

Sport Management Education

Review Track Chair: PG Fahlström

New Models of Delivery in Sport Management Education – The Use of Major Sporting Venues (Practitioner Contribution)

Deane, John

College of World Sport, United Kingdom

jj.deane@icloud.com

Aim

To outline the benefits and challenges of establishing new models of delivery in sports management education through the use of major sporting venues.

Purpose and Background

In the past decade there has been an increase in the use of major sports facilities as venues to deliver sports management education. The purpose of this professional paper is to highlight the benefits and challenges faced in establishing sports education programmes in major sporting venues.

Design and Implementation

There are a number of sports management private higher education providers delivering in major cities around the world such as the Johan Cruyff Institute and others in the UK and Europe delivering out of iconic football venues such as Wembley Stadium. There is growing enthusiasm from the key stakeholders managing these major venues in having a sports management higher education partner.

Results Findings and Discussion

Facilities

One of the key challenges in using major sporting venues to deliver sports management education is the multitude of stakeholders and complex ownership models in operation. The range of different agencies operating in the major sporting venues is a major issue, which includes: professional sports clubs, exhibition and event management companies, overarching management companies, catering companies, third party security and cleaning companies. Secondly, these facilities often have a single professional sports club as the host organisation and are being operated to host a range of major events.

There is considerable pressure on national and City authorities to show a return on the investment of major sporting events and the main mechanism for achieving this is the hosting major events. Thus, the challenge for a sports management provider operating out of such facilities is not having control and full access to facilities year round.

However, one of major benefits to the sports venue of having a sports management education partner delivering out of the facilities is meeting their corporate social responsibility agenda.

Given the legacy commitments often associated with the building of new sports venues linked to major sporting events such as the Football World Cup, Olympics, and Commonwealth Games there is growing support for the delivery of sports management programmes out of these facilities.

HEI Partner and Curriculum

One of the challenges for many of the new private providers has been in ensuring a 'fit' between the ethos of the new provider of and that of the university partner if such a partner is required in the country concerned.

Developing a distinctive sports management curriculum that meets the skills gaps in the local region and is attractive to local and regional employers, district and regional skills agencies is important. Furthermore, ensuring the delivery of this curriculum is flexible and offered to meet the needs of the local population is an important issue. Thus, a model that offers opportunities that are part-time, online and has flexible starting points is crucial.

Conclusion and Implications

The key lessons, contribution and implications from establishing sports management programmes out of major sporting facilities built to host international sports events are:

- (i) The opportunity for Cities bidding to host major sports events to identify a sports management education provider as part of their bid process.
- (ii) There are multiple opportunities to leverage the sports facilities in identifying an appropriate partner University and attracting partner employers.
- (iii) Managing the challenges of dealing with professional sports clubs.
- (iv) Managing the challenges of the sporting venue needing to be prepared for a multitude of different events.
- (v) Developing a long term shared vision between the sporting venue, authorities managing HE, local and regional authorities and the new HE provider for the provision of sports management education.
- (vi) Developing a distinctive HE offer to attract students that is flexible and meets the standards and quality offered by traditional HEIs.
- (vii) Gaining strategic buy in from the leaders of the facility stakeholders is key to the success of accessing facilities.
- (viii) Developing a curricula offering that is attractive to local and regional skills agencies and employers and partner universities and thus meeting local employment needs.