

## Adopting "Learning by Doing" Method in the Undergraduate Sport Marketing Management Teaching--3 Years of Assessments

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### Abstract

Yang Hsu, Aletheia University Undergraduate students without practical working experiences cannot easily perceive the genuine meaning and construct of management subjects like strategy, organization, marketing, and human resource management [9]. And college management graduates often find it difficult to apply knowledge learned fragmentarily at school on the job [6]. In the fast changing, Internet- based society, classroom teaching is threatened by the fact that students can obtain knowledge by themselves; consequently, teachers should develop new ways of teaching to improve students' learning motives [14]. The study aims to: 1. Discover the essence of the undergraduate education of sport marketing management. 2. Develop an innovative teaching method based on the above rationale. 3. Discuss the carry-out process of the innovative teaching method. 4. Deliver the results to sport marketing educators. Theoretical Framework Fundamental management knowledge can be divided into two parts: cognitive knowledge and experienced knowledge, with the former one explaining the phenomenon, theory, principles, and solutions to problems which can be taught at schools. Experienced knowledge, however, derived from the realization through practical work on the job and is thus unable to be taught at schools [6]. Sport products are classified into participation product, spectator product, sporting good, or sponsorship opportunity [1][2][7]. Accordingly, the core mission of sport marketing personnel should focus on event creation and management since event is the platform for selling sport products. Two related studies from different continents both discovered "on the job" training was the best source, among many others, for students to acquire sport marketing competencies [3] [12]. In many marketing literatures, "on the job" or "learning by doing" and "case study" are the most recommended teaching methods [4][5][6][8][10][11][13].

### Method

A project named "out of nothing" was found on the tone of learning by doing teaching method, and was first invented in 2006 by the author, who was also the instructor, based on the above rationales. One hundred students from the two classes in the sport marketing management courses were divided into ten groups with 10 students each. In the name of promoting sports in the community, each group had to create its own event out of nothing, which means from the creative thinking in the beginning to event planning, marketing proposal writing, sponsorship selling, and to event hosting. The students carried out all the activities on their own under the guidance of the instructor. The length of the project lasted about 9 months spanning two semesters. For students to realize the key function of sport marketing, they were required to be creative enough to design an event that was the first of its kind to attract the attentions of media, participants, and spectators. Students had chances to apply the theory of sport marketing management and others. As the project in 2006 turned out to be successful, it continued for 3 years. Till 2008, some three hundred students had participated the project and a total of 21 sporting events had been created and held in public.

### Evaluation

An all-around evaluation mechanism was developed. First, the proposal of each group had to list quantitative objectives in meaningful aspects such as number of media exposures, number of spectators appeared on site, number of sponsors found and whether they had been reached after the event. To pass the evaluation, each group would have to reach the minimum objectives of 3 media exposures and 150 spectators on site. Second, each group had to turn in paper work such as marketing proposal, sponsorship proposal, and final report due in different times of the nine months and they were examined by their qualities. Third, upon completion of each year's project, students would be asked to fill out a 30-question questionnaire reporting the effectiveness of the project from their perspectives.

### Results

In 2006, ten groups launched 10 events and the most successful one, for example, "Girl's Rugby" had more than 700 spectators watched the game, and the news releases prepared by students attracted 30 different media journalists to the field and reported the news on newspapers and TVs afterward, most of which were broadcasted in national prime time schedule. The rest of groups also achieved most of their objectives, and the total media exposures reached 17 times with more than 2,000 spectators present on site. In 2007 and 2008, the project went through some amendments respectively according to the evaluations. As to the quality of the paper work, most of the groups could fulfill the writing guidelines set by the instructor. However, students' implementations sometimes couldn't match with their previous plans. More than 300 questionnaires were collected in 2006, 2007, and 2008. There were more positive reactions than negatives. Statistical methods were used to analyze more information in the questionnaires and the results will be presented in the conference. Personal valuable experiences were gained in the week-to-week supervision of students' jobs in the 3 years, and personal thoughts on "what worked"; "what did not work" and "unanticipated outcomes" about the project will also be revealed.