

Organisational Development at major sport events – the example of the Winter Youth Olympic Games 2012 in Innsbruck

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Aim of abstract/paper – research question

The paper analyses the changes Organising Committees of major sports events face during their lifecycle. In other words the transition from operational planning into Games Time also referred to as “Venusiation.” So far Organising Committees paid insufficient attention to this exceptional phase in their lifecycle, since no particular research was made in this field. The results will assist future Organising Committees in planning the change in a transparent way which will help employees to manage this significant transformation in the best way.

Theoretical background / literatur review

The transformation process during the Venusiation from the employees’ point of view is not yet analysed in detail in the respective literature. Based on a theoretical framework developed by Demschar in 2005, three different change types should be determined: organizational, physical and psychological change. . The three major changes influence not only the social structure in the overall organisation but especially also the processes within the Organising Committee. Therefore, the changes which the Organising Committee has to face during this special part of the lifecycle are highly complex. The restricted resources concerning time, scope and budget even multiply the complexity of this transformation which affects in particular the Organising Committees employees.

Methodology, research design and data analysis

Based on a sample of 76 persons, two quantitative surveys based on the tool “Limesurvey” were carried out in order to analyse the expectations of the employees BEFORE and AFTER Games Time. The sample consisted of full-time and part-time employees, interns and longterm-volunteers working for the YOG at a given time. A resposerate of 81% and just under 70% could be accomplished. Up until now, hardly any research was made in terms of organising committees; however, a number of volunteer surveys exist on this specific

topic. Therefore, we emphasised on the above mentioned sample, due to the fact that the venusiation process is considered as one of the most difficult and challenging transition in their workcycle. The evaluation and interpretation were conducted with the statistics program SPSS as well as Microsoft Excel. Four different dimensions of expectations were analysed. Additionally, the Sinus-Milieu-Concept was implemented in order to figure out the relationship among the personality structure and the reaction of Innsbruck 2012 employees.

Results, discussion and implications / conclusion

We tried to identify the predominant reaction of Innsbruck 2012 employees, as well as the differences among the pregame and the postgame survey. Furthermore, we tried to identify factors which can be held responsible for the individual reactions of Innsbruck 2012 employees.

The survey produced four different dimensions of reactions: pleasure and enjoyment, excessive demand, concernment as well as uncertainty. We identified the predominant reaction of Innsbruck 2012 employees. BEFORE Games Time employees felt pleasure and enjoyment because of the upcoming changes in their professional career. However, DURING the Post-Games survey employees indicated significantly less pleasure and enjoyment. 66% of all employees indicated a high level of enthusiasm at the pregames survey, however only 42% were as enthusiastic about their work at the postgames survey. No significant discrepancy could be measured within the dimensions “excessive demand” and “concernment”. The dimension “uncertainty” decreased at the POST-GAMES survey significantly.

It became clear that a range of factors were responsible for the individual reactions and expectations of Innsbruck Youth Olympic Game employees, i.e. age, duration of employment and sex. All of them had a significant impact on the reaction; – however, an interaction of all of them led to the reaction of the Innsbruck 2012 employees. Women are, for example, experienced the transformation more intense other than their male peers. It is recommended to treat and train employees on an individual basis, in order to implement successful change. Future Organising Committees should especially focus on employees without any experience in event management. Furthermore, it became clear Innsbruck 2012 employees possessed a similar personality structure,. Almost 70% of all employees could be assigned to two quite similar Sinus Milieus. The Milieus are characterized by flexibility, creativity and adaptability. This outcome could support future Organising Committees by recruiting the right employees.

On this account, future organising committees are able to use the findings made to precicely plan and conduct this transitional part of their life cycle. It is recommended to implement appraisal interviews, informative meetings as well as adequate job trainings.

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