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A CONTRAST/COMPARISON OF NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND CURRICULAR
EVALUATION FOR MANAGEMENT CAREERS IN HOSTELRIES/TRAVEL,
PRIVATE SPORT CLUBS, AND AGENCIES

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ABSTRACT

The purposes of this study were to: (a) assess the needs for sport management positions; and (b) obtain the evaluation of sport management programs/curricula by management personnel from different business perspectives, i.e., hostelries/travel, private sport clubs, and agencies. According to curriculum theorists, there has been an increase in the demand for sport management positions, but there is a real lack of and need for empirical evidence upon which to establish the theoretical basis and content for programs/curricula to meet this demand. Thus, the significance of this research is that it provides a basis for planning utilizing the empirical evidence of the needs assessment and program evaluation by/for professional sport managers in hostelries/travel, private sport clubs, and agencies.

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This study was part of a series of studies designed to determine: (a) employer expectations of sport managers across the spectrum; (b) employer evaluation of educational sport management program/curricula from diverse perspectives; (c) existent components of sport management programs/curricula; and (d) student career objectives and program evaluation.

Sport management is defined as including the functions of planning, organizing, staffing, controlling and directing within the context of an

organization with a primary objective of providing sport or sport related activities, products, or services.

The research team of DeSensi, Kelley, Beitel, Blanton designated 15 categories of sport management. They are: agencies; corporations/companies; facilities; hostelry; intramural/sport clubs; private sport clubs; professional sport; retail sales; school/college/university athletics; sport businesses; sport management services; sport marketing/merchandizing; sport organizations; and travel/cruise.

The study included management personnel from all of the 15 categories with stratification for NRPA regions and AAHPERD districts.

The primary reason for national study was to contribute to the body of knowledge upon which to establish the theoretical basis and content for programs to meet the demand for sport managers.

This study determines: (a) employer expectations of sport managers; and (b) employer evaluation of education sport management programs and curricula from diverse perspectives. More specifically, this study focuses on the relative degree of importance of (a) specific criteria for both hiring sport management personnel and on the job success; (b) types of management/leadership tasks and work load; (c) educational background; and (d) specific certifications and training.

Based on the results of this study and our research we have designed a curricula model for sport management. This model was presented at the Sport Business Conference in South Carolina.

PROCEDURES

The sample for this particular study included management personnel in the hostelry, travel/cruise industry, private sport clubs, and local government and voluntary agencies.

RESULTS

Due to the time frame, it would be impossible to share every aspect of each category with the study. The following is a brief summary of the findings.

Criteria for hiring sport management personnel and on the job success:

* More than 70% of the respondents felt that communication, leadership, personality, public relations, general education, management, appearance, and work stamina were important considerations for hiring sport management personnel.

* Communication, leadership, public relations, management,

personality, and work stamina were important criteria for on-the-job success of sport management personnel.

* Communication skill was the most important criteria for hiring to 90% of the respondents while the two criteria important for on the job success were leadership and communication skills.

* The rank order of the criteria was significantly ($p < .05$) different for hiring and on-the-job success across all business/agency categories.

It is important to look within each business/agency to contrast the differences in hiring and on-the-job success. Some agencies were similar and some markedly different.

Required degree levels:

* Eighty percent of the respondents in the hostelry/travel industry and volunteer agencies indicated that a bachelor's degree was required for full-time sport management positions in their setting while less than 40% of local government agencies and private clubs required a bachelor's degree for employment.

In terms of relative importance of sport management degrees:

* For sport management degrees depicted there was a significant ($p < .05$) difference in the rank order.

* More than 40% of all business/agency respondents preferred that personnel in full-time positions have a major in sport management.

Again, it is important to look within each business/agency category to contrast the difference in their degree expectations for full-time employment.

* There were some responses in all business/agency categories that either a major or minor in sport management was preferred for full-time positions.

Distribution of management task workload:

* Directing was identified as commanding the majority of the workload for 20-50% of the respondents in all agency categories.

* The management tasks of organizing, communicating, controlling, and evaluating were also grouped strongly in the 20-50% range.

* Other identified tasks included as component parts of the workload were facility supervision, public relations, teaching and sales.

Business/agencies were asked to note 23 curricular areas and/or courses important for prospective employees in their particular setting. Ninety percent or more of the respondents felt the most important courses and/or curricular areas for their setting were:

Hostelries--leadership, communication, organizational management,

public relations facility management, program management and supervision.

Travel/Cruise--communications, facilities management, leadership, marketing, organizational management, public relations, sport law, and supervision.

Private Sport Clubs--communication, finance, marketing, organizational management, program management, public relations, and supervision.

Local Government Settings--communication, budgeting, finance, leadership, and personnel management.

Voluntary agency settings--communication, program management, program planning, leadership and budgeting.

In summary, communication across all business/agency categories was ranked very important by 95% of the respondents. Also sport management employees in different settings view different courses and/or curricular areas as important and unique to their setting.

The results of the importance of sport/leisure study areas were: current issues in sport was identified by hostelryes/travel and private sport clubs as being the most important area of study in sport and leisure while local government and voluntary agencies identified philosophy of leisure/recreation as being the most important area.

In terms of specific certifications and training, CPR was mentioned across all categories as being important. Again there was an extreme range in terms of how each business/agency viewed which certifications were the most important.

Importance of experiences beyond the basic college curriculum:

* Across all categories of business/agencies work related experiences were identified as the most important type of experience beyond the basic college curriculum.

* All business/agency categories personnel indicated both practica and internships were very important. However, there did not seem to be a clear pattern in terms of the most important of the two.

The results support that sport management is a unique area of study and that knowledge in all aspects of sport is important. It was noted that to have generic management skills is insufficient preparation for the sport manager and that practica and internship experience is important in order to understand the particular sport management setting.