

Developing Managerial Approaches in Football Field

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Abstract

Sport represents a particularly complex social phenomenon, whose social functions are very diverse. Today, sport is considered to be an important source of income, from an economic point of view, but also with a strong social impact.

Therefore, it is necessary to be very well managed so that people can enjoy sports, through clear, fair and consensual contracts, drawn up by experts in the field, which makes it possible, worldwide, in the field of sports in general and sports management, in particular, to have many opportunities for professional development.

Football needs a professional management to build a healthy sports ecosystem in Romania, able to bring together the different stakeholders, through whose involvement the desired performances can be obtained both at the level of clubs and national teams.

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1. Introduction

The field of sports presents various aspects, ensuring many types of activities, because it operates in a mixed economy (with a state regulation and market regulations, of management relations), clubs, sports structures must be able to form an ensemble that activates effectively in modern conditions and be able to offer development opportunities, including a very stable position on the sports services market.

At the same time, the independence of sports organizations in market conditions, as well as the specifics of the work they carry out, combined with the increase in the volume of activities, require a significant increase in the scope of management.

It should be noted that the challenges of postmodern society have led to conceptual changes in terms of new organizational models and their management, which provide viable solutions to the need for adaptation and survival of organizations from most areas of society and from a multitude of environments, from the business environment to the sports environment.

The scientific management of sports activity requires people who possess solid specialist and management knowledge, and who have delegated competences.

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Fulfilling this requirement forces sports organizations to professionalize management and promote knowledge-based management, because it is known that the field of sport, by its very essence, is a performative one. It is important to note that highlighting the intrinsic qualities of the product of sports activities involves performance, evaluated in direct competitions.

Therefore, the achievement of sports performance includes at the same time both activities in the sphere of sports and in that of the management specific to sports organizations. Thus, the two categories of activities indicated above, specialized and managerial, are complementary, management having the role of creating the indispensable framework for the basic activities of the organization and supporting their achievement at the expected performance level. The practical action of sports managerial leadership presupposes the existence of people who carry out activities specific to the sports management process in an organized manner.

According to some specialists in the field, management is a field of research that has an interdisciplinary, borderline character. In essence, it represents the science and art of leading efficiently, of optimizing the utilization of all resources in order to achieve success (Nicolescu, Verboncu, 1999).

In the field of sports, sports management is considered to be a science because it has its own principles as a field of reference and operates with different specific methods and techniques to achieve the objectives of sports organizations, at the same time it represents art, because it values the most important resource, the human, which is the only creative resource and shows that the application of all concepts and tools depends on the personality of managers or entrepreneurs in the field.

At the same time, it is necessary for sports management to cultivate the acceptance of certain responsibilities of an economic, social, but also moral nature, in those to whom they apply, responsibilities and obligations that train the selection of values, that create competencies that maintain competitions on all plans and achieving success.

2. Management approaches in football

The management of every company, including that of the football product, presents two closely related moments: cognitive and operational. In the first, he studies the conditions for carrying out the activity, in order to formulate judgments and make subsequent decisions; in the second, the company's choices are implemented.

In the operational phase, the so-called "management operations" are carried out through which the enterprise tries to achieve its institutional objectives and which can be grouped into four categories: financing, the acquisition of production factors, the transformation of production factors into finished products and the sale of the product on market.

Each company must have, without interruption, adequate financial resources to conveniently finance production, the related choices first involve the process of

acquiring the financial means and then using them, this makes financing and investment operations closely related to each other.

In Europe, the financial structure of sports clubs presents different particularities depending on the amateur or professional nature of the sport practiced: the financial income reflects the objective of increasing the number of subjects interested in practicing a certain sport, it follows that the primary source of financing is represented by the contributions paid by the members and donations made by private citizens.

In terms of professional sport, until the mid-20th century, clubs were mainly financed by the ticket price paid to attend the show, with the help of subsidies provided by national and local authorities.

In the 1960s and 1970s, income from advertising and sponsorships experienced a notable increase, so as to create a strong direct identification between the funder and the sports club.

The transformation of football from a sporting event into a commercial business and the entry of television rights has caused the sport to become more and more a business and therefore to face problems related to financing, the acquisition of factors of production, transformation, typical of a management circuit.

The evolution of the football phenomenon, its tendency to be less of a sport and more of a business, has highlighted a surprising rise in the costs of running a football team.

With the listing on the stock exchange, however, there is access to a new financing channel, which involves the permanent modification of the shareholder and managerial structure, this is a decision of strategic importance that requires a careful evaluation of costs and benefits.

Identifying the most appropriate forms of financing is one of the main issues facing companies in order to improve their value while ensuring that the return on capital is greater than the cost of capital while maintaining financial risks at a low level. The second step in the management circuit, after financing, is the purchase by the company of the specific factors of production, which will later be transformed into finished products to be introduced to the market: football clubs use natural persons, called footballers, to produce a show, called a football match (Minculete G.et. all, 2021). The acquisition of specific production factors for the company must be accompanied by reference to managerial criteria that inspire the management of any company: even football clubs, in fact, have the obligation to rationalize the use of resources; being now integrated in the general economic system, they must acquire, for their correct use, the typical tools of business management, such as planning, managerial culture, efficient organizational structure, information system. All of these typical business management tools can be traced back to the more specific concept of the "entrepreneurial formula," which is the result.

In other words, the entrepreneurial formula that emerges from the set of choices made regarding the fundamental variables related to the company and the reference environmental context, constituting the so-called strategic approach. The acquired factors of production must be combined with each other to obtain the

finished product: football clubs, once they have acquired the players, must be able to create a competitive team, able to "keep up" with the main foreign clubs. Fundamental, in this sense, is both the managerial competence of the majority shareholder and the technical competence of those who lead the team: the coach, the manager.

In particular, the coach is fundamental in the function of planning the strategic goals of the team (improving the player base) and in determining the resources necessary to achieve the goals (investment in the acquisition campaign and the development of the academy).

In order to combine as well as possible the factors of production that top management offers, the coach must first of all be a leader, therefore responsible for the direction and coordination of the people working within the team.

Motivational ability, in daily behavior, is considered one of the most important prerogatives of successful managers: it follows that leadership is a function of strategic importance, as it can develop employee satisfaction and productivity.

The last phase of the management circuit is the transfer of the finished product, i.e. the sale. Football clubs' major income to cover their huge management costs certainly comes from sponsors, as in recent years players' shirts have become an advertising space on which a company's name or logo appears, as well as from stadium season tickets, tickets and television rights. Then there are other forms of earning income: capital gains accrued from the sale of players, a share of match proceeds, prizes for winning competitions, etc.

A football club must abide by rules that require it to manage the club, select players, sell tickets and financially remunerate those who are part of the club. That all this is done to make a profit is not a fact that falls within the classic peculiarities of football clubs. This was true at least until football was largely a 'game', but changes since the second half of the 90s have brought the economic role of clubs to the fore, increasing the importance of the ability to generate income. Just as a company must find an economic balance between competitive success and revenue success, the most important issue for a football club becomes creating a balance between the pursuit of profit and the pursuit of sporting success.

3. The need for developing the sport management

The sports organization represents an ensemble that achieves its purpose in accordance with the connections by harmoniously combining the activities of human resources, with material, energy and informational resources, this having a certain level of autonomy, but as an open system, through the management process, it has links with other systems bigger. So, the sports organization, as a whole, unites several key sub-assemblies and is a component part of a sporting, but also social super-assembly (Minculete G., et.all, 2022).

Therefore, sports management represents the coordination of material, financial, human and time resources, of informational nature, of techniques, processes, as well as problems, aspects and occasional situations with the aim of

increasing the efficiency of production and exchange of sports products, services, as well as for increasing sports results, respectively sports performances.

Therefore, the goal of sports management is the very effective management of sports, which is equally important in small sports structures and non-profit organizations, as well as in large sports clubs.

Sports management is an essential field for any state and must include medium and long-term sports managerial policies and strategies, able to build, at the national level and at different levels, managerial teams capable of promoting a modern approach to sports.

The management of sports activities represents the application of management science to the creation and development of sports clubs, representing the branch of management science and the basis on which a modern performance sports system must be built.

Sports management applies to any organization, sports structure where one or more people work together to achieve a set of common objectives specific to the respective field. It involves any combination of skills related to leading, controlling, organizing, planning, budgeting and evaluating in the context of an organization or just a department, whose main product or service is related to sport or physical activity.

In our country, sports management is different from the general concept of management, the differences are the result of several particularities of sports, such as the organizational structure, for example: federations, associations, companies, etc., the structure of the mission, for example: profit and non-profit, ownership structure, for example: public sports, private sports, public-private sports, organizations, etc., stakeholder structure, for example: athletes and sports teams, volunteers, parents, sponsors, donors, etc. and structure of key products, for example: management of an event, an athlete, a sports facility, etc.

It is also noted that there are very large differences between sports organizations and other organizations in terms of how performance is evaluated, because while private or publicly traded companies exist to make profits and increase the wealth of shareholders or owners, in sports imperatives such as winning championships, providing service to stakeholders and members, or fulfilling community service obligations take precedence over financial results.

It is worth noting that sports management, unlike other business organizations, uses a number of unique aspects. As sports management has a strong predictive character determined by the competitive calendar, this requires an important strategic component, as well as the use of specific techniques in this regard.

Therefore, managers in sports must be very aware of the need to achieve organizational performance on multiple levels, including the practice of responsible financial management, able to ensure the necessary resources to support the established objectives. Sports generate many unique behaviors in people, such as emulating their favorite athletes in the game, wearing a favorite player's gear, or even purchasing products endorsed by sports celebrities.

This indirect identification with the abilities, skills and lifestyles of athletes can be used by managers in sports and related industries to influence some purchasing decisions of people who follow sports. Supporters show a very high degree of optimism, sometimes insisting that their favorite athletes, despite a losing streak, are only a week, a game or a lucky break away from winning the next competition.

At the same time, it is noted that sport has a symbolic meaning in relation to results, performance, success and celebration of achievements, aspects that are not found in other areas of economic and social activities. Therefore, managers of sports organizations must capitalize very well on these passions by appealing to people's willingness to buy tickets to sporting events, to become members of a certain club, to use some of their free time to help run a volunteer associations or to buy sporting goods. They must learn to apply clear business logic and management techniques to maintain traditions and connections with the nostalgic aspects of supporters' sports consumption and engagement.

However, it is observed that in our country, in a traditional way, there is still a great lack of professionalism and specialization in sports management. Skills, knowledge and general professional education in sports are quite limited, but there are also good examples of positive steps in the right direction visible in various sports academies and clubs.

However, sports management in Romania represents a constantly growing sphere of activity, both in terms of the employment potential of specialists in the field, and in terms of academic training programs.

One of the difficulties faced by sports management in our country is the validity of sports management programs and their possibility to produce trained and competent sports managers to meet the needs of the sports industry in Romania. Therefore, a specialized sports management program must consider educating sports managers with a very good understanding of the sports industry and business skills.

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