

Education and vocational education and training of sport managers in Poland

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Introduction

The period of transformations, which began in Poland in 1989, introduced several changes in all areas of social economic life. The change to market economy mechanisms and the increase of the number of private sector commercial units, growing competition, pluralism of legal\organizational forms, change of financing rules, are some of the events which had a direct influence on the substantial changes of the rules and mechanisms of organizational management.

Effective sports organization management requires professional knowledge of law, economy, finance, marketing etc. It had become necessary to educate, train and improve the skills of sports managers.

Method

The following research methods were adopted in the process of data collection.:

1. analysis of legal acts pertaining to the education of managerial staff for the purposes of sport (bills, directives etc.),
2. a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the sport manager training services market in Poland ,
3. participating observation (the authors have been involved in the education and vocational training of sports managers within the framework of academic activity as well as training courses organized by private institutions).

Results

The possibility for training and improving the skills of managers in sport was facilitated by the Physical Culture Act of 18.01.1996 (Dz. U. Nr 25, poz. 113) and the Minister of National Education and Sport directive on the qualification, degrees and titles in physical culture as well as the rules and modes of acquiring them, which was the second directive delivered on this subject from 1996, i.e. from the appearance of the possibility in this field. Furthermore in December 2002 a novel was introduced which indicates the great instability of the law in this field in Poland.

According to current legal regulations in Poland there are 3 managerial titles in sport:

- sport manager,
- sport discipline manager,
- sport event organization manager.

Sport manager must:

1. graduate university level studies specializing in sports organization and management, or
2. complete postgraduate studies in sport organization and management, or
3. has minimum secondary school education and completed specialized sport organization and management course, encompassing at least 180 hours in at least 3 training sessions.

Sport discipline manager or sport event organization manager must complete a specialized managerial course encompassing at least 120 hours in at least 2 training sessions.

According to the current regulations, specialized managerial courses may be held by universities, and units which have been approved by the President of the Polish Sport Confederation upon gaining the opinion of the national association, i.e. the Polish Corporation of Sports Managers. Units other than universities must have their educational program and teaching staff approved by the President of the Polish Sports Confederation. The Minister of National Education and Sport upon receiving a documented request from the interested party, hands out sport manager diplomas. Sport discipline manager or sport event organization manager diplomas may be presented by Rectors of universities which carry out the training. In all other cases this is done by the Minister of National Education and Sport.

Sport manager education in Poland is carried out by: academies of physical education, National Sport Center, the Polish Corporation of Sports Managers and others (about 120 organizational bodies). The curriculums are similar and encompasses such subjects as: sports organization and management, human

resources management, basics of sports marketing, legal, economic-financial, psychological, and sociological aspects of managing sports organizations, management methods and techniques, interpersonal communication and negotiations, managerial organization skills, management.

In practice it is common for training providers, who are much better suited to identify educational needs, thus their training offer targeted at specific groups and environments. In the area of sport this work method is not foreign to the Polish Confederation of sports Management – the leader in this area on the Polish sports manager training services market. Specific training courses carried out by this organization were meant for: managers employed in government organizations, local self-government (marshal offices, sports and recreation centres), sports clubs, the police. The participants were quite often made aware of the gaps in their qualifications.

It is important to maintain the proper time proportions assigned to the use of various methods in the educational process. It should be kept in mind that the training needs can differ. For managers with much professional experience it is important to add modern scientific concepts to their experience. For those who had never supervised a team in practice it is crucial to learn how to solve real, concrete problems (using organization techniques). Organizing sports events, according to the accepted realization project, as well as managerial internships in selected sports institutions and organizations, is especially valuable for the latter (ex. AWF students). They result in acquiring contacts and interpersonal communication skills, self-confidence etc. Practical methods can be realized in-work (ex. Filling in for the boss, assisting, coaching, mentoring) or out of work (lecture, discussion, case study, interpersonal training). In case of internal coaching the trainer is a person from the given organization, in case of external coaching a professional, external advisor. Coaching is a process composed of many cycles. Each cycle is completed when the trainee acquires a pre-determined level of competence. Mentoring is a method of long-term skill building meant for inexperienced managers, carried out under the supervision of an experienced person (mentor), who shares his/her knowledge and experience with the younger colleague. Out of all the out-of-work methods, interpersonal training is an especially valuable but seldom used method. A taste of this kind of training is given by the so called integration meetings.

Discussion

1. Education and training of managers in sports organizations should be treated as a key element of the integrated human resources management process
2. It is possible to apply various principles, forms, methods, and techniques of activity in the process of manager training and education
3. The effectiveness of manager training depends among other on personnel policy, the level of awareness and motivation of managers towards the need and necessity for lifelong education, professionalism, and the teaching staff of companies involved in the training market. etc.

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