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# chapter 3

## The U.S. Sport Industry

### CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

After reading this chapter, you will be able to:

- Explain the breadth of the U.S. sport industry.
- Identify and describe selected organizations working within the subindustries of the U.S. sport marketplace.
- Describe potential internship and entry-level employment opportunities in sport management.

### KEY TERMS

College Football Playoff

Cost of attendance

Football Bowl Subdivision

Football Championship Subdivision

Independent teams

Licensed merchandise

Power 5 Conference

*Find a job you love and you will never work another day in your life.*  
—Confucius

## Introduction

The vast majority of entry-level sport-management students will answer the question “What do you want to do in your sport-management career” with one of the following responses:

1. “Become a general manager of a franchise in the National Basketball Association (NBA), National Football League (NFL), National Hockey League (NHL), or Major League Baseball (MLB).”
2. “Become an athletic director at a National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division-I athletic department, preferably one that is a member of one of the largest conferences (Big 10, Big 12, ACC, SEC, or PAC-12).”
3. “Become a player agent.”

While each of these choices is a potential career option, they are certainly not indicative of the breadth of the sport-management industry. The above-listed positions typically generate extensive media attention, so most students, parents, and non-sport-management faculty tend to think sport-management graduates primarily work in these subsectors of the industry. Though positions in these areas do exist, there are usually few such entry-level positions available and higher-ranking positions are especially scarce. For instance, there are only 32 NFL teams, meaning there are only 32 NFL general managers. Mathematically, students have a higher likelihood of becoming a member of the U.S. Congress than of becoming an NFL, NBA, NHL, or MLB general manager.

In addition to there being few opportunities, general managers, athletic directors, or prominent player agents are often people who were high-level athletes. Though certainly not a requirement, being a well-known former athlete can often provide a springboard to eventual success as a general manager, athletic director, or player agent. It is wonderful if a student desires to someday obtain one of these positions, and, while students should not be discouraged from pursuing a career path with these eventual outcomes as the primary goal, they should understand the reality of the situation. Becoming a NCAA Division-I athletic director, general manager, or prominent sport agent requires intellect, determination, countless hours of learning, and years of preparation. Though it is highly unlikely that obtaining one of those positions will occur, by setting an “ultimate” goal, along with smaller goals that serve as steps along the way, either that final goal will be achieved or other career opportunities will present themselves. While this advice may seem “ cliché-like,” it is actually true.

This chapter discusses various subsectors of the sport industry that may provide internship opportunities and eventual employment. It is designed to provide students with a broader perspective of the industry than a “traditional” view of sport management that consists of only involving college and professional sport employment or becoming an agent. The categories are certainly not exhaustive as the sport industry is constantly evolving, with new subsectors emerging almost daily. Regardless of your career path (Just a note: By enrolling in a sport-management class your career has already begun!), be prepared to work long hours in order to achieve your career goals. Remember, your career will not develop overnight. The adage, “You learn in your 20s and begin to earn in your 30s” is certainly applicable to the sport-management industry. Maintain your focus while working diligently and good things will eventually happen.

## Professional Sport

Professional sport franchises have two distinct sets of employees. The “talent” side of the organization deals with preparing the team to achieve on-field success. The general manager, player-personnel director, coaches, full-time scouts (and certainly the players) usually receive salaries considerably higher than those earned by employees on the organization’s “business” side. Players, coaches, and general managers also typically receive extensive media attention and are readily identified by fans and many members of the team’s local community. The desire to work on the “talent” side of professional sports is what initially attracts many students to sport-management programs. However, in the vast majority of cases, sport-management students will be hired to work in the business side of the organization. It is certainly possible, but extremely rare, for a sport-management student who is not a former college or professional sport player to be hired by a professional sport franchise to work on the “talent” side of the organization. Most sport-management students who work for a professional sport franchise will be employed in one or more of a variety of sport business areas (marketing, finance, game operations, sales, etc.).

When most students think of working in professional sports, they focus upon the NBA, NHL, NFL, and MLB as likely employers. These leagues tend to attract large fan bases and have games that are often televised. Potential internship or employment openings at these organizations usually attract hundreds of applicants and therefore have extremely low salaries. Much of the “compensation” for working for a franchise in one of these leagues is the ability to say that you work for the team. Sport franchises realize there are often hundreds of potential employees who would “love” to work for their organization, so they often keep salaries low and demand long working hours, particularly for those employees who have been with the team for less than five years.

Professional sport franchises from the “Big 4” leagues tend to have distinct compartmentalized divisions in marketing, sales, game operations, finance, media relations, human resources, and law. Interns or entry-level employees hired to work for these teams may find they work almost exclusively in one area and do not get exposed to many facets of the organization. Working exclusively in the marketing department certainly enables an intern or entry-level employee to learn detailed aspects of marketing, but it may not be conducive to understanding how the other departments interact in order for the franchise to operate effectively.

### Independent teams

Baseball teams that operate without a direct affiliation with any Major League Baseball franchise.

Though not nearly as popular as teams in the “Big 4” sports leagues, there are many other professional-sport franchises. Sports such as soccer, lacrosse, and volleyball have financially viable professional leagues, and the NBA, NHL, and MLB also have extensive minor-league systems where clubs may be owned and operated by the major-league franchise or owned and operated by an independent owner. In baseball, there are also **independent teams** that operate without the direct support (in the form of players) of a major-league affiliate. Most students do not initially consider a career working with franchises other than those in the “Big 4” leagues, but often there are much greater career advancement opportunities in these situations. For instance, though not the norm, it is not uncommon for general managers of minor-league baseball teams to be hired prior to reaching their 35th birthday. It is also not uncommon for talented interns to be promoted quickly after an internship with a “minor league” franchise. There are many prominent sport managers who have achieved great success in (so-called) minor-league sport, who refuse “major-league” job offers because their “minor-league” careers are fulfilling.

Since the team’s overall staff is much smaller, minor-league sports franchise employees (including interns) typically have multiple areas of responsibility within the organization. For instance, an NBA team will likely have at least five marketing department staff members. Each employee will likely have a narrowly defined job description. However, an NBA D-League franchise will have a much smaller marketing staff that will, most likely, have daily interaction with members of many different departments. By being thoroughly exposed to the smaller organization’s various facets, skills are developed that can be applied to future work activities. Even more prominent minor league sports, such as Triple-A teams in minor-league baseball, will present opportunities for employees to see and understand how the various aspects of the organization function. For instance, it is not uncommon for every member of a minor-league franchise, including the general manager, to help pull the tarp during rain delays.

In addition, the world of professional sports is not limited to “team” sports. There are numerous organizations that operate tournaments for professional athletes in sports such as tennis, golf, fishing, boxing, mixed martial arts, and track and field. Though events such as the U.S. Open Tennis Championship or Professional Golf Association (PGA) Championship garner extensive media



attention, there are other internship and employment opportunities in these sports, since tournaments are held most weekends during the year. Sports such as mixed martial arts and lacrosse have only recently launched viable leagues, but they are growing—in both popularity and employment opportunities.

The growth of NASCAR over the past 15 years is an excellent example of an emerging professional sport and the potential for growth. For many years, automobile racing was seen as a niche sport in the United States, with little national interest beyond the Indianapolis 500 each spring. Until the 1990s, NASCAR was perceived primarily as a “southern” sport that did not generate much national media attention. However, as NASCAR racing became more popular, various NASCAR employees were recognized for their expertise in a variety of sport-business areas, particularly sponsorship sales and fulfillment. While NASCAR has recently faced numerous challenges, with a concurrent slowdown in television ratings and revenue, its rise as a “major-league” sport is an indication that “niche” professional sport organizations can provide excellent employment opportunities.

Though working for a team is certainly one of the most popular potential sport-management careers, professional-sport opportunities are not limited to team-sport franchises. Each professional-sport league has a league office. League office employees are charged with creating a fair environment for all league participants, enhancing the league’s brand, and developing league revenue sources. Most leagues have a commissioner or league president who oversees the league office. For instance, Major League Baseball has a commissioner who hires a staff that schedules games, hires and supervises umpires, negotiates media contracts, and markets the league. Minor League Baseball (MiLB) has a president responsible for all of the affiliated minor-league baseball teams. In addition, each minor league (Midwest League, Southern League, etc.) has a president who hires and manages a full-time staff, as well as league interns.

Working for a professional sport league does not offer the emotional highs and lows associated with an individual franchise, because team employees have a vested interest in each game’s results. The day-to-day excitement of working for an individual franchise can be intense, especially at the end of the season when a team is in the playoffs. Though “business-office” staff members do not directly influence the outcome on the field, they certainly contribute to franchise success by marketing to fans and providing a positive game-day experience. In recognition of their contributions, most professional sport organizations reward all full-time employees, not just the coaches and players, with rings and other awards if the team wins a championship.

To truly understand the professional-sport environment and to determine if it is a good fit, students should seek volunteer and internship opportunities with individual franchises—as well as league offices. It certainly is appropriate to pursue positions with a “major-league” franchise or league, if that is your primary goal, but do not fail to at least consider a “minor-league” position, since many wonderful career opportunities are available.

## College Sport

### Football Bowl Subdivision

A segment of the National Collegiate Athletic Association that is comprised of schools playing the highest level of football (formerly known as Division IA).

### Football Championship Subdivision

A segment of the National Collegiate Athletic Association that is comprised of Division-I schools that are not playing at the highest level of football competition (formerly known as Division IAA).

Division-I football teams usually compete in large stadiums, whereas Division-II or Division-III programs typically have much smaller facilities.

When most people think of intercollegiate athletics, they tend to focus upon **Football Bowl Subdivision** (FBS) football playoffs and bowls and the NCAA Division-I Men's and Women's Basketball Tournaments. Though these are certainly the most-watched college athletic events, they are a small fraction of the total opportunities in college athletics. The NCAA is divided into three divisions (I, II, III). Currently, there are over 1,100 member schools with 351 in Division I, 320 in Division II, and 450 in Division III. The NCAA organizes championships in 23 different sports with schools offering opportunities for men and women to compete.

To be eligible to be a member of Division I, an institution must offer at least seven sports for men and seven for women (or six for men and eight for women) with at least two team sports for each gender. Division-I members may offer athletic scholarships and most schools recruit potential athletes from various regions of the country. Though nearly every Division-I athletic department is part of a regional conference, most teams schedule some competition with schools outside of their immediate geographic area. Division-II institutions must sponsor at least five sports for men and five for women (or four for men and six for women) with two team sports for each gender. Though Division-II institutions may offer athletic scholarships, their recruitment efforts are usually regionally based. In addition, athletic-competition travel tends to be local or regional. Division-III institutions must offer at least five sports for men and five for women. They are not permitted to offer athletic scholarships ("Divisional difference and . . .," n.d.).

Division I is further separated into three divisions (formerly known as IA, IAA, IAAA). Division-IA institutions that offer "big-time" football compete in the Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS), while D-IAA schools—now **Football Championship Subdivision** (FCS)—do not provide as high a financial commitment to their football programs. Division IAAA members do not field D-I football teams. It is important to remember that all Division-I schools compete for the same championships in all sports besides football. Except for a



Courtesy Mark Nagel



Courtesy Mark Nagel

few rare instances, schools must compete at the same level for all of their sports. Such instances are often in Olympic sports (skiing, hockey, wrestling, etc.).

In 2014, the NCAA Bowl Championship Subdivision further split as a new model permitted **Power 5 Conferences** to create some of their own rules. Leaders of many of the athletic departments in the Power 5 Conferences noted that NCAA rules limiting full scholarships below **the cost of attendance** were inappropriate for most of the top athletic programs as they generated sufficient revenue to compensate their profit athletes with additional monies. The decision to permit greater autonomy to Power 5 Conferences coincided with the first ever College Football Playoff after the 2014 season.

The various NCAA divisions roughly approximate varying philosophical perspectives and financial commitments to intercollegiate athletics. Division-I programs tend to provide coaches with greater financial resources for scholarships, personnel, and equipment; upgraded facilities; large travel budgets; and extensive opportunities to compete against other schools across the nation. Most Division-II institutions offer athletic-related scholarships across a variety of sports, but travel and expenses are typically much lower than in Division I. Division-III members, while still committed to intercollegiate athletic competition, in most instances have deemphasized a highly commercialized approach to college sport. According to the division's mission statement, member institutions prohibit athletic-related scholarships and "...place special importance on the impact of athletics on the participants rather than on the spectators. The student-athlete's experience is of paramount concern" ("Divisional differences and...", n.d., para. 3).

Most NCAA members have maintained their current affiliation for many years. However, each year a handful of members attempt to move divisions. In most cases, the movement is prompted by a desire to enhance athletic commitment and "upgrade" to a higher division. Most schools rationalize such a move (from Division III to Division II or from Division II to Division I) as a means to enhance the institution's "marketability" and focus on the potentially drastic increases in athletic revenue. Competing at a high level of intercollegiate athletics is perceived by many to be critical to attracting and retaining students, since competing at the Division I-level offers a greater opportunity to be mentioned on ESPN's *SportsCenter* and in other media outlets. Though examining the specifics regarding the costs and benefits of moving up a division is beyond the scope of this chapter and book, a focus on athletic-department expansion and increased use of college sport as a marketing platform has resulted in concern among many faculty, students, alumni, and administrators regarding institutional priorities. These concerns have resulted in a small number of schools "downgrading" their NCAA status. Recently, Birmingham Southern College realized an increase in overall athletic participation and an increase in campus minority enrollment, university giving, and applicant quality after it moved from Division I to Division III.

Though the importance placed upon winning and academic achievement may differ by sport and NCAA division, regardless of division, athletic directors' and athletic department staff roles are similar. Athletic directors are expected to hire coaches and other staff members, manage an athletic department's budget, generate revenues to ensure the department's financial viability, and interact with various on- and off-campus constituencies. Reflecting the enhanced commitment to the business of intercollegiate athletics, the vast majority of coaches and athletic department personnel who work at Division-I institutions tend to not maintain formal roles in other areas of the university. However, at many Division-II and (especially) D-III institutions, coaches and athletic department staff members often teach classes and assume other campus roles.

Students wishing to eventually work in college athletics should develop and fully understand their personal philosophy of the relationship between athletics and academics before pursuing potential college-sport internships. At Division-I institutions, a primary focus (and some would argue the only focus) is winning. Athletes' education and character development, while still ostensibly important, are often secondary, particularly in revenue-generating sports. At the Division-II and Division-III levels facilities typically are not as lavish, and media attention is often nonexistent. As a result, there is often less commercial intrusion, which may allow athletes to maintain more focus on their academic and social development. At most Division-III institutions, coaches and administrators are evaluated primarily on how well their program contributes to students' education.

The Division-I focus on winning, particularly in revenue sports, is not necessarily a "bad" thing, but sport-management students must attempt to ensure that philosophy and expectations match a university's mission and goals. If a student's personal values are incongruent with those of the athletic department in which they work, frustration often occurs. Having a general idea of expectations and the work environment prior to taking a job in college athletics can alleviate potential philosophical disagreements.

Though most students seeking employment in college athletics will gravitate toward a job at an individual school, there are additional administrative positions available at the NCAA as well as other college-sport-governing bodies. Each Division-I conference maintains a league office and employs a full-time staff. Certainly, conferences such as the Southeastern Conference (SEC) and the Big Ten Conference have many more staff members than the West Coast Conference (WCC) or the Western Athletic Conference (WAC), but all conference employees attempt to market the conferences' brand and enhance athletic-related revenue streams. Much like working for a professional sport league, NCAA and conference administrators will not have the emotional highs and lows of individual school employees.

There are also opportunities outside of the NCAA umbrella. The National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA) governs sport activities for



member NAIA schools. Though not as large as the NCAA, the NAIA currently has over 260 member institutions, and organizes championships in 13 sports. The NAIA maintains a full-time staff that works to organize championships and market NAIA members. In addition, though their athletic departments will likely be small compared to NCAA Division-I institutions, every NAIA school will have athletic employment opportunities.

Intercollegiate athletics opportunities are also offered at many junior colleges. Junior college athletic department administrators are also often members of the physical education faculty. Since junior colleges typically attract students from the local area, rather than from throughout the country, such athletic department budgets are often much more limited. However, many states organize championships for a variety of sports at the junior college level. These championships can attract local media attention and fans. The National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA) works to promote the efforts of junior college athletics.

### College-Sport License Holders

The development and expansion of the business of intercollegiate athletics has resulted in the proliferation of numerous college-sport marketing companies. Since many athletic departments do not have adequate personnel with the expertise to evaluate and sell sponsorship inventory, negotiate media rights to athletic department content, and seek advertisers, they often partner with third-party license holders. As these license holders have proliferated, they have provided excellent internship and employment opportunities for sport-management students.

There are a variety of college-sport licensees. One of the most important people in the development of this subindustry is Jim Host. In the 1970s, Host established Jim Host & Associates, which provided assistance to college athletic departments looking to outsource some or all of their marketing activities. After initially working with the University of Kentucky, Host's company became more and more successful. As Host expanded his influence throughout the industry, other competitors entered the marketplace. In the early 2000s, prominent college sport-marketing companies included ISP Sports, Learfield Sports Properties, and Nelligan Sports Marketing, Inc.

In 2007, International Management Group (IMG) purchased Host Communications and combined it with the recently acquired Collegiate Licensing Company (CLC), an entity that had initially been established to assist colleges and universities to create and expand their **licensed merchandise** sales, to form IMG College. The merger established IMG College as the nation's largest provider of marketing services to the college-sport industry. In 2014, JMI Sports acquired the rights to the University of Kentucky athletic department with a

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#### Licensed merchandise

Granting another entity the right to produce products that bear a trademarked logo.

\$210 million deal (Rovell, 2014). Despite the dominance of IMG College, it is likely that other entities will continue to enter the college rights holder industry.

Though the aforementioned companies provide a variety of marketing services to college athletic departments, there continues to be new opportunities for college-sport consulting. In 2009, Georgia Tech hired the Aspire Group to organize its ticket sales for football and men's basketball games. It was believed to be the first time an athletic department outsourced its ticketing operations to a third party (Lombardo & Smith, 2009). Since then, it has expanded its client list to include dozens of colleges and professional sports teams, and some sport leagues. It is likely many future employment opportunities in college athletics will involve working for an outside entity, rather than directly for the athletic department.

## Youth Sports

Professional and intercollegiate athletics typically generate significantly higher attendance and greater media attention than organized youth sports; however, over the past 10 years high-school athletics has become dramatically more commercialized. At many high schools, since the athletic director is no longer expected to teach classes, his/her energy can be fully devoted to selling tickets, executing fund-raising initiatives, seeking sponsorship agreements, and raising awareness of the high school's athletic exploits in the media. High-school football and basketball games are increasingly being broadcast on local or regional television and radio stations, or sport networks. In addition, ESPN has recently dramatically increased its coverage of selected games. It is not uncommon for prominent high-school athletic teams to travel via airplane to participate in prestigious tournaments. As many high-school athletic departments have begun to model their structure and activities after prominent colleges, athletic directors with advanced sport-business skills are needed.

Other youth sport activities have also recently seen dramatic changes. Little League Baseball and the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) have long attracted thousands of participants, but the scheduling and marketing of their athletic contests now mimics commercialized sport properties. Not only are Little League World Series games televised live on ESPN, but most regional championships are also covered extensively by the media. AAU tournaments in a variety of sports no longer merely attract parents and close friends of the participants. With much of the college recruiting for some sports (such as basketball and volleyball) occurring during summer AAU tournaments, fans have begun to attend, and media outlets have begun to cover, some of these events in the hopes of seeing the "next" great college players before they have graduated from high school.

With the growing emphasis on commercialized youth sports, parents now often insist that their children's sporting activities be organized and operated like

“professional” sport entities. Some affluent parents have also retained “performance” coaches to work with their child—in some cases before their son or daughter has enrolled in junior high school. The increased emphasis that parents have placed upon organized, elite youth-sport activities is of grave concern to many people. During much of the 20th century young kids participated in athletics without direct parental organization or supervision (Coakley, 2009). Sport was as much about “play” as it was about winning. Participants (children) often amended rules to allow for a more competitive and “fun” environment. While some sociologists lament the current state of youth sports, with today’s emphasis on adult-organized and-directed youth sports, there are opportunities for sport-management graduates to establish, organize, and promote youth-sport events.

## **Olympic Sports**

In 1896 the first “modern” Olympic Games took place in Athens, Greece. Though the “first” Olympics attracted “only” 14 nations and 241 athletes, the games slowly expanded during the first half of the 20th century. Since it was impractical to hold competitions for many popular sports, such as skiing and ice-skating, during the summer, in 1924 the first Winter Olympic Games were held in Chamonix, France. As the Olympics continued to attract larger contingents of athletes and greater media attention, they became an outlet for countries’ nationalism. During the 1936 Summer Olympics in Berlin, the Nazi Party utilized the Games as the focal point to demonstrate the “rebirth” of Germany after World War I. Despite Adolf Hitler’s propaganda campaign about the Aryan “master race,” U.S. track star Jesse Owens won four gold medals to become the hero of the 1936 Olympics.

Though the popularity of the Olympics grew following World War II, many Olympic Games have been marred by tragedy, financial problems, and political turmoil. During the 1972 Munich Games, members of the Israeli Olympic team were taken hostage and eventually murdered by Black September, a militant group with ties to the Palestinian Fatah organization. By the end of the ordeal, the death toll stood at 17. The terrorists eventually killed eleven Israeli athletes and coaches and one West German police officer. Five of the eight Black September members were killed during a failed rescue attempt. Though certainly not as tragic as the loss of life in Munich, the 1976 Montreal Games were a financial disaster as millions of dollars of facility investments required decades for the citizens of Montreal and the rest of Canada to repay. At the height of the “Cold War,” the United States and many of its allies boycotted the 1980 Moscow Games in protest of the Soviet Union’s invasion of Afghanistan. By 1984, there was considerable concern about the financial viability of the Los Angeles Games, especially after the Soviet Union and other “Eastern Bloc” countries boycotted the Games in retaliation for the 1980 boycott. Despite

The 1984 Summer Olympics generated a profit and changed the way future Olympic Games would be organized.



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concerns, the financial and marketing success of the 1984 Summer Olympics changed the Olympic movement.

Peter Ueberroth served as the Executive Director of the 1984 Summer Olympics. Where all of the preceding Olympic Games were primarily financed and operated by government entities, Ueberroth organized the Los Angeles Games as a private entity. Ueberroth managed the Olympics as a separate, stand-alone business and he solicited extensive sponsorship and licensed merchandise sales to generate revenue. The Los Angeles Olympics was such a financial success that Ueberroth was named *Time Magazine's* Man of the Year. Cities and countries that had viewed hosting the Olympics as a financial risk, changed their opinion of hosting future games. The Los Angeles Olympics caused many worldwide sporting events to become “mega-events” requiring extensive and highly-trained staffs in order to solicit bids, develop financial plans, schedule facilities, organize event employees, and maximize revenue opportunities. Today, sport-management students have the opportunity to pursue an Olympics-based career, whether working for the International Olympic Committee (IOC), U.S. Olympic Committee (USOC), one of the USOC’s national sport governing bodies (NGO), or for a potential host city.

The Olympic Games are not the only mega-event to attract competitors and spectators from throughout the world. In 1948 Sir Ludwig Guttman organized the first sport competition for injured soldiers from World War II. Guttman’s event would grow and eventually be called the Paralympics. Starting in 1988 with the Seoul Olympics, the Paralympics have been held in the Olympic host city shortly after the Olympic Games have concluded. The Paralympics, as well



as other sporting events for the disabled, have grown in popularity. Much like the Olympics, the Paralympics must be organized and managed. With thousands of athletes and spectators attending, there are numerous career opportunities in this area.

## **Sport Facilities**

Regardless of the size or scope of a sporting event, facilities will be needed to ensure the event is successful. Even outdoor events, such as cross-country races, require facilities for spectators, members of the media, and race officials. Certainly, major professional sports facilities and Division-I athletic-department facilities receive considerable media attention, but there are also many potential career opportunities associated with smaller venues. As discussed in Chapter 12, sport facilities may include stadiums (both indoor, outdoor, and retractable roofed) for events such as football and soccer games, arenas for events such as basketball and volleyball games and facilities designed specifically for sports such as tennis, swimming, auto racing, horse racing, and dog racing.

Though high-profile “competitive” sport facilities tend to initially attract sport-management students, there are also numerous opportunities to work in recreation and fitness facilities. Most communities have private and publicly-owned recreation centers that offer general recreation opportunities as well as scheduled events such as tournaments. Over the past 10 years, colleges and universities have come to realize on-campus recreation centers can be utilized to recruit and retain students (as well as faculty and staff). Most campuses have at least one recreation center, and offer extensive intramural programs. Military bases, both in the United States and throughout the world, also offer recreation opportunities. Community recreation centers, like other facilities, require professional, part-time, and volunteer staff members to ensure operational efficiency. Employees at all venue types establish budgets, organize programs, ensure the safety of equipment, and attract and retain customers.

Over the last 15 years, as the importance and complexity of managing sport facilities has increased, numerous private management companies have offered sport facility-management services. Though there are numerous private management companies that offer such full-scale management, three organizations currently dominate the marketplace. SMG World is the leading provider of management for arenas, convention centers, stadiums, and theatres throughout the world. It currently manages 10+ stadiums, 60+ theatres, 60+ convention centers, and 65+ arenas, with more than 1.5 million seats. SMG continues to expand its operations and influence in the sport facility marketplace.

Global Spectrum, a division of the Philadelphia-based sports and entertainment company Comcast-Spectacor, has dramatically increased its presence and influence in the industry over the past 15 years. Global Spectrum

presently manages over 100 venues throughout the world; and is expanding its global presence, with offices in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Singapore.

AEG Live has only recently begun soliciting facility-management contracts as it has a long history of presenting live music and other entertainment events. AEG Live has signed contracts with some of the top-grossing facilities in the world. It currently oversees the development of L.A. Live, a 4-million-square-foot, \$2.5 billion sport, residential, and entertainment district. AEG has committed to expanding its presence in the sport facility-management field.

Each of these companies offers extensive internship and entry-level employment opportunities. Since SMG, Global Spectrum, and AEG manage multiple facilities around the world, there are tremendous opportunities to advance your career, if you are able and willing to relocate. It is not uncommon for these companies to “fast-track” exceptional students from internships to full-time employment and from entry-level employment to middle management.

In addition to full-service facility-management companies, there are also potential sport-management employment opportunities in firms that offer specific services in subsectors of facility management. Since selling food and beverages is a critical revenue stream for most sporting events, many facilities have outsourced concession-sales responsibilities to private companies. Though there are many food-service companies, a few dominate the marketplace. Aramark is the largest sport concessionaire and it continues to expand its presence in the United States and international markets. Other prominent concessionaires include Centerplate, Delaware North Sportservice, Levy, and Ovations Food Services (owned and operated by Comcast Spectacor). Much like the large full-scale facility management companies, these concessionaires have multiple accounts across the country, providing employees many opportunities for career advancement.

Though crowd safety has always been an important issue, after the terrorist attacks on 9/11 most facilities and events realized they needed to reassess their crowd-management practices. There are many companies that work directly or indirectly with sporting events to create a safe environment. Contemporary Services Corporation (CSC) is the best known. With multiple offices throughout the United States and accounts with many of the top college and professional sport teams, CSC is a leader in providing staffing for sport-event crowd management.

Most live sport events require patrons to purchase tickets to gain entry to the facility. For many years, tickets were sold primarily at a facility’s box office. By the 1970s, tickets could be purchased over the phone with a credit card, but the sales process was still inefficient. In 1976, two Arizona State students founded Ticketmaster—a company that designed software that allowed for “remote” ticket sales. In the 1980s, as Ticketmaster developed and enhanced its technology, it quickly became the industry leader. With the proliferation of the Internet in the

1990s, Ticketmaster captured nearly the entire sport and entertainment ticketing industry. In 2010, it merged with Live Nation. Though many students may not have an interest in working for Ticketmaster, it is important to understand how its operations impact nearly every aspect of live sport and entertainment events.

There are a variety of other employment opportunities in sport facility and event management. Sport events cannot function without office equipment, landscaping, trash removal, and a myriad of other services. There are many lesser-known companies that work intimately within the sport industry. In addition, there are companies that have not even been established that will provide future employment opportunities. For instance, in 1981 Sports Team Analysis and Tracking Systems (STATS, Inc.) was established by John Dewan. In the early 1980s, statistical analysis (particularly in sports) was often seen as a “fringe” activity reserved solely for “nerds.” Since 1981 the importance of sport statistical analysis (as well as statistical analysis in all aspects of business) has grown tremendously and companies such as STATS, Inc. (now STATS LLC) play an important role in the industry. Many students reading this book will likely have ideas for aspects of the sport industry that have not yet been contemplated. Do not discount emerging ideas or companies as they may become a critical component of the sport industry in the future!

## **Licensed Merchandise**

In the 1950s, New York Yankee’s General Manager George Weiss was asked about having a Yankee Cap Day. He supposedly replied, “Do you think I want kids in New York wearing Yankee hats?” Certainly, the use of team or league logos on hats, shirts, jackets, sweaters, and various other articles of clothing and other products has greatly expanded since the 1950s. Today, any sport executive would welcome the opportunity for logoed merchandise to be worn by fans, especially when the fans pay for the “privilege” of being associated with the sport organization.

Most teams, leagues, and athletic department sell licenses that permit third parties to produce various products that display a sport organization’s name and logo. The profit margin on sales of licensed merchandise can be quite high. One only has to look at the price of a plain sweatshirt sold at a department store, and compare it to the price of a sweatshirt bearing a college or university logo, to see the profits generated through licensed merchandise sales. The cost of ink is likely pennies, but the addition of a school logo on a plain piece of clothing can double, triple, or even quadruple the product’s price!

Licensed merchandise sales are a critical component of most sport organizations’ revenue plans. The tremendous profit margins available through the sale of licensed merchandise have led most sport organizations to devote at least one employee to this area. For extremely popular sport teams, an entire

franchise division or functional area may work to investigate potential licensing opportunities, negotiate licensing contracts, and ensure that counterfeit merchandise is not sold. In order to maximize profits, sport leagues typically create league-wide licensing agreements. These league agreements typically disburse revenues to each team, which enables every team (though their individual sales may fluctuate each year due to team performance and other factors) to receive a more consistent revenue stream.

Companies that design and sell apparel have been interested in utilizing sport logos for many years. Recently, various nontraditional products and services have sought associations with sport organizations. Some college athletic departments offer their fans the opportunity to purchase licensed products as varied as seat cushions, plates, silverware, glasses, futons, toilet seat covers, DVDs, photographs, and other new-media products. Some schools and professional sport franchises have even begun offering officially licensed urns and coffins for fans who wish to be buried in “their” school or team colors (Jones, 2008).

## **Sport Media**

Sport events typically attract the attention of fans, and therefore are often covered by various media outlets. Certainly, sport organizations seek to maximize media exposure. Most hire employees to work with the media to generate positive publicity. In addition, media-relations departments must also prepare and handle potential crises that develop. An organization that is not prepared for a crisis will likely experience significant negative feedback from fans and other constituents who view the sport entity as unprepared, uncaring, or unprofessional in their dealings with the media.

The media industry has changed dramatically over the past 100 years. The primary mode of information gathering for most sport consumers has progressed from newspapers to radio to television to the Internet. Changes in media platforms have resulted in employment opportunities and in alterations to some established sport norms. In addition to a proliferation of satellite and cable TV networks and delivery options, many professional and college leagues and conferences now have their own cable sports networks. The NFL, NBA, and MLB all have their own networks. The Mountain West Conference (Mtn) and Big Ten Conference (Big Ten Network) led the way in college sport in the early 2000s, with other conferences creating their own networks, including the SEC starting theirs in 2014. Individual franchises (such as the New York Yankees with the YES Network) as well as individual schools (such as the University of Texas) have developed their own cable networks.

The Internet’s “viral” nature (through the sharing of files, video-sharing websites, blogs, digital networks, and “old-fashioned” email) has enabled



bloggers to wield significant influence in the sport industry. For many years, many sport franchises did not view Internet writers as “real” journalists. Today, most teams have begun to recognize prominent bloggers are an important part of their media constituencies. As technology continues to evolve, the need for sport organizations to tell their “story” through the media will not change, but the platforms by which that story is conveyed will undoubtedly be much different. Students seeking employment in sport media should understand the unique nature of sport media relations, and prepare for continued rapid changes in the future.

## Sports Agents

Though being a “player agent” is probably the number-one career non-sport-management people think of when sport management is mentioned, an infinitesimal fraction of sport-management students will ever work as a player agent. Though multimillion-dollar athlete contracts and movies like *Jerry Maguire* make the layperson think there are numerous player agents and many of them are financially successful, in reality only a few player agents make substantial salaries. For every Scott Boras, Drew Rosenhaus, or David Falk, there are thousands of other agents who have considerably more dreams than clients. In many years, the reported number of agents exceeds the number of players in several sports. Leigh Steinberg was once a prominent agent who fell from grace due to alcoholism and other personal problems. He has written a book describing his own career path and the struggles agents face in a cutthroat industry.

Though the player-agent industry now involves millions of dollars, the first athlete-agent agreement began with little more than a handshake. In 1960, Attorney Mark McCormack noticed that golfer Arnold Palmer had established his career as a successful performer. With television rapidly increasing its coverage of golf tournaments, McCormack approached Palmer about managing his endorsement opportunities. McCormack’s success with Palmer’s career attracted other golfers such as Jack Nicklaus and Gary Player. McCormack’s agency, IMG, would eventually sign numerous other golfers and tennis players. Later, IMG expanded its agency to represent athletes from other sports, as well as entertainers, politicians, and models. IMG also began to manage sport and entertainment events.

The success of McCormack and IMG led other individuals to work in the player-agent business. During the 1970s, numerous attorneys expanded their business to include athlete representation. As the value of player contracts escalated in the 1980s, many individuals became full-time agents rather than attorneys who “also” represented athletes. In the 1990s many prominent agents began to expand their client services. Instead of merely negotiating player

contracts, most large agencies began to design marketing and sponsorship campaigns; offer financial advice; retain nutritionists, personal trainers, and sport psychologists; and perform statistical analysis of their clients' athletic performance. Currently, most "successful" agents represent many clients and allow their past successes to supplement their recruiting efforts.

Becoming a prominent player agent is one of the most difficult sport-career paths. Competition within the industry is fierce, with some agents notoriously circumventing established rules, laws, and ethical guidelines (see Chapter 5) to attract clients. The actions of players, coaches, parents, and "advisors" can make the life of an agent difficult—particularly since most agents rely on their commission as a primary source of income and are therefore usually not in a position to say "No" to most requests. Few sport-management students realize an agent's long hours, tough working conditions, and stressful lifestyle. Students wishing to become an agent should seek opportunities to work for an established agency. Though most agents are reluctant to share their secrets regarding recruitment and retention of clients—for fear of training someone to eventually become their competition—there are typically opportunities to work for agents doing a variety of tasks such as coordinating athlete appearances and researching marketing opportunities. Students who desire to become an agent should not abandon that dream, but should realize the incredibly tough environment in which player agents operate.

## Athlete Foundations

With the large salaries that some professional athletes earn, there is often a pressure to "give back" to the community. Most prominent athletes have either established charitable foundations or work closely with organizations that attempt to enhance the livelihood of various constituents. Athletes can generate positive publicity through their charitable work with schools, hospitals, and other entities that serve the community. There are potential internship and employment opportunities working for athlete foundations. This has become especially important over the past 10 years as many athletes have been publicly chastised and, in some cases prosecuted, for allowing family members and close friends to improperly operate their charitable foundation. With an increased emphasis on operating athlete foundations as a legitimate non-profit organization, many of these organizations have sought sport-management students for internships and entry-level employment.

## Sport Tourism

Though tourism is one of the world's oldest industries, many components of organized sport tourism in the United States have only been developed in the past 30 years. In the United States, the 1904 St. Louis (Missouri) World's Fair was organized in concert with the 1904 Olympic Games. Hosting both events was designed to maximize the number of tourists who would visit St. Louis. Despite the success of the 1904 Olympics, most sport events in the first third of the 20th century were primarily viewed as "local" events. However, during the height of the Great Depression, the 1932 Los Angeles Olympics attracted many spectators who spent money in the Los Angeles area. In 1939, the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum was opened in Cooperstown, New York. Despite the ongoing economic depression, the induction of the first class of baseball hall of famers generated substantial onsite attendance and national media attention. Other sports and leagues would later establish their own Halls of Fame to attract tourists.

In the United States, the link between sports and tourism has continued to grow. Various companies, particularly those in the restaurant, hotel, and car-rental industries, reap economic benefits when sport events attract tourists from outside the community. Tourists who spend money generate "economic impact," which can spur employment opportunities and enhance tax receipts. Certainly, most cities' convention and visitors bureaus attempt to attract as many sport events, and sport tourists, as possible.



The San Jose Sports Authority works to bring events such as the Rock 'n' Roll San Jose Half Marathon, with an estimated economic impact of over \$16 million annually, to San Jose.

Courtesy David Eadie

Attracting sport events to a local community is perceived to be important enough for many municipalities that agencies specifically tasked with attracting such events have been established. The San Jose Sports Authority (SJSA) is an excellent example of an agency established to attract sport events to a community, in order to attract tourists and generate economic activity. Long overshadowed by San Francisco and Oakland to the north, the City of San Jose established the SJSA in 1991. Since its creation, the SJSA has worked to bring sport events such as the NCAA Division-I Women's Final Four, NCAA Division-I Men's Basketball Western Regional Finals, Major League Soccer All-Star Game, Siebel Classic (Senior PGA event), and numerous U.S. Olympic trials to San Jose.

There are numerous opportunities to work in sport tourism and new opportunities are continually being developed. Recently, travel companies have developed sport tourism packages that offer organized tours of stadiums and other sport facilities in a variety of cities. It is likely that sport tourism opportunities will continue to expand in the future, making this an important potential outlet for internships and employment opportunities.

## Employment Placement

The growth of the sport industry and the proliferation of sport organizations have resulted in the creation of companies that specialize in helping sport-management students find internships and entry-level employment. In addition, many such organizations link established sport management professionals to sport organizations that need specific skills. For instance, TeamWork Online (through its web-based services) assists sport organizations in finding employees and employees finding open sport-management positions. Six Figure Sports is another company that specializes in helping sport organizations seeking employees, but their focus is typically upon executive-level searches. It is likely that as the sport industry continues to develop, additional organizations that provide employment consulting will be established, creating additional sport-management employment opportunities.

## Sport Sponsors

The importance of sport sponsorship has grown over the past 20 years—both for sport entities and for local, regional, national, and international companies. With sports becoming a larger component of many individuals' everyday lives, many organizations have realized that they must actively attempt to understand sport sponsorship and its potential costs and benefits. Many Fortune 500 companies have staff members specifically tasked with evaluating sport-sponsorship opportunities. Sport-management graduates often have a unique



understanding of what makes a sport athlete, team, league, or event worthwhile for potential sponsorship. Though working in the corporate world may not seem as “exciting” as working for a team or league, there are some potential benefits. Most Fortune 500 companies offer much higher salaries than those in other sport-industry sectors. In addition, though employees are expected to work diligently, especially during sponsored events, there tends to be a more “reasonable” expectation of working hours and better fringe benefits (excluding the opportunity to be a part of a potential championship team). Even if a company does not have a division devoted specifically to sport-sponsorship, most organizations task their marketing staffs with exploring all possible outlets to enhance their brand. There are many sport-management graduates working in “marketing” for non-sport organizations who maintain a close contact to the industry through marketing and sponsorship opportunities.

## Conclusion

Opportunities for internships and entry-level employment in the U.S. sport-management industry are extremely diverse. There are myriad avenues for students to pursue. Certainly, developing a knowledge base by studying the industry is important for future success, but understanding the nuances of various subsectors can only be accomplished by working in that industry area. Students should begin to explore potential opportunities immediately, as no employer will ever tell an applicant that they have “too much experience” for a sport-management position.

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# chapter 3

## Interviews

### Interview 3.1

Dr. Tom Regan  
Associate Professor &  
Graduate Director  
Department of Sport  
and Entertainment  
Management  
University of South Carolina



*In the nine years that Dr. Regan served as chair of the University of South Carolina Department of Sport and Entertainment Management, the undergraduate program expanded to over 500 students, new faculty were hired, a master's program was created, and plans to start a doctoral program were implemented. Throughout Dr. Regan's tenure as chair, the academic requirements consistently increased and USC's graduates positively impacted numerous areas of sport and entertainment management. Through Dr. Regan's leadership, USC's sport and entertainment management undergraduate program has become one of the best in the country and its graduate program is in position to begin to attract quality students from throughout the world.*

**Q:** Can you briefly describe your background and career path?

**A:** I was born and raised in Miles City, Montana, one of six children of blue-collar working parents. I attended the University of Wyoming on a baseball scholarship and graduated with undergraduate (1979) and master's (1981) degrees in Accounting. My first job after graduation was

as a staff accountant for Fox and Co. CPAs (later Fox/Grant Thornton after a merger). After two years I took a job as the senior accountant at Natural Gas Processing Company. Within six months I became the controller and worked for the next eight years with NGP, Wyoming Gas Co. and other entities we purchased.

I then wanted to do something that involved my passions of sport and business. The University of Northern Colorado had a new sport-management doctoral program. Though I was initially concerned about some aspects of the new program, I enrolled and enjoyed taking courses that conformed to my business background. I finished my degree by writing my dissertation on the Economic Impact of the Denver Broncos. After graduation in May 1991, I took an academic position at the University of South Carolina in the Department of Sport Administration (since renamed) under the tutelage of Dr. Guy Lewis, who started the University of Massachusetts sport-management program many years before. USC's program was attractive because it was business oriented rather than physical education or recreation focused.

I have stayed at the University of South Carolina in the Department of Sport and Entertainment Management since my initial appointment. After being tenured and promoted in 1997, I was named the department chair, a position I held for over nine years. During that time the department grew from 151 students and three full-time tenure track faculty members to over 500 students and 10 full-time faculty members.

**Q:** What have been the biggest challenges you have encountered during your career?

**A:** Balancing work and family is always a challenge. I have tried to never let work get in the way of being at my children's games or significant events. I can work later in the day, at home, or on weekends to make sure I keep my priorities in order. Everyone needs to maintain balance in their mental,

social, spiritual, and physical lives. Properly juggling home and work lives often takes planning and commitment.

The academic world often reacts slowly to change and accomplishing goals quickly can sometimes be a challenge. Working within a bureaucracy is often difficult and a university has multiple layers of approval for most activities.

**Q: What are the most important issues sport-management programs, and specifically sport-management faculty members, currently face?**

**A:** The ongoing struggle is to stay current and relevant to the sport and entertainment industry. Programs should focus on doing practical, applied research that the industry can use to enhance their business activities. Research should impact the financial bottom line not only by enhancing revenue but also by containing costs.

**Q: What are the most important skills for sport-management students to develop?**

**A:**

- Interpersonal communication (writing, especially activities outside of Twitter/Texting)
- Entrepreneurship (ability to problem solve and incorporate ideas from various aspects of business)
- Public speaking
- Sales—the ability to sell is critical
- Accounting
- Strategic management—this is often the difference between the manager and the subordinate.

**Q: What classes do you recommend students take while an undergraduate (especially electives)?**

**A:**

- Public speaking
- Accounting
- Finance
- Marketing
- Sales

- Graphic design (helps with sporting events—creating brochures, etc.)
- Foreign language—It is a global economy and foreign language skills are invaluable.
- Computerskills—this is essential. At a minimum a comprehensive understanding of MS Office is needed but additional skills are helpful, particularly a comprehensive understanding of MS Excel.

**Q: How do you teach students to understand that sport management extends beyond becoming an agent or a general manager of a professional sport franchise?**

**A:**

- There are more neonatal surgeons than general managers of a professional-sport franchise. Considering how difficult it is to become a surgeon, students should consider the likelihood of becoming a GM.
- I tell the students who are interested in being an agent to go to law school and build the agency after they have established a solid practice as an attorney. You have to make a living, and agency work is a dog-eat-dog world where lots of financial resources and contacts are needed. If you do not have a client, you are not an agent!
- I tell them to read biographies of successful sport managers from a variety of fields.

**Q: Where are the best places to find jobs in sport management presently? Where do you see the largest areas of growth for sport-management jobs in the future?**

**A:**

- Jobs that are related to facilities (professional, college, and interscholastic sport and entertainment venues of all sizes) are available. The challenge for many facilities is how they will pay for the debt that was accumulated to build the venue. Increasing the number of events is the likely answer and there will be jobs in that area of the business.



- Largest area of growth will be international events in Asia. Many Asian countries have a growing middle class with disposable income and free time, which means they will be looking for opportunities to spend some of that money.

**Q: Once students start their first sport-management job, what are the most important things they should consider as they plan their career path?**

**A:** First, listen during meetings and don't speak because you think you can add content. Listen, learn, see who the leaders or power players are in the meetings. Then as you continue to learn and listen, one day you will be asked your thoughts. Be ready and have content to add to the discussion. It is a test – are you ready?

Next, learn corporate structure. You can see it in class in a book and tell stories about management, leadership, and bosses, but experience is the only way

you really understand corporate America. It is a great thing to learn and it is a great system that benefits the brightest.

Don't be afraid to relocate. Great careers are not born in your backyard. Relocate and be willing to have a sense of adventure. If you want to be the AD at your alma mater, you better move a couple of times; get the experience and hopefully the break to get back home. It is not an easy journey.

**Q: Do you typically advise undergraduate students to pursue graduate school?**

**A:** For students who want to pursue a career in college athletics a master's degree is required. For other fields it is not required, but the skills that can be learned in graduate schools can certainly help. Specific careers (agent—law) do require a specified graduate degree, but there are many successful sport managers who do not have a graduate degree.

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## Interview 3.2

Dr. Norm O'Reilly  
Richard P. and Joan S. Fox  
Professor of Management  
Professor and Chair,  
Department of Sports  
Administration, College of  
Business  
Ohio University



### **Q: Could you briefly describe your career path from undergraduate student to your current position?**

**A:** Honestly, I never intended to be a professor. I entered my undergraduate in science hoping to learn more about being an athlete (I was a serious triathlete and Nordic skier) and potentially going to medical school or chiropractic college. After spending time volunteering at both a doctor's office and a chiro clinic, I learned quickly the field was not for me. Following my third year at the University of Waterloo, I had a chance to work the summer at Triathlon Canada and I loved it. My first boss—Bill Hallett—was president of Triathlon Canada and really introduced me to business (I had not taken business courses up to that point) and my career path formed. I worked again for Triathlon Canada the next year, then went to graduate school, doing both an MA (Sports Admin) and an MBA. I still had no intention of being a professor. Following my MBA, I did some consulting for a while (we started our own firm in management and biotech consulting), then worked for the 2008 Toronto Olympic bid, finally getting a job at Sport Canada (the Government of Canada's department responsible for sport in Canada), where I stayed for about three years. During that time, I had a chance to teach part time at my alma matter—the University of Ottawa—and loved it. I did this for four years and also started my PhD at Carlton University's Sprott School of Business working with my advisor, Dr. Judith Madill, a marketing and social marketing expert. My thesis built a process model for sponsorship evaluation, something of both academic and practitioner need—which I think is what I aspire to do. This led me into an interest in research in the area, spawning into sport finance, sport marketing,

sponsorship, social marketing, and tourism marketing. While at Sport Canada, an opportunity came to interview for a professor job at Laurentian University's School of Sports Administration, Canada's oldest sports administration program (SPAD). I didn't win the competition but when they couldn't sign with the first choice, I got a call just days before the term was to start and made the quick and risky decision to leave the government and try an academic life. After one year in Laurentian, I moved to Ryerson University's Rogers School of Management in Toronto for three years (2003-2006) and then back to Laurentian as Director of the SPAD program for another three years (2006-2009), followed by a year at Syracuse University and a sabbatical as Visiting Professor at Stanford University's Graduate School of Business. In 2010, I returned to the University of Ottawa as a professor in the School of Human Kinetics and have just recently moved to Ohio University's Department of Sports Administration as Chair of the Department and a full Professor. In addition to these roles, I have continued to work professionally as a consultant (Senior advisor at Toronto-based TrojanOne Ltd from 2005 to today), taken on Visiting Professorships (Stanford, Limerick, AUT University, UNSW Canberra), and built research partnerships with colleagues around the world.

### **Q: What have been the biggest challenges you have encountered during your career?**

**A:** Time management. Keeping research going while doing other things (and having a family) is very challenging and requires sacrificing sleep and balancing work with life.

### **Q: Are there specific skills sport-management students should look to develop while still in school?**

**A:** Yes! I've been doing a project on this led by Dr. David Finch of Mount Royal University and Dr. John Nadeau of Nipissing University and we're finding there is a disconnect between what managers want and what most schools are providing. This includes both hard and soft skills. So, this is a multilevel answer. Simply put, we need to narrow the gap with practice, in my view.

**Q: How does Ohio University work to develop those skills in students?**

**A:** I've only been here for a few months and, wow, the faculty here amaze me, as do the 3,400+ alumni with their focus on students, placements, industry-projects, and applied research. There is a reason they—now we—are ranked as one of the top schools and programs in our field. Tremendous attention is paid to the curriculum and staying up-to-date on what employers/industry wants/needs. An alumni board (one for graduate programs and one for undergraduate) provide input as well. Any changes are vetted through them.

**Q: What are the biggest changes you see occurring in the next three to five years in sport-management academic programs?**

**A:** We have lots—it's a growing field.

1. Too many programs/places and not enough jobs for graduates
2. Achieving a global body (The WASM is starting this effort now, which is good.)
3. Low entry-level pay for graduates
4. Making sense of accreditation—AACSB, ASB, COSMA, etc.—and making accreditation matter industry wide
5. Enhancing 'hard skills' in our curriculums (finance, accounting, etc.)

**Q: What publications do you regularly read to stay apprised of sport-business events?**

**A:** I am biased as I also write a regular column with Rick Burton, but *SportBusiness Journal* is my number-one source for industry biz info.

**Q: Would you recommend students pursue graduate school? If so, when should they pursue a graduate degree and what area of study would you recommend?**

**A:** Yes, but only after a few years of work experience and after achieving a keen understanding of what they want to do. I'd also say that if your career is progressing as you want without it, then keep progressing. When you stall or want to change fields/sports, graduate school is an ideal 'diving board' to move.

## Learning Activity

Create a list of 25 sport-management professionals who have achieved success in an area you feel you might have interest. Contact each of those professionals and ask to conduct informational interviews so that you can begin to build not only your knowledge base, but also your professional network.

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