APPLIED ETHICS FOR
SPORT MANAGERS
Dedication

for

Dr. Herbert Rodrick Otto

Thinker, teacher, father, friend.
In Memory

of

Nash

My writing companion. My best friend.
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The purpose of this textbook is to heighten your awareness regarding the importance, responsibilities, and challenge of becoming the complete sport manager. The complete sport manager is someone who evolves from a manager of sport to a leader of sport by operating professionally, ethically, and socially responsibly. Professionalism is the charge to act in ways that are civil, respectful, and honorable. Professionalism requires you to answer the question: What must I do? Ethics calls you to do the right thing when it is difficult to do. That is, what should I do? And why should I do it? Social responsibility challenges you to be forward-thinking, to figure out how you can use sport to advance social change. Becoming a socially responsible sport leader propels you to answer to the question: What can I do?

If you make the conscious decision to develop your character, operate ethically, and be receptive to your social responsibilities, then you are on your way to becoming the complete sport manager. Taken together, the day-to-day living out of all three of these responsibilities is what will transform you from a sport manager into a sport leader.

This text is organized into three parts. Part I is comprised of five chapters and examines what it takes to become the complete sport manager. What is required of you, and what must you do from a professional perspective? Part II includes four chapters that challenge you to put ethical theories and concepts into action in managing sport. What should you do from an ethical perspective,
and why should you do it? Part III, also comprised of four chapters, propels you into the realm of advanced action toward the goal of becoming a sport leader. Here, you are called to use sport to make the world a better place by answering the question: What can I do?

Part I

Part I explores the values of sport, the expectations of a sport management professional, the motivations behind our actions, ethical theories, and social responsibilities. In Chapter 1, we examine the values of sportspersonship. Are values, such as respect for rules and persons, transferrable from the field or court to the front office? Can we take these values from the sporting environment and apply them to the management of sport? An athlete who operates professionally upholds the values of sportspersonship. In the same sense, the good sport manager operates professionally. Ultimately, professionalism prods us to answer the question: What must we do?

In Chapters 3 and 4, we explore what it takes to become an ethical sport manager. We examine Kohlberg’s stages of moral development to understand the motivations behind our actions and decisions. An understanding of the importance of ethics leads us to do the right thing by responding to the questions: What should we do? And why should we do it? In Chapter 5, we explore how sport can be used to advance the values of liberty, common good, and equality of opportunity. Using the theories of justice of libertarianism, utilitarianism, and egalitarianism, we discover that sport can be used to not only advance the integrity of the sport industry, but perhaps more importantly, that sport can be used to make this world a better place. In Chapter 5, we answer the call: What can we do?

Part II

Having laid out our professional expectations, our commitment to operate ethically, and our social responsibilities in Part I, Part II challenges us, as future sport leaders, to put ethics into action. Here, we are challenged to use ethically sound frameworks to inform our decisions within specific areas of managing sport. Part II covers cultivating a healthy work culture, communicating and marketing sport responsibly, pricing and selling tickets fairly, and ensuring a safe and respectful sporting environment. In Part II, we take ethical action by answering: What should we do? And why should we do it?
Part III

Part III is a call to advanced action. How can we use sport to make this world a better place? What can we do as sport leaders to honor the rights of all sports participants, extend economic freedom to revenue-producing athletes, use sport for peace, and make sport sustainable? As the next generation of sport leaders, if we commit to operating professionally, ethically, and socially responsibly, then we are well on our way to becoming complete sport managers!

UNIQUE FEATURES

Embedded within the chapters are a variety of activities designed to provide you with opportunities to apply concepts of professionalism, and theories of ethics and social justice.

The Thinker

French sculptor Auguste Rodin (1840–1917) created The Poet as himself, sitting atop his work Gates of Hell, the theme of which was taken from Dante’s Inferno (13th c.). In 1896, The Poet became known as The Thinker, the universal embodiment of humanity who brings to light in “physical terms, the mental effort and anguish of creativity” (National Gallery of Art, 2018, para. 2).

Strategically positioned at the beginning of every chapter, The Thinker serves as a consistent reminder of our responsibility to expend mental effort to solve some of the toughest problems facing sport and the sport industry. As a future sport leader, you will be called on to employ critical thinking, logical reasoning, and imaginative problem-solving to advance the sport industry. The Thinker reminds you to read, learn, and challenge yourself in the spirit of mental effort toward the goal of advancing sport and the sport industry in ways that are professional, ethical, and socially responsible.

It’s Your Turn!

It’s Your Turn! sections challenge you to put your learning into practice. These are practical, hands-on, mini-assignments that aim to ensure your understanding of important concepts linked to professionalism. To determine your professional responsibilities, you are challenged to answer: What must I do?
Take Action!

Take Action! segments propel you into the real world of managing sport. When faced with difficult decisions in the sport industry, will you operate ethically? These sections challenge you to do what it takes to become an ethical sport manager by taking action: What should I do? And why should I do it?

Take the Lead!

Take the Lead! pieces challenge you to think and operate at a higher level. These sections call on you to shift from a manager of sport to a leader of sport. At this level, you recognize the sociopolitical power of sport. You realize sport can be used to make this world a better place. These sections challenge you to take the lead by answering the call: What can I do?

Red Flag Challenge

Positioned at the end of every chapter, Red Flag Challenges are ethical dilemmas unique to each chapter’s content. As the complete sport manager, each Red Flag Challenge tests your commitment to fulfill all three of your responsibilities—operate professionally, make ethical decisions, and take socially responsible action. In other words, what must I do? What should I do? And what can I do?
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