EARLY CAREER DEVELOPMENT IN THE SPORT INDUSTRY:

FACTORS AFFECTING EMPLOYMENT

A Thesis

by

MICHAEL D. HUTCHINSON

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

May 2008

Major Subject: Kinesiology

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Chair of Committee,   Michael Sagas
Committee Members, Gregg Bennett
                              Ben Welch
Head of Department, James Eddy

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ABSTRACT

Early Career Development in the Sport Industry: Factors Affecting Employment.

(May 2008)

Michael D. Hutchinson, B.S., Mississippi College

Chair of Advisory Committee: Dr. Michael Sagas

The purpose of this study is to identify the processes and factors contributing to employment in the sport industry. In order to completely address the sport industry as a whole, sport management has been pragmatically divided into five sub disciplines, including professional practitioner, recreational, Olympic, collegiate athletic administration, and high school athletic administration. Academia has been specifically excluded from this study as a category, since its purpose is to focus on those with experiences outside the educational setting. Recognized professionals in each of the above mentioned areas were interviewed to establish their individual views and perceptions. These candidates have been drawn from a cross-section of both educational (bachelor's and/or graduate) degree programs and several different university institutions. Individual phone interviews were utilized to establish the primary contributors for each participant in their career development. The data has been analyzed to answer research questions and form recommendations that will provide guidance for current students and practitioners in developing their career aspirations.

DEDICATION

To my Family, who guides, supports, and loves me

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To my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, for He is faithful

"I am willing to endure anything if it will bring salvation and eternal glory in Christ Jesus to those God has chosen. This is a true saying: if we die with him, we will also live with him. If we endure hardship, we will reign with him. If we deny him, he will deny us. If we are unfaithful, he remains faithful, for he cannot deny himself."

II Timothy 2:10 – 13

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With relation to the topic of this study, I must thank Dr. Catherine Quatman. Her guidance in helping me understand qualitative research and beginning this study is greatly appreciated. I would also like to thank Dr. Quatman, Dr. John Singer, and Adrien Bouchet for their suggestions of potential interview participants for this study. Likewise, the participants of this study put forth a superb effort in the interview process, providing information above and beyond the expected norm.

Finally, I must thank my mother and father for their encouragement, patience, and suggestions throughout this process. Without their persistent guidance and direction, I am certain that this thesis would not be where it is today.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

From early adolescence, individuals seem focused on the selection of a vocation that appears exciting and enjoyable (Super & Hall, 1978). Typically, these childhood selections revolve around a fire fighter, veterinarian, athlete, pilot, and the like. However, as youthful zest dissipates and the complications of early adulthood begin, the initial stages of vocational selection and career development can prove to be painstakingly difficult and challenging (Parsons, 1909). With the hundreds of billion dollar growth in the 1990's (Howard & Mahony, 2001), the sport industry continues to expand and embrace venues on a broad international scale. Multi-million dollar salary and compensation packages for professional athletes have become commonplace, serving as a magnet for little-leaguers around the world "to nurture the unspoken dream of heroically making the big leagues" (Fox, 1998).

Unfortunately, the real world is a much harsher environment than the soccer fields of youth. Statistics support the extremely low probability that any single individual will rise to compete in athletics at a professional level (Bracken, 2007). With maturity, as proposed by Tuckman (1974), individuals with sports related career interests may turn to the business of sport to satisfy this desire. Coincidentally, the growth of the sports industry has created a demand for qualified sport industry professionals, and the sport management discipline has been developed to satisfy this demand for specialized practitioners. Curricula, practicums, and internships have been designed to develop the

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This thesis follows the style of the *Sociology of Sport Journal*.

specific competencies necessary for preparation within the sport industry profession.

Problem Statement

Broadly speaking, the ultimate desire of any student or graduate is to find meaningful employment within their respective industry (Cheng & Alcantara, 2007; Kjeldsen, 1990). As an undergraduate student at Mississippi College, this researcher encountered numerous students who exhibited interest in a particular field or profession, yet were uncertain of the most effective and efficient path to follow in the attainment of their desired profession. Student uncertainties ranged from the weight of the academic major in determining future employment opportunities and the identification of industry relevant coursework, to important personal characteristics sought by hiring organizations. In order for students to more completely understand employer expectations regarding preferred academic majors and necessary coursework for employment, guidance and direction is mandatory. Upon completion of academic coursework, inexperienced students may also be unaware of potential factors that can boost initial career development. Therefore, students and young practitioners additionally need to understand proper utilization strategies for improving career development as they participate in internships and embark on early employment.

Yet, the majority of students do not receive the necessary academic advisement at the university level and have usually not formed a deep, diverse network of social contacts by this stage in their career. Grupe (2002) addresses the difficulty of academic advisors to thoroughly address the specific curricular needs of all students. With the growing number of university students and the minuscule number of qualified academic

advisors, advisement time is not only excessively short, but the quality of guidance is compromised due to time constraints (Grupe, 2002). This is also seen in the lack of guidance and direction afforded to individuals entering the workforce. Young, inexperienced employees need direction in determining important factors for current, as well as future career development (Cardwell & Corkin, 2007; Becze, 2007; Conway, 2006). The sport science discipline and the business of sport are without difference in regards to other respective industries. This demonstrates the existence of an issue which is in fact a problem for those pursuing employment in the sport industry: that of establishing and developing the protocols required to gain both exposure to entry level opportunities, as well as providing an avenue for continued progression within the industry in positions of increasing responsibility. With that being said, the purpose of this study was to identify the processes and factors contributing to employment and development in the sport industry.

Current Study

As previously noted, the sport management discipline has stemmed from the explosion of the continually growing sport industry. Throughout the last two decades, the sport management discipline has developed and revised curricula in accordance with industry needs, as well as implemented methods to provide pragmatic experience (internships, practicums, etc.) for students (DeSensi, 1990; Kelley, Beitel, DeSensi, & Blanton, 1994; Li & Cotton, 1996; Foster & Moorman, 2001). In addition to understanding the importance of academic coursework and practical experience, the effects of social factors, such as role models, mentors, and networks, have the tendency

to enhance early career development (Cobb et al., 2006; Knoppers, Meyer, Ewing, & Forrest, 1991; Kropp, 1989; Whitely, Dougherty, & Dreher; 1991). As will be demonstrated in chapter II, a thorough literature research has been conducted and supports the lack of significant evidence of guidance available to the sport science practitioner. As the discipline matures, continued success will be based on the development and retention of individuals well versed in the practical perspective that is realized through employment in the industry. It follows that the general credibility of the sport science discipline, as a recognized career path, will be based on recognition and demonstration of strong performance and contributions of practitioners to the industry. Consequently, it is in the best interest of the industry itself to understand the factors that contribute to enhancing employment and performance, subsequently promoting those as factors to enhance employability and progression within the industry. This research identifies benefits that are derived from planning career exposure and employment. An appreciation of academic preparation, practical experience, and employability would be extremely useful to the aspiring practitioner. Moreover, little evidence exists of practical guidance that could be easily applicable in the development of a future practitioner. This research is developed to help fill that void.

From this researcher's perspective, the principles of qualitative analysis, while theoretically well understood, provide an opportunity to gain experience in both research and analysis, which are not heavily dependent on the more traditional quantitative approach. Evolving sport science discipline research appears to rely on the application of qualitative techniques in an increasing manner (Shortell, 1999; Elliott, Fischer, &

Rennie, 1999). Consequently, this research provided an opportunity to both understand and apply qualitative principles while allowing development of associated expertise by the researcher. Ultimately, employment within the sport sciences is an aspiration. A career which reflects accomplishment, satisfaction, and stability is the goal of continued educational development. Exposure to satisfying opportunities, however, is developed by more than academic preparation. Pragmatically, both practical experience and industry contacts seem to be reasonable components supporting employment. An understanding of the nature and contributing factors for both initial employment and progressive development provide a more complete knowledge of the skills which will be applicable throughout an individual's career.

Contents of Thesis

This thesis is presented in five chapters. Chapter I consists of the introduction and summary overview for the study. Within chapter II, a review of literature provides an evaluation of the current perceptions of factors that are important in acquiring employment within a sport management related field. Factors of importance include career development, academic and vocational preparation for employment, social capital (networking), role models, and mentors. Chapter III documents the approach that will be taken to identify and gather the data for this study, as well as its subsequent analysis. Following an explanation of the methodology, chapter IV will provide the results and discussion of the data obtained from interview participants. Finally, chapter V will address and answer the research questions posed, additionally noting limitations and implications for future research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This research seeks to develop an understanding of the factors which impact early employment trends in the sport sciences. The foundation of this research is predicated upon a sampling of a broad cross-section which then provides the ability to examine and contrast observed characteristics prior to development and evaluation of the research protocol. It seems appropriate to develop an assessment of the currently available literature to establish a baseline for determining the contribution this work provides to the broader industry. Consequently, one must first establish a foundation of the basic principles which contribute to hiring, broadly irrespective of the focus area. This will entail identification and development of several critical factors.

Several basic precepts will be developed from a generic perspective, beginning with career development and subsequently moving to academic and vocational preparation for employment. The impact of social networks, role models, and mentors are developed to establish a basis and understanding for their impact on obtaining employment. Each of these identified areas are also developed specifically in the focused area of sport science. The literature provides numerous examples to establish the potential importance of these related factors in both development and employment in a sport related position.

Career Development

Career development is a lifelong process (Super et al., 1992) that occurs in stages (Super & Hall, 1978). According to Super & Hall (1978), individuals experience

approximately five stages of career development. The teens and twenties are a period of exploration and trial, in an attempt to establish and settle down with a job. As an individual enters his/her thirties, they begin to experience growth, establishing and advancing their career within an organization. By mid-forties, the third stage of career development presents three different paths an individual's career may follow. From this point, a career can continue to experience growth, plateau, or begin its decline. Ultimately, decline will be the final stage of development, as individuals conclude their occupational career and begin to prepare for retirement.

To establish a basis for understanding factors associated with early employment in the sport industry, it is reasonable to first develop a broad general overview of career development. This will subsequently serve as the foundation for additional specificity associated with the subject of this thesis. Therefore, there is some value, prior to full development of this literature review, to establish a working definition and understanding of career development. The literature provides several broad definitions that can be utilized to shape a working definition for purposes of this document.

As defined by Tuckman (1974), career development is "a process which enhances a person's ability to develop and become aware of concepts about himself, develop and become aware of his environment, including occupations, and make career choices" (p. 194). To condense Tuckman's definition of career development, he addresses three primary areas including self-awareness, career awareness, and career decision-making (Tuckman, 1974). An excellent example is available from the research of McWhirter, Nichols, & Banks (1984). This specifically relates to teacher education, but is more

broadly applicable to career self-awareness and development. McWhirter et al. (1984) investigated the factors that contributed to graduates in teacher education who elected to change professions after a short period of practice. In an effort to understand the factors associated with career awareness and development, these researchers implemented a self-awareness program for undergraduate teacher education students. The authors implemented a comprehensive self-assessment of each student, their career plans, and their career expectations in order to establish an undergraduate appreciation of the conditions and situations associated with employment after graduation.

The results of this self-assessment are intriguing, in that approximately 9% of the students elected not to continue in teacher training, with another 8% shifting to a different training program. Additionally, 15% decided to teach a different age or grade level and 50% elected to prepare in an additional subject area not previously planned prior to the self-assessment. This provides an excellent insight into the benefits associated with limited introspective perception and thought regarding future career plans. This is directly applicable to the current research regarding career development. While this type of information is not readily available for the sport science profession, it does provide a broad general view of the benefits that can be realized from early career planning.

Another generally accepted definitional form of career development may be found from a review of Gutteridge (1986). He defines career development as the outcome of actions on career plans as viewed from both individual and organizational perspectives

(Gutteridge, 1986, as cited by Carden, 2007). Subsequently, in the same reference,

Gutteridge expands his definition by stating:

> Career development represents the outcomes created by the integration of individual career-planning activities with institutional career management processes. These outcomes may be described in individual terms, such as better self-understanding and the identification of desired career goals, as well as in terms of organizational results, such as reduced turnover of valued employees and better communication of career opportunities to employees (Gutteridge, p. 54-55, 1986, as cited by Carden, p. 9, 2007).

Pragmatically, Gutteridge (1986) has simply increased the scope of career development

to include an organizational capacity component. For purposes of this research, it is

established that Tuckman (1974) is consistent with Gutteridge's (1986) definition, which

is then expanded to acknowledge an organizational component.

Now that a working definition of career development has been established, it seems

reasonable to focus on the components of both the individual and organizational

perspective. Individually, a number of examples are readily available to establish key

components to be considered from an individual's perspective. Radlinski (2003)

researched athletic directors of two year community colleges. The purpose of her work

was to specifically identify critical factors which contributed towards obtaining this

position. Results from her study reveal several items that are pertinent to this review.

Radlinski (2003) found education, athletic experience, and networking reflected by a

mentor/mentee relationship to be critical success factors. Educationally, a graduate

degree was viewed as highly desirable to establish the academic credibility required for

this leadership position. Coincidentally, prior experience with athletics served to

establish credibility with the athletes. Finally, identification and utilization of an

experienced mentor was instrumental in establishing a role model and defining vocational guidance.

A similar perspective is provided by Smith (2005). Her research surveyed numerous NCAA Division I and II athletic directors for the purpose of understanding characteristics demonstrated by current athletic directors. Smith (2005) found similar results to that of Radlinski (2003) with Division I and II athletic directors. Her results indicated that academic preparation and prior related experience were important components required to obtain this position. Additionally, Smith (2005) discovered that informal networks were an important consideration, both positively and negatively affecting the attainment of an athletic director position. Also, research identified positive benefits realized from identification of a mentor to serve as a role model and counselor for career decisions.

Similar results are demonstrated by research involving a different vocational facet of the sport sciences. Horch and Schutte (2003) presented results involving health and recreation managers. Not surprisingly, business skills are an important characteristic for these more commercially focused positions. Educational backgrounds in business oriented curricula, including accounting, finance, and marketing, were identified as valuable preparatory skills. Additionally, strong communication and social skills were needed to support the public interaction. Another pertinent point identified from this research refers to employment progression within the sport sciences. Interestingly, these results also presented a view of networking within the industry reflected by the statement "Being part of this sport culture is vital to getting a job in such positions" (Horch &

Schutte, p. 73, 2003). Consequently, following a review of the available literature, it is reasonable to group these results into broad categories which include academic/educational background, practical/vocational experience, and networking as significant factors associated with personal characteristics.

To complete the evaluation of the career development definition, propounded by Gutteridge (1986) and accepted for purposes of this discussion, it is appropriate to establish perceptions related to the organizational responsibilities of career development. Gutteridge's (1986) definition acknowledges the organizational benefits realized from employee development. It should be noted, however, that various organizations place different values on the importance of career development among its employees. With that being said, Pazy (1988) provides a broad and inclusive discussion relating the personal and organizational interactions associated with career development. Numerous items related to the organizational component are presented and may be summarized into the following salient points:

- Organizational assessment and related human resource planning

- Opportunity/career path identification

- Training, development, assessment, and rewards

- Balance between work and personal life (family, counseling, etc.)

Interestingly, Pazy (1988) provided research that investigated the relative importance of the personal and organizational responsibilities. A statistical analysis of Pazy's (1988) results establish that the personal component is viewed as more influential than the organizational component on career development. This may be a reflection of the

individual's acknowledgement that a single organization may not provide the full range of development opportunities. Conversely, from the organizational perspective, flexibility may be more limited within the bounds of operating parameters and profitability. From the organizations perspective, joint ownership of career development is useful only if it increases bottom line results.

Educational Preparation for Employment

With its beginnings housed in the physical education department, the sport management curriculum has thoroughly developed throughout the past four decades of existence since 1966 (Parks, Quarterman, & Thibault, 2007). Yet, it was not until the mid 1980's that the degree began to take a similar shape to the sport management programs of present day (Costa, 2005). In a 1984 study that evaluated the current status of sport management curricula, the top six required undergraduate courses consisted of 1) Introduction to Sport Management, 2) Anatomy of Physiology, 3) First Aid & Safety, 4) Exercise Physiology, 5) Kinesiology, and 6) the Sport Management Internship (Case, Fox, & Davis, 1984). However, over the next five to eight years, the sport management curriculum began to place greater importance on foundational business areas (e.g., management, marketing, finance) and interpersonal application areas (e.g., communication, sport sociology, sport psychology) (DeSensi, Kelley, Beitel, & Blanton, 1988; Brassie, 1989; Slack, 1991). By 1993, the NASPE-NASSM (National Association for Sport & Physical Education-North American Society for Sport Management) Joint Task Force created a recommended course path for sport management programs to use

as a guide in determining necessary classes. This includes the following content areas, as provided by the NASPE-NASSM Joint Task Force (1993):

- Behavioral Dimensions in Sport (e.g., history of sport, sociology of sport, legal aspects of sport)

- Management and Organizational Skills in Sport (e.g., management of sport, sport administration, business applications to sport, business statistics)

- Ethics in Sport Management (e.g., business ethics, ethics in sport management, administration of sport)

- Marketing in Sport (e.g., sport marketing, advertising, entrepreneurship)

- Communication in Sport (e.g., organizational communication, public relations, business writing)

- Finance in Sport (e.g., budgeting, accounting, sports finance)

- Economics in Sport (e.g., labor relations, economics of sport, the sport enterprise)

- Legal Aspects of Sport (e.g., corporate/business law, taxation, sport labor relations)

- Governance in Sport (e.g., administration of sport, governance in sport, sport law)

- Field Experience in Sport Management (e.g., internships, practices)

Beyond the mid to late 1990's, however, there does not appear to be a large amount of literature surrounding any changes or necessary adjustments that need to be made to the general curriculum outline. The start of the new millennium offered little to no

literature pertaining to the sport management curriculum. However, from the year 2000, additional research encompassing curricula of sport management programs began to focus on education from a practical experience standpoint.

Vocational Preparation for Employment

As seen above, much time, energy, and thought has been exerted into the molding and shaping of classroom content for occupational preparation. However, classroom coursework alone is no longer sufficient for proper workplace preparation (Overton, 2004). As stated by Fender and Watson in regards to the internship:

> This form of experiential learning allows students to apply their academic training to real-world problems and situations, and frequently makes the classroom material become real instead of just more information that an instructor wants students to learn (Fender & Watson, p. 36, 2005)

The largest concern surrounding the internship experience involves the idea that coordinators are not educationally qualified to oversee students who receive academic credit for the required internship (Young & Baker, 2004). Nevertheless, the internship experience is a necessary addition to any educational curriculum, as students are provided the opportunity to apply learned knowledge for which there is "no substitute" (Fender & Watson, p. 36, 2005).

In sport management specifically, the internship, as viewed by Chouinard (1993), is considered a cooperative education. As he defines it, "Cooperative education is essentially a partnership between education, business, and labor that integrates academic study and classroom theory with on-the-job experiences" (Chouinard, p. 96, 1993). These on-the-job experiences provide students with the opportunity to evaluate the pros and cons of their occupational decision prior to officially accepting a position in the

sport industry (Cunningham & Sagas, 2004). Participating in a sport management internship allows students to understand the basis of their academic education. In essence, students understand why they were required to take courses in marketing, management, finance, ethics, and the like.

In addition to the application of knowledge attained in the academic setting, the internship allows students the opportunity to develop other aspects of their future career. As stated by Cunningham and Sagas, "Positive outcomes include the acquisition of additional human capital by way of experience and training, gaining influential contacts, and developing mentor/protégé relationships" (Verner, 1996, cited by Cunningham & Sagas, p. 146, 2004).

Social Capital

Educational and vocational preparation are well established in the literature as important components of employment within the sport science discipline. Moreover, review identifies additional factors that also contribute to employment. Research documented by Boxman, DeGraaf, and Flap (1991), as well as Lin (1999) explicitly propose that social networks are beneficial in obtaining good jobs and should be regarded as social capital. Thus, while falling outside the direct scope of this research, a solid working definition of social capital must be developed to serve as the basis for discussion of more specific social networking principles. Broadly defined, from a financial/economic perspective, capital is considered to be "1.a.(1): stock of accumulated goods… or 1.a.(2): accumulated goods devoted to the production of other goods" (Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary, 2007). More specifically, social capital, as an

asset, has been approached from different perspectives. Putnam (1995) states that "social capital refers to features of social organization such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit" (p. 67, 1995). Subsequently, Putnam (1995) provides additional guidance, proposing that a structured network and high levels of trust and reciprocity are key requirements for understanding social capital. Putnam's (1995) recognition of the importance of a structured network is reflected by Johnson's (2007) definition from a network analyst perspective:

> Social network analysts consider social capital to consist of resources to which individuals have access through their social relationships. Individuals with high levels of social capital can tap into their social networks to borrow money or learn about new investments or jobs and gain an advantage over others with similar social backgrounds and education (Johnson, p. 884, 2007).

This approach allows social capital to be applied and analyzed with an approach no different than would be applied to any capital investment analysis, whether real, tangible, or intangible in nature. The sociological definition of social capital developed by Glanville (2001) seems to provide the most meaningful view for direct application and understanding to the current research:

> Social capital refers to features of social structure that facilitate the achievement of individual or collective goals (Coleman 1988; 1990, cited by Glanville, p. 2, 2001) More concretely, social capital is defined as investment in interpersonal relationships that can be used for a variety of purposes (Bourdieu 1986; Lin, 2001; Paxton 1999; Woolcock 1998, cited by Glanville, p. 2, 2001).

Lin (1999) observes that social capital serves as an investment with expectations producing positive return. In particular for those seeking an occupation, social capital

produces information, exerts influence on others, and validates social credentials (Lin, 1999).

Social Networks

If one accepts the proposals of Boxman et al. (1991) and Lin (1999) regarding the inter-relationship of social capital and social networking in gaining employment, a working definition of social capital must then be used to shape a view of social networking. Barnes (1954), a social scientist, developed the phrase "social network" after studying social relations in a Norwegian fishing village. Barnes' (1954) results concluded that "the whole of social life could be seen as 'a set of points, some of which are joined by lines' to form a 'total network' of relations" (Barnes, p. 43, 1954). He observed that these ties and relationships might cut across traditional societal boundaries. More recently, the term might be generically established as an association of people drawn together by family, work, hobby, or some other common interest (PC Magazine, 2007). This will serve as a reasonable definition for purposes of this discussion. Thus, intuitively, there must be both perceived and real benefits for participation in a social network. The work of Luthans, Rosenkrantz, and Hennessey (1985), as well as Michael and Yuki (1993), reveal statistical data displaying the increased effects of networking activities on managerial success. The results demonstrated that networking has a significant direct effect on the success rate of managers in a variety of occupations. More supporting data for the benefits of networks is presented by Knoppers et al. (1991):

> Consequently, those who are excluded from informal networks and are in
> managerial and professional careers may be cut off from information that

is significant for enhancing their career enhancement and upward
mobility. Access to informal channels for discovering job opportunities
therefore tends to be associated with high opportunity, and access to
formal channels with low opportunity (p. 3, 1991).

The prior references clearly encourage networking to enhance success, opportunity, and upward mobility. However, these results also clearly imply that failure to participate in networks will result in limiting career potential.

A well-documented example of the impact of networks may be found within the framework of the well established 'old boy's network.' While this may be generically applied to any group of individuals who are well established and resistant to any change in a perceived "status quo," the label has specific connotations for minorities and disadvantaged individuals. Myles (2005) describes the 'old boy's network' as "a group of individuals, usually white men, who take extreme measures to deny women, Blacks, and other minority's entrance into social systems strongly believed to be exclusively for White men" (p. 46, 2005). Consistent with Myles (2005) definition, Smith (2005) presents a more polished definition of the 'old boy's network.' She states that it is "…a gender based network characterized by favoritism in hiring, exclusive support systems, gender-restricted communication, and cronyism" (Smith). While not embraced or endorsed by this researcher, the 'old boy's' network demonstrates, at an extreme, the strength and resilience that may be found in an informal network, to the point of excluding more highly qualified individuals from opportunity.

The sports sciences are not excluded from similar social network factors. Shropshire (1996) and Smith (2005) maintain that individuals in sport, more than any other business, tend to hire their friends. From the beginning of sports in America, personal

networks have controlled the power positions. Burdman (2002) observes that people in intercollegiate athletics have a tendency to recycle each other, thereby dismissing any chance that someone else could be a better candidate. As a result of the perceived and demonstrated benefits, social networking has become a tool for individuals seeking to gain employment in any industry or field of study. Obviously, there is some benefit to understanding how and why this process operates. Two areas closely linked to social networking will also be included for purposes of this review, as they have been identified as strong factors in career development and advancement: mentors and role models.

Role Models

Role models, a related subject to networking, merits some discussion. Published data identifies the importance of role models to career development even within the sport sciences. Moore (2002) researched factors that contributed to career opportunities for collegiate athletic administrators. Effective role models were identified as an important contributing factor to opportunity identification and realization. Additionally, Moore (2002) defines a role model as "an individual whom another person imitates or desires to emulate with respect to actions, values, philosophy, and/or profession" (p. 30, 2002). Moore (2002) continues by stating that "Personal interaction is not essential between the two individuals. Oftentimes, the one who is considered the role model is unaware of this assigned role, and there is no interaction between them" (Shapiro, Haseltine, & Rowe, 1978, cited by Moore, p. 30, 2002).

Implicitly, the role model concept assumes the existence of qualified and competent individuals who can be recognized as examples for developing individuals (Moore, 2002). Some insight associated with use of a role model for personal career development is expanded by Gotwalt & Towns (1986, cited by Smith, 2005). Their work, while focused on gender issues and business administration, provides broad generally applicable insights. According to Gotwalt & Towns (1986, cited by Smith, 2005), successful business administrators have "identified successful leaders, studied where they have been, and observed what they have done to get ahead. Then they set out with the determination …to have the same type of experiences" (Gotwalt & Towns, 1986, cited by Smith, p. 8, 2005). Radlinski's (2003) work acknowledges the importance of suitable role models as athletic administrators to serve as examples for developing individuals.

Additional insights relating to role models in the sport sciences is presented in the work of Kropp (1989). This work studies the characteristics of highly successful (i.e., highest winning percentage) NCAA Division I basketball coaches. Several items related to role models were identified as a result of this work. Specifically, each of the twenty-five coaches had at least one individual providing positive influence on personal career development. Secondly, role modeling was more likely to occur when a common bond, such as age, sex, or race, was identifiable between the observer and the role model. Finally, the vast majority (almost 90%) of these coaches acknowledged the existence of another coach serving as a role model for their career.

Mentors

It is appropriate to include, within the discourse of social networking and its impact

on an individual's career development, the role of mentoring (i.e., a mentor/mentee

relationship). The literature provides considerable support for this networking

component. For example, Smith (2005) identifies mentoring as a recurrent theme in

promotion to Division I and II athletic director positions, playing an important role in

career development. Myles (2005) found that a lack of mentoring inhibited progression

to athletic administration positions. Radlinski's (2003) results also support the view that

mentors, when available, positively impact the individual being mentored. This impact

was demonstrated by individual growth of the mentee and development of an

environment providing network opportunities. Additionally, this research documents that

the vast majority of mentees obtained career benefits from their mentors and

acknowledged that mentoring played an important role in progression into athletic

administration positions.

There is some value for establishing a definition of mentoring for consistency and

common understanding. Moore (2002) proposes that mentors are simply individuals who

have gone out of their way to help others achieve their life goals. Interestingly, the type

of assistance provided was not viewed as important as the specific interaction with the

mentor. Phillips (1977) establishes mentors as "individuals identified by their protégés

as having gone out of their way to successfully help them meet life goals" (Phillips, p. 4,

1977, cited by Moore, p. 27, 2002). Radlinski (2003) researched career development

factors for community college athletic directors. As a result, she maintains that

characteristics of the mentoring relationship should be professionally centered and long-term in nature. The more experienced individual (mentor) provides career-related guidance, assistance, and advice to the less experienced individual (mentee or protégé). The benefits of mentoring to career development and advancement within the sport sciences is supported by the literature. A direct statistical relationship between mentoring and career progress was reported by Whitely et al. (1991). This work also documents the existence of a "coat-tail effect." This refers to the practice of mentors, as they progress organizationally, having the tendency to bring their mentees/protégés with them (Hairston, 2004). Research involving NCAA Division I athletic directors found that 74% of the respondents credited mentors for providing help and assistance in obtaining their current position (Hairston, 2004). This finding is supported by the results from Radlinski (2003) in a study of community college athletic directors, in which a mentor/mentee relationship was identified as an important factor in achieving this position. Work by Weaver and Chelladurai, (1999, cited by Radlinski, 2003) have demonstrated similar benefits for those involved in athletic administration positions. A related observation to the "coat-tail effect" is provided by Allen, Jacobsen, and Lomotey (1995, cited by Hairston, 2004). Their work suggests the practice that older administrators tend to identify individuals (i.e., mentees) that demonstrate characteristics necessary for their ultimate replacement (Allen, Jacobsen, & Lomotey, 1995, cited by Hairston, 2004).

Conclusion of Literature Review

As demonstrated within this chapter, considerable information is available concerning the broad constructs related to career planning, development, and the important sub-components imbedded therein. Of particular interest to this research is the areas not specifically addressed in the literature review. Supporting information for these constructs is available from numerous sources, both within and outside the sport sciences. However, relating to the sport sciences, there is no single representation which reflects a broad cross-section of the discipline with a consistent analysis. The nature of a qualitative analysis is based upon the perceptions and interpretations of a single individual to gather and distill data to salient issues with equal consistency. This consistency of treatment across the broader discipline is what is not available within the scope of the currently published literature. The above mentioned constructs serve as an outline for interview discussion topics conducted with sport industry practitioners. Based upon the review of existing literature, four research questions have been developed to guide this study:

1. How important is a students major in determining his/her future in the sport industry?

2. Regarding coursework, what classes are necessary for individuals seeking employment in the sport industry?

3. How important is the internship in preparing students to become future sport practitioners?

4. How beneficial are social ties in employment and career development in the sport industry?

CHAPTER III

METHOD

The approach utilized for this study is straightforward, applying the techniques of qualitative analysis to access the experiences and knowledge of current practitioners in the business of sport. Qualitative interviewing provides a more in depth assessment of the deeper ideas encompassing employment acquisition in the sport industry (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). In order to expound on the general technique applied to this study; a brief overview of qualitative research will be provided. Additionally, the details concerning participant selection and question development will be addressed in greater detail. Upon completion of all interviews, the accumulated data will be analyzed for common themes, which will then be validated by independent reviewers.

Qualitative Interviewing

Over the years, qualitative research has continued to grow in diversity of methods used (Patton, 1999), as well as amount of credibility earned (Biddle et al., 2001; Patton, 1999). Kaplan and Maxwell (2005) define the goal of qualitative research as "understanding issues or particular situations by investigating the perspectives and behavior of the people in these situations and the context within which they act" (p. 30, 2005). Lincoln (1992) breaks-down qualitative research into two sub categories: human-to-human methods and artifactual methods. The human-to-human methods include "interviewing, participant and non-participant observation, and nonverbal communication," (p. 376, 1992) while artifactual methods involve "the use of documents – such as letters, memoranda, project descriptions, evaluation reports, diaries,

descriptions of curricula, and the like – records, and unobtrusive measures" (p. 376, 1992).

For purposes of this study, the human-to-human interviewing method will be conducted in order to fully utilize the flexibility of the one-on-one interviewing process. Qualitative interviewing allows researchers to better evaluate interviewee experiences, while additionally allowing them to restate events that have occurred throughout their career (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). This is specifically applicable to the current study as it is based on understanding sport industry professionals experiences at varying educational and career stages. This method of qualitative analysis has been effectively used in similar capacities of previous studies. Kram and Isabella (1985) assessed peer relationship support and its affect on various stages of career development. Interviews were conducted to establish an increased comfort level with participants, thus extracting more detailed information regarding peer relationships and their role in career development.

Mincemoyer and Thomson (1998) applied in-depth interviewing in their study of the mentor/protégé relationship. The authors conducted interviews with mentor/protégé pairs in an effort to better understand hindrances of such a relationship, as well as effective techniques supporting a mentoring relationship. As for their reasoning behind the utilization of a semi-structured set of open-ended interview questions, Mincemoyer and Thomson (1998) stated that, "In-depth interviewing allowed for more complete documentation and understanding of the experiences of the mentors and the protégés and the meaning and value they held regarding their mentoring experiences" (Mincemoyer &

Thomson, p. 2, 1998). In a subsequent study, Doell, Bush, & Newburg (2006) examined the effects of resonance-based intervention on the training and performance of four female track athletes. As with Mincemoyer and Thomson (1998), Doell et al. (2006) also utilized open-ended interview questions to gain a more in-depth understanding of the effects of feelings and experiences on the performance of the four female athletes.

Participant Selection/Characteristics

Participants were selected based upon current or previous occupational status and experience in the sport industry. Eight candidates, six male and two female, were identified within five industry categories (professional practitioner, collegiate athletic administration, high-school athletic administration, recreational, and Olympic) to participate in the study. These categories were chosen in an attempt to reach individuals from a wide array of sport industry professions. Specific potential interviewee candidates were identified as the result of several discussions with professors or experienced practitioners currently involved within the author's academic program. Purposive, non-probability sampling was implemented for this study.

Potential participants were e-mailed an information sheet explaining the purpose and procedure of the study. Additionally, participants were e-mailed a confidentiality consent form, along with a copy of the semi-structured interview questions. All identified potential participants elected to participate in this study. Participants were interviewed via phone conversation at their convenience. Their agreement to participate included their agreement for the conversation to be audio-taped and used as data. Throughout the analysis and documentation stages, all participants' names were

substituted with pseudonyms to protect the confidentiality of their responses and individual identity.

Question Development

Nine primary interview questions were developed, with numerous supporting questions for each of the primary questions. These were formed using the pre-determined research questions as guidance and input. The resulting primary and supporting questions were the result of several semi-structured discussions with academic advisors with the author's academic program. These discussions produced and validated numerous types of questions involving the sport management curricula (i.e., major, coursework, internships), career paths of sport industry professionals, and the overall impact of role models/mentors and social networking. The final interview questions were derived from these discussions. Questions posed provided information concerning participants current occupation, level of education earned, initial jobs in the sport industry, career paths, application and value of academic knowledge/experiences, individuals who aided in their career development, and the overall value of social capital in the sport industry. The use of open-ended questions allowed participants to make additional comments concerning valuable knowledge for future sport practitioners. A copy of the interview questions is attached in Appendix B.

Data Collection

Phone interviews were conducted with eight individuals from five different domains of the sport industry. Data for this study was collected via telephone interviews on seven of the eight occasions, with one instance occurring locally in the form of an audio-taped

face-to-face interview. Participants were subsequently contacted and requested to participate in the interview process, utilizing individuals within the author's academic program. Each interview timeframe was targeted for a length of one hour, with actual interview times ranging from twenty minutes to greater than sixty minutes. Although interviews followed a semi-structured format, the nature of each interaction typically leaned more toward a style consistent with an informal conversation. Occasionally, discussions included areas which fell outside the scope of the primary interview questions. As discussed previously, this is well within the methodology and scope to be expected from application of qualitative techniques. This was particularly obvious in situations where the participant had a prior established relationship with the interviewer. However, these effects were reduced by following the pre-defined set of primary and supporting questions which allowed the interviewer to redirect as required.

Data Analysis

In order to facilitate analysis of the collected data, each interview was audio-taped and transcribed verbatim following completion of individual interviews. Transcription of the interviews allowed the researcher to validate the research results through repeated verification of the audio record, and serve as a basis for subsequent data coding in an organized manner. Responses from each participant were copied into an Excel spreadsheet to allow for further organization of the data. Question responses were evaluated, highlighted, and grouped (coded) according to similarity of responses and the emergence of general themes. Additionally, individual responses from each participant to each of the nine interview questions were coded and documented separately. This

allowed the researcher to visually analyze individual participant responses on one document or spreadsheet. By applying these methods of organization, responses could easily be analyzed as a whole, as well as on an individual basis.

Validity and Credibility of Research Analysis

Several techniques were used to demonstrate the appropriate levels of validity and credibility for this work. This includes audio-taping, interview transcription, and debriefing and validation. Each interview was audio-taped with permission of the participant as evidenced by the interview agreement in Appendix B. Audio-taping provides a unique opportunity to capture the environment and spirit of the interaction between the research and the participant. It provides a unique opportunity for the researcher to periodically revisit the discussion to validate perceptions and themes with the spirit of the interview. Of course, for research purposes, audio-taping must be combined with transcription to be fully effective. For purposes of this research, following each interview, the audio-tapes were transcribed in document form and then compared to the audio to ensure accuracy. This provided the ability to thematically group common observations that were useful for investigative research. Transcriptions were compared with audios for consistency and to ensure complete data accuracy.

Qualitatively, the nature of this study and the techniques used to gather data demand a continued focus on the interpretive methodology used for the acquired data. Especially for qualitative analysis, personal bias from the researcher may be introduced to shape results and analysis in directions not entirely consistent with the spirit of the interview. To ensure accurate and representative analysis, this research also reflects the validation

associated with periodic reviews and debriefs involving the author. Individuals within the academic program of the researcher were used to discuss emerging issues and themes, as well as to provide insights relating to interviewing technique and documentation. Along these same lines, as thematic points emerged from the analysis, discussion and revalidation of the research data was conducted by a third party to validate the supporting technical analysis.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This research sought to address several employment factors as addressed by previous and current practitioners in the sport industry. Their perceptions of both academic and vocational preparation will provide invaluable insight to factors affecting employment. Additionally, this provides an opportunity to investigate other potential factors and their prevalence in the experience of the participants. The qualitative nature of this work, with a limited sample set, provides useful insights supporting conclusions and, ultimately, areas for additional research. Completion of the qualitative methodology applied to evaluate the data has identified several themes which will be discussed in additional detail in this chapter.

These themes revolve around several areas: academic curriculum, academic major, vocational factors affecting employment, social networking, role models, and mentors. Academic curriculum was identified by the participants as a minor contributing factor to gaining employment in the industry, with business and communication courses providing the most valuable academic preparation for future employment. Participants identified the academic major as lacking in importance for obtaining employment in the sport industry. Additionally, participants provided insights supporting a greater importance applied to practical experience than academic major when selecting candidates for employment. The benefits of networks, role models, and mentors were also supported by the results. According to the participants of this study, it appears that

these findings are common across the sport science specializations. Consequently, this establishes the research as generally applicable to anyone considering employment in the sport industry, regardless of potential specialization.

Academic Curriculum

The participants demonstrated a broad variety of academic backgrounds. Educational backgrounds of participants, presented in Table C-1 in Appendix C, varied considerably. Consequently, no single thread of academic coursework was specifically investigated. However, five of the eight participants identified specific business oriented classes that were useful in their sport based employment. Figure D-1 in Appendix D identifies several areas from the participant's academic preparation that have been useful in their career. Most of the interviewees participated in some type of vocational internship or practicum while in college. Six of the eight participants identified the benefit of internship/practical experience gained while in college. Four of the eight identified business oriented classes as valuable. Complete specifics of all participants' responses is provided in Figure D-1 in Appendix D. In particular, business courses mentioned included finance, marketing, sport marketing, accounting, statistics, economics, law, and organizational development. An equal number of participants felt that marketing and communication academic preparation were also important. With the exception of the internship, there seemed to be no clear consistency or significance with academic preparation. Additional specificity is available from the interviews to provide the perspective of the participants. Relating to business, Rodney, who worked as a professional practitioner in the sport industry for nearly two decades, stated:

> I think it's great that I was a business major. I like the fact that I had principles of marketing, principles of accounting, economics 101, economics 102, most feared player in the league, statistics. I'm glad that I had those kind of core curriculum business courses.

Sarah, who works in recreational sports, echoed similar sentiments regarding business classes:

> I think the classes that were very beneficial were the sport finance classes, marketing, sport marketing classes. Also, I took a couple of classes through the business school on organizational development….and then there was also one specific to sport through the sport management program that I think helped prepare me for this job.

From a different perspective, Garrett, a journalism major who is currently employed with a national athletic training organization, did not express the same enthusiasm for his coursework as did previous interviewees. With regards to his specific major of journalism, Garrett expressed the lack of benefit realized from the classroom:

> I would say, pretty much, my entire education…was done outside the classroom. I mean, I took…communication classes and they were rather easy and they were something which I had to do to get the degree…so the classroom experience was of minimal impact to what I really needed.

Marty, currently a high school principal with a background in athletic administration (athletic director) and a masters in education administration, echoed Garrett's sentiments regarding the applicability of learned knowledge from the classroom environment. In fact, Marty put it quite bluntly with regards to the relevance of academic coursework to everyday tasks:

> Well, it ain't gonna be any courses. Even administrative courses I took to be a principal, 20 years ago, never helped me for this job I took 5 years ago. I really don't remember anything from those programs…

Jacob, who also obtained a masters in education, did not exhibit the same ambivalence as Marty towards academic coursework. His response notes the applicability of general principles as he obtained employment in a sport related position:

> A lot of the class work that we did was related to middle school, high school, administrative jobs, but a lot of the basic foundation type stuff translated over into higher education and athletic administration, so there were definitely some key principles and things that I was able to kind of move over and modify as I adjusted to being a collegiate athletic director.

From an academic perspective, classes that provided hands-on exposure were found to be most useful in preparation for sport oriented positions. This may also be due to several of the participants receiving educational background outside the specific sports science academic area. Moreover, of the participant responses, both business oriented and communication oriented classes were the most useful in application to sport employment.

Academic Major

Each participant also provided insights regarding the importance of the academic major when selecting an individual for employment. Surprisingly, five of the eight interviewees were not concerned with the major of a potential employee. Both Matthew and Ginger agree that the major was not of utmost importance when hiring employees onto their staff:

> Not when it comes to majors. No, I'm looking at the experience and trying to decipher whether they had real responsibility or they were just kind of a gopher type person.

> Matthew

> I don't remember it (major/degree) being a major factor. It may have when I was seeing through those different resumes…

                                                                        Ginger

Jacob and Marty echo the sentiments of Matthew and Ginger, yet, as athletic

directors, they encourage their employees to attain additional education beyond

the bachelor's degree. Of interest, both individuals had indicated the nature of the

specific major was not an important factor. Thus, their comments seem to relate

specifically to the broadening and experience obtained from pursuing graduate

studies, rather than the specific major per se:

> I encourage our assistant coaches and our assistant A.D.'s to really try and
> get a graduate degree. …I'm not as caught up in what that degree is in. It's
> important, but I think a lot of the graduate degree things nowadays is kind
> of the way to narrow down the field, first and foremost, but then just
> making sure that people have an understanding that they're always trying
> to learn something new or that they understand the value of continuing
> education.

                                                                        Jacob

> As an athletic director, I really think you need a masters, you know what
> I'm saying. I guess more experience would be more important.

                                                                        Marty

Marty continued by additionally noting that whatever an individual's major may

have been, (e.g., business, english, communications), it does not make a

difference in his hiring practices. Two of the remaining three interviewees were

indifferent to the major of job candidates. A general sentiment might well be

represented by that of Sarah, who states:

> For this job, a lot of times we prefer someone had a degree in sport
> management or recreation management, but if they don't, then that's fine.
> As long as it's something that is transferable to the job that we do here.
> So, if they have a degree in higher ed. or student personnel administration,

that will work as well. More so, looking for the experience that they have working with students.

This research also sought to understand the importance that employers place on academic backgrounds and majors in selecting a candidate for a position in sport related employment (as seen in Table E-1 in Appendix E). Five of the eight participants indicated that academic background was not a deciding factor in employee selection. Two of these five individuals had obtained a sport oriented degree and, as identified earlier, four of the eight participants had received a sport oriented degree. Consequently, fifty percent of the individuals with a sport oriented academic background did not feel that a specific sport related major was the primary factor for employment. Of the fifty percent who did identify this as important, no strong responses were evidenced that this would be a primary deciding factor. Comparatively, four of the participants did not reflect an academic background with a sport orientation. Not surprisingly, based upon their own academic background and subsequent employment, three of these indicated that the academic major was not of primary importance.

Vocational Factors Affecting Employment

Contrary to the view of academic curriculum associated with earning a degree, internships and practical experience were viewed quite differently by interviewees. It was demonstrated by the research that degree programs providing internships and practical hands-on experience were valued by the participants' significantly more than traditional coursework. As discussed in the prior section, six of the eight participants identified internships and practical experience as being the most important academic experience gained from their coursework. This establishes the value of practical

experience as part of a balanced curriculum preparing individuals for sport oriented

employment. Five of the participants completed internships in college. Four of these five

(80%) indicated that the internship was valuable. Three of the five that completed

internships were required as part of their degree to participate in an internship. Two of

the three reported that there was value in an internship.

Therefore, there is benefit to gaining a broad understanding of the nature of influence

resulting from internships and practical experiences. As Rodney states:

> …The classroom is great, but there's nothing like real life learning, there's
> nothing like traveling, seeing the way other people live outside of our own
> little communities. You can't put a price tag on that. So I would say the
> internship is pretty high on the list.

Rodney also comments on the experience that a student should expect to receive when

interning for, in this case, a minor league sport organization:

> …Wow, do you get involved in so many things; from selling the tickets, to
> ripping the tickets, to pulling the tarp onto the field, to having lunch with
> the owner, to picking players up at the airport. You do so many different
> things, you work so many different departments…So that's kind of what
> the internship did; it exposes you to reality as opposed to theory.

This statement by Rodney aligns with the study conducted by Cunningham and

Sagas (2004) concerning an intern's experience prior to officially accepting a

position. Rodney's remark also addresses the previously referenced cooperative

education (Chouinard, 1993), by noting the integration of theory and on-the-job

training.

As described by Rodney, the internship experience appears spontaneous and

exciting. However, does it truly prepare students for a future career in the sport

industry? According to Sarah, her internship in intramurals was more beneficial

for her occupational preparation than her earlier graduate assistantship position:

> The internship prepared me because my graduate assistantship at
> (University name) was more centered around…developing a new rec
> center,…so it was more of a research type graduate assistantship, not
> practical experience like if I was the intramural G.A. or the sport club
> G.A. or the marketing G.A. in athletics. So my internship was kind of
> outside of that…I did my internship with intramurals so, that definitely
> prepared me for this job.

Matthew, an Assistant Athletic Director of Event Management at a Division I university,

had this to say in regards to his internship preparation with a minor league hockey team:

> Yeah, it really has. I think it was an experience to help me understand,
> 'Right now you run events, so you have the event people and then you
> have the fundraisers and you have the marketers…' I understand what the
> fundraising staff for our department does and needs to do and its important
> and what time they spend doing things because I was doing that stuff as an
> intern with the 'Tigers' (Name of Team). Just knowing the bigger picture
> is really where those experiences helped me.

In addition to the preparation an internship offers students, its ability to help an

individual find her/his initial job in the sport industry is arguably of equal importance.

Ginger makes note of the internship as a stepping stone to an initial job in the sport

industry:

> I think it's probably a foot in the door and then you still obviously have to
> do the work, but I do think it makes a huge difference, again probably the
> reason that "Q" even looked at my resume or interviewed me is cause I
> had interned here and even though he personally hasn't worked with me,
> again it's very easy for him to go talk to people and say, 'Hey, is this
> person good or not, tell me.'

Ginger also notes the advantages of subsequent employment with the organization an

individual conducts her/his internship with:

They can find out more about you, more than just what's on paper, on your resume, that you went to school here, you had this job or you've done xyz kind of thing. I think they can find out more about your work ethic and all that good stuff that really doesn't show up on a resume. So, I think it totally helps to get your foot in the door and its networking in general and I do think it makes a big difference.

The internship preparation also provides students with an understanding of the qualities and characteristics employers' value in their employees. When asked about specific characteristics of future employees, seven of the eight participants identified 'experience' as a characteristic they value in determining a future hire. As seen in the quotes below, employers are looking for individuals with relevant experience to the accompanying positional requirements:

…But for me it was… looking for people with event experience, whether that was a job or an internship or something they did through a class or something like that. So I was looking more for that experience…

Ginger

…More so, looking for the experience that they have working with students.

Sarah

Certainly, they need to have a basic amount of experience and they need to be able to show what they've done, so you can verify that they've done the writing and the work…

Garrett

I don't know if it's a real factor or not, but usually I'm looking at some experience.

Matthew

Prior work history, length of service…

Greg

> …I guess you're looking for at least that paperwork, that reference, that experience, that degree to begin with… And I guess the second thing is… you're looking for that experience in athletics. You want to call those references and see… what people say about them… just talking to them; kind of feel like there on the same page I am, you know.
>
> Marty

> I really try to look at their experience and I may ask on ways, especially if it is somebody just coming out of a graduate program, how they envision utilizing whatever they got their degree in, how would that translate into athletic administration or trying to get them to think like an administrator and how they can utilize what they've been taught over the course of time.
>
> Jacob

Based upon this research, the importance of experience is inescapable when seeking initial or subsequent employment. In addition to experience, each interviewee made specific requests as to the preferred attributes they seek in future employees. For instance, Sarah's involvement with the recreation department requires her to hire individuals who have the ability to work well with students. Therefore, she places a great deal of importance on hiring an employee who 'fits' with the students and the organization:

> Probably an important thing is whether or not they will be a good fit for our department, if they will be a good fit for our students. Definitely look for someone who has a strong background in student development because the majority of our day-to-day job involves working with students. So making sure someone has a descent background in student development.

As a Director of Communication and Special Projects, Garrett, contrary to Sarah, was searching for a multitude of traits from his potential employees:

> …In our business, you have to have a very outgoing, competitive, hard-working, enthusiastic-type attitude about life and about your work. And in some cases it helps if you have a passion for the sport you're working in.

> And I think my best hires are people that have figured out that this is what they want to do and that they're willing to do whatever it takes to get the job done. …I think an attitude and certainly the confidence to work hard are things that are important.

As with Garrett, Matthew primarily focused on personality in hiring individuals for positions encompassing athletic event management:

> I really look at personality. Obviously, you have to go through the resume to see the personality when you bring them in for interviews…

Building on the necessity of passion within the workplace, Marty would concur with Garrett, additionally noting the importance of employee promotion of the mission and vision of an organization or institution:

> …I guess just talking to them; kind of feel like there on the same page I am, you know. Whether they believe in what they doing or they got the right frame of mind, the same vision; you share the same vision and mission for that program. Well, you almost can't teach somebody your vision and your mission, you know what I'm saying. They got to have that in their hearts; it's gotta be part of their character. I guess that's what we're looking for…

Jacob's requirements for employees take a somewhat different approach, in that the religious denominational affiliation of his institution raises the bar for ethical standards of coaches and staff in his athletic department:

> …One of the key things we look for our people (to) have a strong, I guess, moral foundation and people who have an understanding of what (Name of University) is about. …We spend a lot of time kind of looking at 'are they organized, how do they address conflict, do they handle people well, can they communicate well.'

Jacob also places great emphasis on the importance of communication. In particular, within an athletic department, there are varying degrees of diversity

encompassing players, coaches, donors, staff, and the many other individuals

directly and indirectly involved with the department:

> Obviously, one of the things I strongly believe in looking at hiring anybody, whether it be an administrative position or a head coaching position, is the communication aspect has to be there. They have to understand how to go out and, not only relate to their student-athletes, but relate to the million dollar donor who may pop-in and see them in the office and be able to manage those two types of personalities and converse with them in a way that we're building relationships and partnerships with a lot of different people.

One final note of importance concerning the attributes of job candidates is the

grade point average (G.P.A.). Matthew briefly mentions the G.P.A. and its weight

in his hiring process:

> The G.P.A. and the major isn't the first thing that I look at, but it certainly helps. It would help a candidate if it's good.

Rodney echoes the sentiments of Matthew, yet includes a more detailed

description of the G.P.A.'s effect on candidate marketability for the industry, as

well as post-graduate studies:

> I'm gonna tell ya that your G.P.A. has to do two things…Number 1, it's got to help you get your first job out of college. If you have a 2.13 and, because of the reasons I just mentioned, you can't get hired, guess what, you failed yourself. You might have your degree and you got the seal, but obviously it's affecting your career. Number 2, your G.P.A. has got to get you, if you choose to do this, to the graduate program you wanna get in. So, they're the type of things that we're looking for, but most importantly, you give me a smart guy or girl that wants to work hard, that is personable, polite and professional; that person will get hired in any era.

Social Networking, Role Models, and Mentors

Interviewees were asked to answer a series of questions concerning the

attainment of their initial, as well as subsequent jobs in the sport industry. Of

particular interest was the manner in which participants discovered their jobs or

obtained employment opportunities. Sarah, who discovered her initial job

opportunity at a national conference, had this to say concerning what helped her

obtain that first job:

> …One of the professional staff at (Name of University) encouraged me to apply because he knew some of the people and knew about the program and thought that I would be a good fit for the department, so he encouraged me to apply, to go to the informational sessions (at the conference) and all that, and I did and I applied and came in for the interview, went through that whole process and so I got hired. I think the networking, the fact that I was working at (University name), the fact that they knew, were aware and familiar with this department of professionals here, gave me the push to apply.

Sarah identifies the importance of encouragement and guidance from experienced

staff members, as well as the weight that networking played in notifying current

industry practitioners of her employment intentions and availability. In a similar

manner, Rodney expansively reiterates the role and impact that more experienced

mentors and social networking played in creating a stepping stone for him as a

young practitioner:

> There was no advertisement at that time… I just pursued them. I just sat down with one of my professors and my father and we wrote, for the first time, a cover letter resume reference. And there was a guy who was the executive secretary or the sports information director…And I said, "Look, here's who I am, here's what I'd like to do, I just want the experience of working in the front office, can you give me any advice?"… He gave me one representative from (each of the four "Name of City" teams) and the one he gave me from the "Majors," who really mentored and championed me through my career and is almost seen… as an older brother…was from the same (University Name) as me... So I made "Bob's" cover letter a little different than the other three… And that, I think, that's probably the reason he asked me to come down… and he said, "I'd like you to interview."… And he said, "We're gonna bring you onboard in August.

Although Ginger decided to apply for a position away from her internship

organization, she still utilized the social ties obtained from previous work

experience. In regards to her initial job as an assistant to a strength and

conditioning coach, Ginger states:

> I worked with a strength and conditioning coach… He and I went down to (City) to open a clinic with another doctor; it was a performance center. So I worked for him for a couple years in the spring… and the reason, actually, I had met him was previously, like two jobs before I had worked at a doctors office and he had known that doctor, so I kind of met him through that and had that connection. So when he decided to expand his business and open his own clinic, I was actually working up at (Name of Business) doing group and corporate service sales and he contacted me up there and made an offer that I couldn't refuse…

Matthew, whose initial occupation was an extension of his graduate assistantship,

mentioned the benefits of his first employer as a social contact:

> The guy who hired me as the G.A. in intramurals…He was the guy who ran intramurals and he hired the G.A.'s... He was the one who was involved in football games and basketball games here at (University Name) and the state high school track meet and a bunch of other state high school events and so I think knowing him and helping him run those different events and those different games and stuff like that certainly helped me.

Marty also makes note of the relationship he maintained with his high school

basketball coach, as well as a lifetime of social ties from his father, who was

involved with athletics in a variety of fashions throughout the community:

> I guess the athletic director at, my basketball coach, at (Name of School). He's the guy, you know, that got me on the track I wanted to go on. He kind of (said), "I think you could be a good coach and a teacher… Here's what ya gotta do and here's how to go about it" and gave me good advice. You know, I guess, too, my dad… I knew a lot of other high school coaches, high school athletic directors, you know, through my dad because he was a high school basketball referee and umpire. So, you see those people once in a while, you know what I'm saying, or you run across them

and you ask them, "What do you have to do and what's the best way to do it." They give advice… I had a bunch of opportunities, when I first came out of high school and my first couple years at (Name of School) because of knowing people and having some connections.

According to the results thus far, networks, role models, and mentors play an important role in early career development. Sarah, Rodney, Ginger, Matthew, and Marty provide us with examples of role models and mentors who were strategic in guiding them towards the achievement of their career development and goals. This supports the definition of mentors formulated by Moore (2002) and the work of Radlinski (2003) involving the positive impact mentors provide for mentee networking opportunities, as well as career growth, development, and benefits mentors provide their mentees.

On the other hand, Garrett experienced obstacles in obtaining his initial job in journalism, eventually forcing him to branch out into an entrepreneurial venture. However, from his previously formed social ties, Garrett found employment through a role model from his earlier athletic years:

…I was looking to be a newspaper reporter and didn't initially have any immediate success getting hired as a news reporter, so I ended up starting a wrestling magazine with my college coach who's a very successful, respected coach within wrestling... And we started a wrestling magazine called (Name of Wrestling Magazine). And we worked and tried to promote that publication and that business for five years.

Although Garrett did not experience much success with the magazine, he did utilize a previous contact to partner with in his entrepreneurial venture. This contact was more than a partner for Garrett, in that he provided support, encouragement, and direction:

He didn't teach me how to do the job, but he gave me an opportunity to do it. He thought it would be a good investment to start a wrestling magazine that had a lot of technical knowledge in it. We actually developed a pretty good product, but at the time, we weren't able to make it work within the market that we were. Go back and do an analysis of what we did right and what we didn't do right, but the bottom line was that we didn't turn in into a profitable business. But because he believed in me, he knew I was a good reporter, he knew I knew wrestling and he also got along with me and had faith in me, gave me an opportunity to enter the wrestling and sports market. That's certainly a very valuable person for me.

Failure to capitalize on his social contacts would have greatly limited his career development, potentially creating an unpleasant extended period of unemployment. Thus, Garrett's career path is a prime example of the opportunities that social ties can produce, supplementing the work of Knoppers et al. (1991). Based upon the data, it is apparent that networking, role models, and mentors are important factors in obtaining initial employment in the sport industry. However, the results also reveal the ongoing influence networks and mentors play in gaining subsequent employment.

Following her initial job as an assistant at a strength and conditioning clinic, Ginger utilized social ties retained from her internship to assist in acquiring an interview:

…So I started looking at jobs outside of (City) and had still kept in touch with people from (Organization Name) where I had interned at that time, probably five, six years prior when I was in graduate school and somebody had told me about a job that was open here in inline department running events, so I applied and got an interview and I think just even getting the interview I would attribute to having done an internship here and having people that were still here that knew me and knew the job I had done during my internship.

The individual who headed the hiring committee was not a direct boss in her previous academic internship. However, Ginger notes the importance of creating

and then utilizing a solid network of contacts to speak on one's behalf for an

employment opportunity:

> I think it was really more feedback from just other people in general who I had worked with at (Organization Name). They probably relayed to him what it had been like to work with me or, hopefully, that I had done a good job. And, again, I think that helped even get the initial interview; you know I had a phone interview in (City) and then I came up here and interviewed with him and that worked out well, obviously, because I got that job.

Garrett continued to use contacts for various jobs throughout the next few years of his

career, until he stumbled upon an opening provided by a mentor who decided to resign

from his current position:

> The Director of Communications at (Organization Name), a guy named (Name), who was a friend and one of my peers, one of my mentors actually, left his position at (Organization Name), which was a governing body for amateur (Sport) in the United States... So, I heard about it and I applied for the position and because I'd, for five years, been running a national wrestling magazine, as well as the contacts I had through, not only my partner (Name), but through my part-time work with the (Association Name), I was granted an interview, given an opportunity to apply for that job… I decided to take the position and that was in May of 1988. And I just finished my 19th year with (Organization Name). So, that position allowed me an opportunity to develop my career within one company and I have stayed in (Organization Name) since.

In this particular situation, the benefits of Garrett's social ties are two fold. First, the

initial tie with the mentor leaving the position gave him an advantage, as the mentor had

exclusive rights to speak on his behalf with the hiring committee. Secondly, Garrett had

contacts through his partner at the magazine, as well as other individuals, who he had

worked for on a part-time basis, to speak on his behalf as outside reference sources.

Garrett's career path is also a partial example of the "coat-tail effect" proposed by Allen

et al. (1995, cited by Hairston, 2004). Although not necessarily devised by Garrett's

mentor, his relationship with and knowledge of Garrett's personal characteristics certainly lead us to believe that his support was placed upon Garrett's candidacy as his replacement.

Although Garrett did not have the benefit of an internship or graduate assistantship to aid him in obtaining initial or subsequent employment, his social ties have afforded him a position now held for nearly two decades. Marty, like Garrett, did not participate in any form of internship training; however, he used his fathers coaching network to help obtain subsequent jobs following his initial position as a high school basketball coach. In particular, Marty landed his next job as an athletic director by way of a contact he had through the hiring institution:

> …the A.D. job at (Name of School) and I guess I found out about it, I guess just through personal contracts, it was actually (Name)'s dad. (Name of School) was looking for an A.D.…

Conclusion of Results

This work identifies that the specific academic major does not appear to be a significant factor in obtaining employment in the sport industry. The importance of an internship was identified by a majority of the participants as the single most key academic exposure which was useful in gaining employment. Academic background obtained through business and communication courses were useful to the participants, regardless of major, but not as much as the internship. Networking does appear to play a role in future job identification, and several of the participants have utilized mentors and role models in enhancing their career development.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

This study has been framed by four questions that have served to guide this effort

from its inception through to its conclusion. As previously mentioned, of particular

interest to this research is the areas not specifically addressed in current or previous

literature. Supporting information for the constructs utilized is available from numerous

sources, both within and outside the sport sciences (Radlinski, 2003; Smith, 2005; Horch

and Schutte, 2003; Pazy, 1988; Fender & Watson, 2005; Cunningham & Sagas, 2004;

Luthans, Rosenkrantz, & Hennessey, 1985; Michael & Yuki, 1993; Burdman, 2002;

Kropp, 1989; Whitely et al., 1991; Hairston, 2004). However, relating to the sport

sciences, there is no single representation which reflects a broad cross-section of the

discipline with a consistent analysis. The nature of a qualitative analysis is based upon

the perceptions and interpretations of a single individual to gather and distill data to

salient issues with equal consistency. This consistency of treatment across the broader

discipline is not available within the scope of the currently published literature. The

previously mentioned constructs have served as an outline for fully addressing the four

research questions. Consequently, it is appropriate to establish the results of this work in

relation to the guiding research questions.

Research Question 1

How important is a students major in determining his/her future in the sport industry?

As provided in Chapter IV, the participants reflected several academic majors. While

several were received in a sport science background, many others leveraged academic

degrees from other areas into meaningful employment in the sport industry. More interesting, however, is the broad general feedback from a majority of the participants, which indicates that academic degree does not, as itself, serve as a discriminator for employment. This was received from both sport science majors and non-sport science majors alike. This broad response implies that the successful factors may in fact be more basic than those obtained or developed through a particular academic program. Consequently, if academic background of itself is not an employment discriminator, then other factors must contribute most significantly to employment decisions. Based upon this research, the academic major is not a significant factor in gaining employment.

Research Question 2

Regarding coursework, what classes are necessary for individuals seeking employment in the sport industry?

Although academic major does not serve as a key employment factor, response was considerably more direct relating to academic classes. Each participant identified and discussed either particular classes or disciplines which they viewed as contributing to employability, both of themselves and others. Interestingly, these results also tend to provide an explanation for the lack of importance on a specific major. In light of this, these were represented by the participants as more of a required skill set rather than specific collegiate classes. As reported in Chapter IV, both business and communication classes were amongst those more highly recommended by the participants, thus supporting the recommended content areas of the NASPE-NASSM Joint Task Force (NASPE-NASSM Joint Task Force, 1993). Occasionally, participants would identify

specific useful classes. However, when observed across a broader level, these results should be viewed as a perceived need of business skills, which should include a background in the routine areas (marketing, accounting, finance, economics, etc.). Business skills and background, regardless of formal academic major, should be viewed as an important factor.

Along the same lines, several participants identified communication skills as contributing towards employability. Particularly, this expression represents a skill set to allow meaningful interaction with others. When combined, both business and communication skills, were specifically identified as beneficial. This likely reflects a commercial characteristic inherent in the sport science discipline. Specifically, one that requires the ability to understand basic business principles, whether to develop a business model, understand a balance sheet, or allocate funds between athletic programs. Coincidentally, this also involves the ability to effectively communicate thoughts, feedback, and ideas to others, whether financial, performance-based, or academic in nature. A background providing exposure to basic business principles and effective communication skills are important courses supporting employment in the sport industry.

Research Question 3

How important is the internship in preparing students to become future sport practitioners?

As previously stated, several of the participants did not reflect a sport management emphasis in their collegiate training. However, 75% of the participants (as seen in Figure D-1 in Appendix D) indicated that this was an important factor in obtaining

employment, exceeding the impact of both academic major and curriculum. The logical conclusion supports a perception that the internship of itself provides the individual with familiarity and real world experience, thus confirming the studies of Fender & Watson (2005) and Overton (2004). The specific nature of the internship experiences (while outside the direct scope of this research) did not seem to be viewed as important as the benefits from simple industry interaction at any level. Internships and practical experience was identified as the single most important factor contributing to employment in the sport industry.

Research Question 4

How beneficial are social ties in employment and career development in the sport industry?

Chapter II provides a broad review of both the positive and negative effects characterizing social capital and networks. This research identified numerous situations where contacts identified through networking were instrumental in helping participants obtain employment. No single vehicle seems to characterize the network interaction which might include contacts developed through internships, prior working relations, or academia. It seems that an individual's identification and selection for a specific position was directly influenced by networking, although several of the participants indicated that results were the controlling factor for continued employment. This confirms the statistical work of Luthans, Rosenkrantz, and Hennessey (1985), as well as Michael and Yuki (1993), displaying the increased effects of networking activities on career development. Networks are significant contributors towards obtaining employment in

the industry; however, participants indicate performance serves as the basis for continued employment. Mentors and role models also appeared to play an important role in the career development of several participants, thus supporting the work of Moore (2002), Radlinski (2003), and Smith (2005). These mentors and role models specifically affected decisions relating to internships, career choice, and organizational exposure. The benefit from this relationship was characterized by guidance, encouragement, and career counseling.

Implications

This research provides important insights to individuals contemplating employment in the sport industry. Succinctly put, individuals pursuing employment in the sport industry should focus on obtaining business and communication skills, with less emphasis on the specific major. Moreover, the value of an internship and practical experience should not be understated when seeking employment. Additionally, the benefits of a mentor/role model relationship should be valued, as they provide an opportunity for demonstration of real world, practical application of principles useful to the practitioner.

Prior research has focused on evaluating the employment factors for specific areas of the industry (Horch & Schutte, 2003; Radlinski, 2003; Smith, 2005). This work represents the views of a broad cross-section of practitioners in varying sport industries. Rather than the focused perspectives available through the literature on individual positions, the results acquired from a broad cross-section tend to support that there are overarching factors related to employment that are broader than an individuals sub-

discipline focus. The current view, based on this research, encourages development of specific skills related to business and communications, the value of practical experience, and the benefits of establishing and utilizing networks for continued exposure to new employment opportunities. This study supports the position that guidance and direction are invaluable tools for career development, regardless of specific area of specialization.

Limitations

As with any other study, limitations are an unavoidable aspect of all conducted research. Nevertheless, this study produces three primary limitations. Although the application of qualitative analysis was an effective methodological strategy, additional quantitative analysis should be considered for a more detailed understanding of the current study. Additionally, a quantitative analysis may better develop the relative importance and impact of the combined constructs implemented for this research. Another factor affecting this study is the small sample size of interview participants. The small number of participants in this study limits the research from gaining a multitude of responses. However, as earlier noted, qualitative analysis is designed to gather a more in-depth, detailed account of interviewee experiences, rather than a broad generalization as typically seen with quantitative analysis.

Finally, the broad nature of industry sub-disciplines surveyed (e.g., professional practitioner, collegiate athletic administration, high school athletic administration, recreational, and Olympic) limited the individual detail provided for each category. Focus on a specific sub-discipline would have allowed for a more detailed analysis, thus accruing the amount of acquired information and knowledge. However, the purpose of

this specific implementation was to gain a broad perspective on the sport industry as a whole. Different perspectives from various sport practitioners was desired for complete, overall coverage of the industry.

Future Research

Additional areas of potential interest were also identified that might easily impact those seeking future employment. While outside the general scope and nature of this study, several of the participants indicated that some type of graduate level degree was encouraged for continued employment and development. Although this study was not focused on assessing specific academic qualifications for employment, it should be of interest that 87.5% (seven of the eight) of the participants did acquire graduate degrees. Consequently, a question for future analysis might reflect potentially changing perceptions regarding the pragmatic entry level academic degree and whether this has migrated from the traditional baccalaureate to an advanced graduate degree expectation within the sport industry.

Another area of particular interest relates to the perceived "coat-tail effect" that emerged from the literature. Some participants in this review had experienced promotion within their current employing organization. While not directly included within the framework of this analysis, there would likely be benefit from an impartial assessment of the factors which contributed to this progression. More specifically, an assessment of the specific contributing factors, including more conventional succession planning or the literature documented "coat-tail effect," should be useful to help entering practitioners

establish developmental plans relating to both employer (organizational), as well as

managerial (networking) opportunities.

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APPENDIX A

Semi-structured interview questions

1. What is your current job/job title?

2. Do you have any undergraduate or graduate degrees? If so, what programs were they in and from what institution did you earn them?

3. How did you get your first job in the sport industry? That is, where did you find out about the job? What factors compelled you to apply? What factors do you believe ultimately led the organization to hire you? For example, was it a certain type of training or experience you had on your resume? What factors led you to accept the position?

4. Please trace the steps you have taken in your career in the sports industry from after you took your first job in the industry all the way to the job that you have now. How did you find out about each job? What factors compelled you to apply? What factors do you believe ultimately led the organizations to hire you in those positions? What factors led you to accept the positions?

5. How well did your degree programs prepare you for the job(s) that you have held in the sport industry? Were there any specific courses or school experiences that stand out as having been very beneficial and/or relevant for the tasks your job requires?

6. Were you required as part of your degree curriculum to complete an internship? If no, did you complete an internship on your own time? If yes to either question, where did you complete your internship? Do you think your completion of the internship helped prepare you for the jobs you have held throughout your career in

the sport industry? Do you think your experiences in the internship helped you get one or more of your jobs? If so, how do you believe the internship helped you get your jobs?

7. Are there certain people throughout your career that you believe your association with them helped you get a job or get promoted from one job to the next? If so, please elaborate on the role this/these individuals played in terms of your career opportunities and experiences. For example, did they provide you with information and/or advice about career opportunities? Did they speak on your behalf or serve as key references?

8. Does your job now, or have you ever held a position, that required you to recruit and/or hire candidates for jobs? If so, what specific things might you look for in candidates? Were you more likely, less likely, or indifferent toward the type of degree a candidate held (i.e., sport management, business, other)? Were your decisions ever influenced either positive or negatively by who candidates listed as their references? If you personally knew one of their references or someone they knew, do you think that might have influenced your decision to hire/not hire someone?

9. In your experiences throughout your career, do you perceive "who you know" to be an important factor in getting a job or at least a job interview? Do you believe a person is more likely to succeed in a career in support based more upon who they know rather than what they know?

APPENDIX B

Information Sheet

You have been asked to participate in a research study regarding the opportunities and career paths in sport management. You were selected to be a possible participant because of your success and position in the sport industry. A total of ten (10) people have been asked to participate in this study. The purpose of this study is to identify the processes and factors contributing to employment in the sport management discipline.

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to answer various questions regarding your career in sport management. Although the use of an audio tape is optional, it would be beneficial to the researchers, as well as the overall study if you would comply with being audio taped. This study will occur once, in an interview format, for no longer than one hour. The risks associated with this study include some discomfort associated with the reflection upon negative aspects of your current position or the sport management degree program. Although there will be no tangible compensation for your participation, the benefits of participation include the opportunity to further reflect upon your experiences and career in the sport industry. Your participation in these regards could also prove to be valuable information that can help guide educators in the field of sport management as well as future practitioners in the field.

During the transcription and documentation processes, your name will be assigned a pseudonym to preserve your confidentiality. The records of this study, including audio tapes and information gathered during the interview, will be kept in a locked filing

cabinet and will only be accessible by Michael Hutchinson or Catherine Quatman. No identifiers linking you to the study will be included in any sort of report that might be published. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Texas A&M University. If you decide to participate, you are free to refuse to answer any of the questions that may make you uncomfortable. You can withdraw at any time without your relations with the University, job, benefits, etc, being affected. You can contact Michael Hutchinson by phone at 281.682.9373 (mdh_001@hotmail.com) or Catherine Quatman at 979.458.2724 (cquatman@hlkn.tamu.edu) with any questions about this study.

This research study has been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board – Human Subjects Research, Texas A&M University. For research-related problems or questions regarding subjects' rights, you can contact the Institutional Review Board through Ms. Melissa McIlhaney, IRB Program Coordinator, Office of Research Compliance, 979.458.4067, mcilhaney@tamu.edu.

Please be sure you have read the above information, asked questions and received answers to your satisfaction. You will be given a copy of the information sheet for your records.

APPENDIX C

Table C-1   Information Regarding Interview Participants

Name	Industry Category	Bachelors	Masters
Ginger	Olympic	Exercise Sport Sci., Mgt., & Psy	Sport Adm.
Sarah	Recreational	Health & Exercise Sci.	Sport Mgt.
Rodney	Pro. Practitioner	Mkt. & Mgt.	M.B.A.
Garrett	Olympic	Journalism	
Matthew	Collegiate Adm.	Sport Mgt.	Sport Mgt.
Greg	Pro. Practitioner	Mkt. & P.E.	P.E.
Marty	High School Adm.	Math	Edu. Adm.
Jacob	Collegiate Adm.	Education	Education

APPENDIX D

Figure D-1   Course Recommendations of Participants
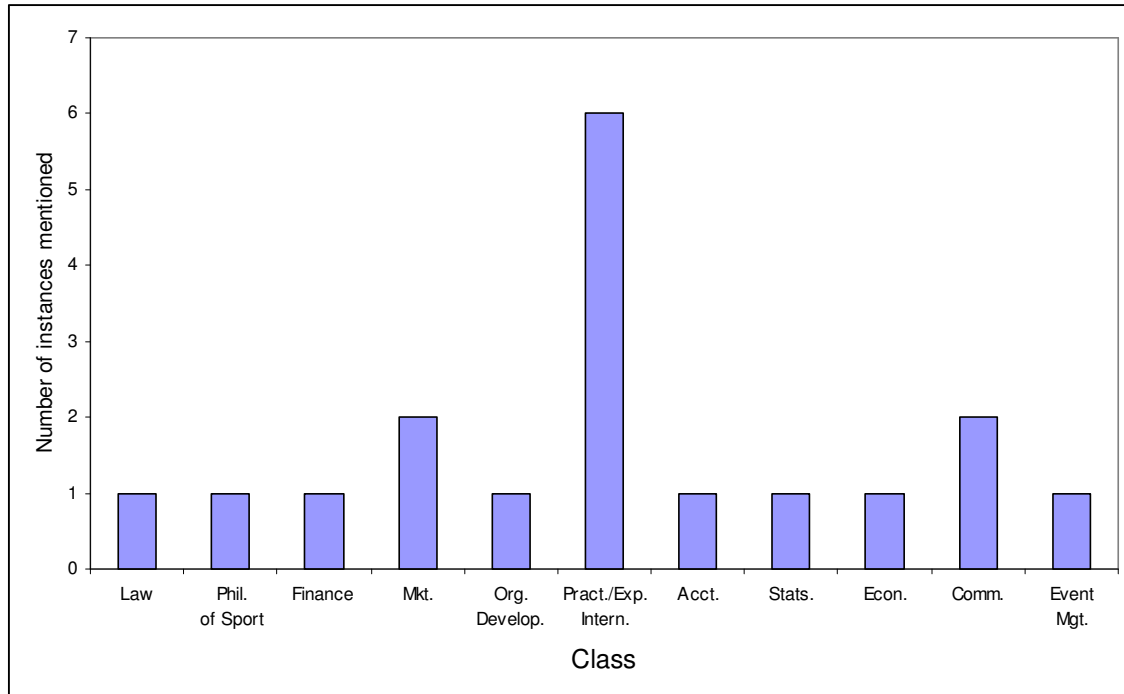
APPENDIX E

Table E-1   Breakdown of Participant Degrees and Importance of Academic Major

Name	Industry Category	Sport Oriented Degree	Major Important for Employment
Ginger	Olympic	Yes (BA, MA)	No
Sarah	Recreational	Yes (MA)	Indifferent
Rodney	Pro. Practitioner	No	No
Garrett	Olympic	No	No
Matthew	Collegiate Adm.	Yes (BA, MA)	No
Greg	Pro. Practitioner	Yes (BA, MA)	Indifferent
Marty	High School Adm.	No	Yes
Jacob	Collegiate Adm.	No	No

VITA

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