospective employee, to consciously develop the knowledge and skills that are valued by the organizations in your chosen field. Although the transition from the bureaucratic model to the competency-based model is not complete, you would be wise to consider the competencies valued by contemporary sport organizations.

Competencies- Skills and knowledge necessary for successful performance in the job.

Bureaucratic model: An organization design that stresses specialization, division of labour, hierarchy, formal rules, and standard operating procedures (Lawler & Ledford, 1997).

Research suggests that sport management competencies are universal and have remained relatively stable over time (Cuskelly & Auld 1991; Danylchuk & Boucher, 2003; Horch & Schutte, 2003; Lambrecht, 1991; Quain & Parks, 1986) ^[5, 13, 14, 15]. In addition to emphasizing competencies required to perform traditional tasks such as personnel management and planning, today’s business world places increased importance on communication skills, communication technology, and the ability to interact in a global and multicultural society (Ammon, 2000; Danylchuk & Boucher, 2003. Li, Kanters, & Ammon, 2002; Masteralexis & McDonald, 1997) ^[16, 17, 13, 18]. Infact, with respect to competencies expected of sports managers, Horch and Schutte noted, “Interpersonal communication, information tasks and external representation as well as social tasks are central components of their activity. This is why they should be given equal consideration in basic and advanced training frameworks” Although competencies required for specific settings depend on the assigned tasks and the type and size of particular organizations (Horch & Schutte, 2003) ^[5], the sport management tasks presented in the figure provide an overview of sport industry expectations. Most of the competencies required for these tasks are transferable, which means that you should be able to use them in a variety of vocational settings that include, but are not limited to, sport organizations.

The core tasks of sport management are general sport management responsibilities, those in which all sport managers must be proficient and, to varying degrees, be able to perform on the job. For example, regardless of whether you work in a sport club, the front office of a professional sport team, a sport governance association, or an intercollegiate sport department, you need to demonstrate competence in writing, speaking and public relations as well as in the other core tasks presented in the table.

The tasks listed in clusters branching out from the core reflect distinctions between two types of responsibilities. Leadership and management skills are necessary for

performing tasks in the organization management cluster. Sport managers need good organizational skills to direct and supervise subordinates in settings such as sport clubs, municipal recreation programmes, or sport associations for

specific populations, such as juniors/seniors or people with differing abilities; in intercollegiate athletics and professional sport; and in the business aspect of any sport-related enterprise.

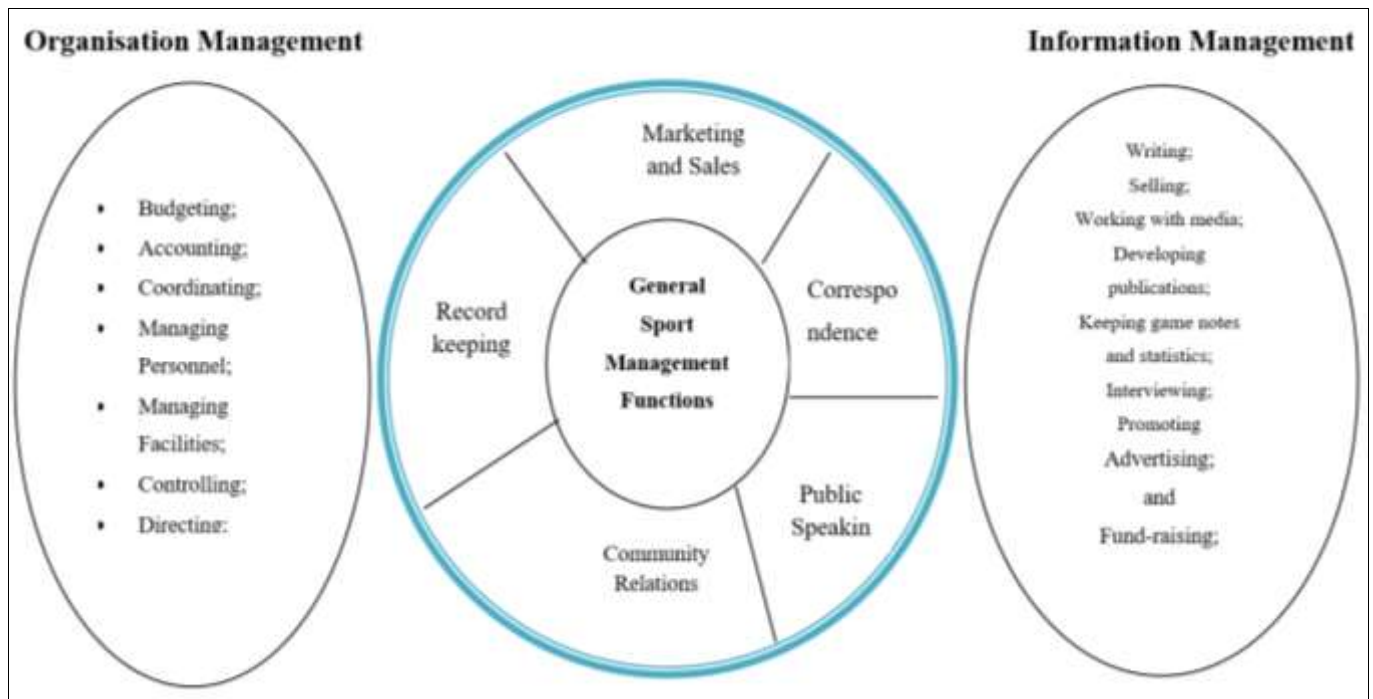


Fig 1: Task Clusters of Sport Management

In the information management cluster, written and oral communication skills are of paramount importance. Information management tasks include identifying information needs, acquiring information, categorizing and storing information, packaging and formatting information, developing information products and services, disseminating information, and analyzing and using information (McGee & Prusak, 1993) ^[19]. Contemporary sport communication practitioners also must be highly skilled in computer technology related to data storage and retrieval as well as Web-based technology. Sophisticated information management competencies are critical areas such as sport marketing, media relations, and sport writing. Note that although tasks requiring similar competencies appear within one cluster or the other, the clusters are not mutually exclusive. For example, people employed in media relations (information management cluster) also need to be able to manage and lead personnel (organization management cluster). Conversely, employees in organization management positions need strong communication skills to be successful. Some of you might be planning to obtain professional positions in one of the numerous health-related industries. Some people preparing for careers in these settings focus solely on acquiring the fundamental scientific understanding for such positions and are unaware of the need to develop proficiency in tasks associated with organization and information management. Our experience is that health care professionals soon learn that management skills are required. For example, a contemporary trend is for athletic trainers to work in commercial enterprises such as sport medicine clinics, hospitals, professional sport teams, and industrial fitness programmes. In recognition of this trend, students must demonstrate competence in health care management Board

of Certification, 2004. Moreover, after you have been an athletic trainer or other health care professional for a while, you might receive an opportunity to become the director of your clinic or club. If so, competence in both organization management and information management functions will be prerequisite to your success.

A comprehensive listing of desirable management competencies

What then, specifically, are these "desirable management competencies or skills" that are needed by the aspiring sport and physical education manager? Through a careful analysis of the literature and responses from knowledgeable colleagues, we are now prepared to offer a lengthy, but probably incomplete listing of competencies and skills subdivided into the five areas or category of skills that we have determined. (The competencies or skills are categorized below in relation to understandings developed, skills acquired, assessments carried out, plans devised, experiments undertaken, evaluations made etc. whereby the development of such competency or skill may be effected to some degree.)

The five general areas of competency or skill are:

- 1) Individual skills.
- 2) Interpersonal skills,
- 3) Intangible skills,
- 4) Technical skills,
- 5) Conjoined skills.

The Manager's individual Competencies/Skills

- A. Determine one's personal philosophy of life and/or religion,
- B. Establish priorities in personal values clarification,
- C. Develop a personal mission statement.

- D. Devise a plan that tentatively maps out one's future (i.e., goal-setting in relation to stages of maturity).
- E. Conduct a personal analysis to assist in the development of an individual time- hope.

Additional individual Competencies/Skills:

- Learning self-management.
- Practicing positive thinking.
- Learning a second language.
- Employing the requisite amount of assertiveness.
- Improving one's perception.
- Strengthening one's motivation.
- Acquiring ability at self-analysis.
- Avoiding stress through biofeedback.
- Improving one's reading skills.
- Evaluating personal communication skills (e.g., writing and speaking) determining one's overall physical fitness and a "recreational quotient" based on self-assessment.
- Learning to think critically (based on informal logic).
- Evaluating one's position on a sociopolitical spectrum (i.e., assessment of opinion about controversial social issue).
- Employing a cognitive style instrument to determine how one thinks about information received.
- Learning about useful techniques for the elimination of encounters and situational stresses.
- Self-assessing one's daily work habits by completion of a checklist-learning a systems analysis approach to optional health achievement through human ecological interaction.
- Completing a personal fitness inventory (Including initial assessment of strength, flexibility, and endurances).
- Passing a basic computers "literacy" test.
- Completing a scale designed to assess one's creativity and innovation abilities.
- Testing one understands of the meaning of statistical terms used in everyday life.
- Determining one's "attitude adjustments quotient".

The Manager's Interpersonal Competencies/Skills

- Develop an understanding of self (i.e., self-concept) as required for successful interpersonal competency.
- Assess interpersonal communication skills (e.g., empathetic listening and responding).
- Execute an interpersonal style inventory.
- Evaluate interpersonal management skills (e.g., selling ideas).
- Learn about one's leadership attributes and effectiveness; assessing present leadership style.

Additional Interpersonal Competencies/Skills:

- Assessing one's basic management skills.
- Carrying out a simulated job interview (e.g., a "structured" interview).
- Completing a debating experience on a controversial issue.
- Completing a team development scale.
- Learning how to negotiate.
- Development a leadership style a based on sound management theory.
- Role-playing a situation involving the counseling of staff members including. Working with a disturbed colleague).

- Discharging a staff member.
- Disciplining a staff member.
- Learning to combat staff mobility.
- Detecting the managerial or employee "hustler".
- Understanding how to relate to minority personnel.
- Handling conflicts (i.e., conflict resolution).
- Assessing the organizational climate of an organization.
- Taking part in a leaderless group discussion (including performance assessment).
- Chairing a case method discussion as an example of an approach to managerial decision-making.
- Required for admission to a management training program serving as chairperson of a discussion group to consider qualities that should be.
- Knowing about successful strategies employed to gain organizational power and then being able to convert it to (actual) influence.
- Developing a supporting rationale for a proposal to implement an affirmative action program for the hiring of women, ethnic minorities, or handicapped persons.

The Manager's Intangible Competencies/Skills

- Understand the development of twentieth century management thought and theory.
- Analyze the general (external) and immediate (internal) environments.
- Plan in the management process (levels and tools).
- Organize in the management process (guidelines and types of organizational structures).
- Staff in the management process (human resources management).
- Direct in the management process (leadership theory and techniques).
- Control in the management process (including setting standards, developing an annual budget, and performance evaluation).
- Relate Mackenzie's Management Process Model to a systems approach for physical activity education and athletics management.

Additional Intangible Competencies/Skills

- Executing an assignment designed to improve conceptual blockbusting.
- Understanding of a mathematical model that explains management process in physical activity education and athletics.
- Demonstrating an awareness of the historical development of management thought, theory, and practice in physical activity education management.
- Understanding the variety of organizational concepts.
- Creating a statement of aims and objectives for a sport organization.
- Determining one's own management philosophy (presumably derived from one's personal life philosophy determined in Category I above).
- Understanding of selected current management theories and their implications for practice.
- Explaining (including diagramming of) a systems approach to theory & research in physical activity education and athletics management.
- Based on data presented about a management problem presented, executing a simulated exercise designed to produce a solution to the situation.
- Writing a case for subsequent consideration of those

concerned with a management problem in physical activity education and athletics.

- Based on careful observation, preparing a model delineating an organization's structure.
- Developing a mission statement delineating long range aims and specific objectives of an organization with which one has had experience.
- Formulating one's approach to professional ethics.
- Explaining the steps one must follow to implement a management by objectives approach (MBO) in an organization.
- Understanding how to establish work priorities.
- Distinguishing between managing and doing.
- Analyzing information that comes to one's attention.

The Manager's Scientific Competencies/Skills

- Learn how to use the meeting as an effective tool for the work group.
- Learn about team-building (i.e., developing an understanding of how work groups are formed and maintained).
- Execute an "in-basket analysis" as the manager approaches a day on the job (including a request for an assessment of how computer information technologies & networking might be employed).
- Understand legal liability in relation to sport management.

Additional Scientific Competencies/Skills

- Acquiring minimum computer skills (i.e., word processing, spread sheet, data storage, etc.) and learning everyday office techniques (e.g., telephone usage, dictation, interviewing) .
 - Using a computer as an aid to decision-making.
 - Developing a plan for facility and equipment maintenance.
 - Learning how to apply for various types of grants.
 - Learning how to order supplies and equipment competitively.
 - knowing what is involved in the preparation of, and the "checking up" on, a personal resume
 - Discussing the topic of computer technology and networking knowledgeably determining cost-benefit analysis that compares present condition to two competing objectives alternatives (using a spreadsheet)
 - Developing a year-end balance sheet for an organization.
 - Developing an outline for a manual on facilities management.
 - Explaining research methodology available to managers of physical activity education (including so-called action research) and the research techniques available to do each type of research.
 - Developing an understanding of public relations and learning how to prepare media releases by objectives.
 - Preparing an instrument designed to assess an organization's marketing status.
 - Executing a fact-finding investigation to assist with the solving of a specific problem or issue.
 - Carrying out of an action research project (e.g., in-house survey) and developing a format for the implementation of the following categories of operations research models:
- 1) Comparison and/or classification (e.g., statistical

sampling)

- 2) Operational process (e.g., linear programming).
- 3) Future prediction (e.g., break-even & profitability).
 - Using an evaluative grid, completing a structured interview to employ a manager of physical activity education
 - Demonstrating competency in chairing a meeting.
 - After observing a meeting, appraising its efficiency and effectiveness
 - Mapping a program for fund-raising within the internal environment of an organization
 - writing the following documents effectively: (1) an inter- office memorandum, (2) a letter, and (3) an agenda for a meeting
 - learning how to develop a successful sponsorship for a program
 - developing a plan to obtain a sponsorship for a program
- keeping the necessary criteria well in mind, developing a plan for the organization and management of a sport tournament
- organizing and developing one's own resume for possible use in obtaining a position in the management of a physical activity education program
- learning how to implement a management information system (MIS)

The Manager's Conjoined Competencies/Skills

- Develop an outline of a policies procedures manual for a special event (e.g., a sports tournament).
- Develop an approach to decision-making in relation to one's personal and professional philosophy (including ethical decision-making where applicable).
- Carry out a strategic market-planning assessment for a physical activity-based program.
- Understand how to manage for change.

Additional Conjoined Competencies/Skills

- Creating an organizational climate within which people can accept advice from others
- Planning for the implementation of an on-the-job training program
- Learning how to use the informal organization in the achievement of organizational goals
- Using a problem-solving approach with a small group to develop a change-process model
- Using a quantitative technique based on an applied mathematical model, determining the solution to a management problem in physical activity education (operations research)
- Developing an organization's "future orientation" (e.g. by developing a format for a standing committee on the topic)
- Developing an organizational approach to ethical decision-making
- Assessing the ecological implications of a physical recreation program in an educational institution
- Construction a mechanism to assess the cost-effectiveness of competitive athletics at an educational institution
- Role-playing how to solve an issue arising from a management problem in physical activity education by having a (simulated) management team consider it
- Understanding how to manage a complex project (e.g.,

Critical Path Method -CPM

- Allocating designated resources through case analysis of specific administrative situation employing such factors as human capital, scarcity, effectiveness, efficiency, optimization, competition, and monopoly
- Based on actual case situation, determining what actions to take (and what not to take) in regard to situation where the question of legal liability arises developing a crisis management plan and adapting it to a specific situation (e.g., budgetary shortfall in the middle of a fiscal year)

Recommendations

Obviously there is insufficient time in one undergraduate course to offer all of experiences listed above that can lead to the development of all of the management competencies and skills mentioned.

Those planning the broad physical education and athletics management training programme in a particular college or university should offer an entire course devoted to the development of management competencies and skills.

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