

UEFA'S PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES: A UNIQUE AND TAILOR-MADE EDUCATION PROJECT

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Abstract

Aim of paper

The paper analyses the uniqueness of the new UEFA personal development programmes. Recently, UEFA's efforts in developing cooperation with leading universities and researchers have resulted in the setting up of a three-stage education programme for professional staff of its 53 member associations, certified by the academic community. In September 2010, the UEFA Certificate in Football Management (UEFA CFM) was launched, followed, one year later, by the Diploma in Football Management (UEFA DFM). These blended learning programmes are tailored to the needs of UEFA's member associations and aim to increase and share management skills specific to football. They also grant access to the last stage, the Executive Master in European Sport Governance (MESGO), developed with other European team sports.

Thus, this paper presents the efforts of UEFA in interacting further with the academic community. Furthermore, it evaluates the results of their cooperation.

Organisational/managerial practice/issues

The UEFA CFM and DFM are courses combining e-learning modules with face-to-face seminars. Run by academic experts, each module focuses on an important aspect of the management of football associations. For the UEFA CFM, which is more theoretically orientated, the modules cover the organisation of football, strategic management, operational management, event management, marketing and communication. The UEFA DFM, which is more practice-orientated, focuses on the organisation of a football match/event and looks at the management of volunteers, stadium management, marketing operations, and PR and media operations. These courses are issued, in ECTS credits, through the Swiss Graduate School of Public Administration (IDHEAP) at University of Lausanne.

Organisational/managerial context

The Knowledge and Information Sharing Scenario (KISS) project, in place since 2005, focuses on workshops where UEFA's 53 member associations meet to collect and compare know-how and invaluable expertise in order to create good practices adapted to local contexts. Furthermore, over the last few years UEFA has increasingly engaged with the academic community by establishing a series of initiatives, notably the UEFA Research Grant Programme, to assist the European football family to reach more informed decisions.

Based upon the KISS project, and in cooperation with the academic world, UEFA's personal development programmes aim to help managers of UEFA's member associations enhance and increase their knowledge of football management.

Implications for sport and sport management

This paper focuses on the collaboration of UEFA and leading professors and universities in sports management across Europe, with the common objective that participants will not only be able to apply what they learn back at home in their respective associations, but also exchange experience with representatives of other national associations, thereby also serving the development of football management in Europe as a whole. The paper concludes by showing how interactions between academic experts and professional experts are reciprocally beneficial and foster new ideas, projects and actions in the field of sport management.

