

ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY IN SPORTS SETTING

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KEY WORDS: Organizational Psychology, management in sport Psychology, assessment instruments.

ABSTRACT: New perspectives for research and applied work in top level sports are discussed within the context of organizational psychology (OP). First, the basic concepts of OP are briefly considered: management process, kinds and levels of managers and their roles and functions, organizational environments. Second, manager problems in transition to managerial roles are examined with the special reference to the concepts of Inner Game of Management (E. Flamholtz) and psychological readiness for change (Y.L.Hanin). Third, the ways to assist sports managers and administrators to cope with their stresses are described with the special emphasis on the strategies of bridging the gaps in their communication with top athletes and coaches. Organizational psychology and sport psychology can definitely enrich each other by enhancing the performance level of both athletes (coaches, operators and managers). Special problems of application of the best assessment instruments from organizational psychology are also discussed.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Psicología de las organizaciones, organización y dirección, instrumentos de evaluación.

RESUMEN: Se discuten en este estudio nuevas perspectivas para la investigación y el trabajo aplicado en los deportes de alto rendimiento, dentro del contexto de la Psicología de las Organizaciones (PO). En primer lugar, se consideran brevemente los principios básicos de la PO: proceso de gerencia; tipos y niveles de gerentes, administradores o directores, así como sus roles y funciones; y los ambientes organizativos. En segundo lugar, se examinan los problemas de los gerentes en transición a su papel de administradores, con especial referencia a los conceptos derivados del Juego Interno de la Gerencia (E. Flamholtz), y de la preparación psicológica para el cambio (Y.L. Hanin). En tercer lugar, se describen las diferentes formas de asesorar a los gerentes deportivos para enfrentarse con sus problemas, poniendo especial énfasis en las estrategias para salvar las brechas en su

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comunicación con atletas y entrenadores de élite. La P.O. y la Psicología del Deporte pueden definitivamente enriquecerse una a otra al mejorar el nivel de rendimiento tanto de atletas y entrenadores como de administradores y gerentes. Se discuten asimismo problemas específicos en la aplicación de los mejores instrumentos de evaluación provenientes de la P.O.

Organizational psychology in sport settings

Our topic today, concerned with the problems of organizational psychology which might be relevant to sports settings, is a very important and intriguing subject to discuss. Bridging these two areas of research and applied work is indeed very relevant, I personally can confirm this from my 20 years of working with top athletes, coaches, sport administrators and 3 years of consulting, training and research, with our top, middle and on-line managers during perestroika times.

The point is that both these areas -organizational and sports settings are very similar in many respects: achievement orientation, stresses of top performance, high visibility for outside environment, to say nothing about the risks of failures involved. Both disciplines, as we shall see, are very receptive to the ideas and approaches from different fields of psychology (general, social, industrial, clinical, environmental, etc.).

It is interesting to note that the topic of organizational psychology in sports settings is somewhat unique compared to the most discussed topics at the international or national conferences and congresses. In fact, I remember an article in a Canadian journal about some experience in Organizational Development in Child Sport and a recent French publication by David Wilkinson *Le Marketing du Sport* (translated from English, The Sport Marketing Institute).

So, turning to Organizational Psychology as related to sports settings might be a promising avenue to explore in response to ever increasing problems encountered in top performance sport by sport psychologists, coaches, and sports administrators who start to recognize the need to speak the same (common) language in

handling the real-life problems of not only athletes but all involved in this increasingly complex field of human endeavor. Therefore, there's no doubt about this relevance of the topics we are all interested in considering.

From the sport psychology perspective we do have a lot of things to offer for top performance in general: especially at the level of individual performer: motor learning, motivation, arousal, pre-contest anxiety states. In fact, the beginning of SP was the application of general psychology principles and methodology. The second biggest contribution to SP is of course, social psychology: group processes, team communication and work, leadership, athlete-coach relationships. Again this area was borrowed and then developed in the sport setting due to the unique problems of top level sports. Such concepts as optimization of intragroup communication, interpersonal and intragroup anxiety were in fact first discovered and applied in sports and then in managerial psychology.

But if we look from the level of organization, then we can state that these concepts and approaches are underused. In fact, our sensitivity to the social and economical environment in which top level sport functions is just beginning to emerge. We are just starting to appreciate that the modern contemporary sport is more than performance of top athletes. It is a big and very complicated organization interacting with other bodies and organizations at both domestic (national) and international levels. Another thing, is that athletes and coaches are beginning to be affected more and more by sport administrators, sport federations and international events and social, political and economical processes. Understanding organizational environment and organizational perspective might be therefore useful for sport

psychologists to enhance their working relationships not only with athletes and coaches but with sport managers. Helping them to work more effectively with teams and to run sport organizations. In fact bridging the gaps within the sport clubs and organizations and all the participants at different levels might be a new and very challenging task for sport psychologists in the 1990's.

This is very important and already recognized by applied sport psychologists working directly with athletes and teams. So the new approach might be to go from the performance level up to management.

My long personal experience of working with top performance teams and organizations shows that we are constantly trying to bridge the gaps: between an athlete and coach, athlete and a team, athlete and fans. And now there's a new gap between top performance team (coaches, athletes) and sport management (club, federation, NCC). In other words, discussing organizational psychology issues as related to sports settings is, in fact, stressing environmental problems of top performance. And finally, we've got to understand another very important issue: turning to organizational psychology doesn't mean that we are at a starting point. Top sport as a unique experience is very relevant to organizational psychologists (stress management, team building, optimization of team communications, psychological preparation for change).

In order to discuss possible implications of organizational psychology to sports setting let's first make a short overview of organizational psychology and organizational behavior as a discipline. What is management? What are managers doing? What is organizational behavior? What are the stresses of managers? The stages of their careers? Who are sport managers? What are their potential and real problems? And finally, what are the implications for sports psychologists working with teams and sport federations.

If we turn to the main ideas and basics in organizational and managerial psychology we shall come to the following.

1. OP is concerned with *people problems* as encountered and handled in organizations. OP is a systematic study of attitudes (thoughts, feelings, intentions) and actions (behavior and performance) that people exhibit within organizations. Not all actions and attitudes but mainly three types of behaviors that have proven to be important determinants of employee performance: a) productivity (absenteeism, turnover); b) job satisfaction; and c) organizations.

It is well known that psychology and sociology do study behavior, but they do not concentrate solely on work-related (performance!!) issues. OP, in contrast, is specifically concerned with work-related behavior, exactly as sport psychology with top performance! and that behavior taking place in organization.

2. An *organization* is a formal structure of planned coordination, involving two or more people, in order to achieve a common goal. It is characterized by authority relationship and some degree of division of labour. So OB or OP encompasses the behavior of people in such diverse organizations as manufacturing and service firms, schools, hospitals, churches, military units, charitable organizations, and local, state and federal governmental agencies. Top level performance sports from this perspective is no doubt a very complex organization. And as is the case with the sport psychology OP, a very specific feature of the OP is that there are usually a number of subdisciplines contributing to OB: psychology (fatigue, boredom, working conditions), sociology (social systems, roles, group behavior in organizations), social psychology (interpersonal, intragroup behaviors, implementation of change, reducing barriers to its acceptance, decision-making), anthropology (functions of culture, norms and values, acceptable behaviors), political science (conflict,

allocation of power and its manipulation), role of wider social (environment political).

3. OP as a discipline includes branches of behavioral science, their contributions, units of analysis (individual group, and organization system) and an output (study of OB).

From applied point of view, OB (OP is concerned with development of *people skills* in *organizational context*). The goals of OB, as goals of any applied psychological science are to help practitioners (managers administrators, employees) to explain, predict, and control the behavior of individual performers, group units and whole organization by assisting them to successfully function in the social economical environment (interacting between themselves and with their counterparts).

It is quite clear that in the SP setting this approach is very relevant. We are applying contributions from general, social, developmental and clinical psychology, and somewhat from sociology. But what is missing is anthropology, and social-cultural perspective, thus adding to individual and group level of analysis the third level - organizational. And therefore, additional comments on management and managers might be relevant here in order to appreciate some of the problems which sport administrators and managers are facing.

First, management as a process. Management is usually defined as a set of activities, including planning, and decision making, organizing, leading, and controlling, directed at an organization's human, financial, physical, and informational resources, with the aim of achieving organizational goals in an efficient (using resources) and without unnecessary waste (and effective) doing the right things (manner). Briefly defined these activities are:

Planning and decision making: - Determining the organizational goals and deciding how best to achieve them.

Organizing: - Determining how best to group activities and resources.

Leading: - Motivating members of the

organization to work in the best interests of the organization.

Controlling: - Monitoring and correcting ongoing activities to facilitate goal attainment.

And of course, all these functions are closely related. But what is important within an organization is the fact that managers can be also differentiated by level and area. Three basic levels include: top, middle, and first-line managers.

Top managers control the organization by establishing the organization's goals, overall strategy, and operating policies and also by officially representing the organization to the external environment.

Middle managers are primarily responsible for implementing the policies and plans developed by top management and for supervising and coordinating the activities of lower-level managers (for example, coaches).

First-line managers supervise and coordinate the activities of operating employees (athletes).

Managers at different levels may work in various areas within an organization, and accordingly there may be marketing, financial, operations, human resources, administrative, and other kinds (public relations, research and development, international contacts) of managers.

Critical roles and skills of managers

Certain roles and skills are usually required of all managers, no matter what their speciality or level. Doing certain things, meeting certain needs in the organization, having certain responsibilities requires management skills and talents for effective performance.

Basically, there are three categories of roles: Interpersonal (dealing with people: figurehead, leader, liaison), Informational (processing of information: monitor, disseminator, spokesperson), and Decisional (making decisions: entrepreneur, disturbance handler, resource allocator, negotiator).

A number of specific skills are needed for all managers to succeed. These usually include: technical, interpersonal, conceptual and diagnostic and analytic. But their relative importance varies at different organizational levels. For instance, as one progresses up the organization, fewer and fewer technical skills are needed, because top managers spend little time in actual operating situations and usually are concerned with broader aspects of organization. Conceptual and diagnostic (analytic skills) become proportionately more and more important at higher levels of organization. Interpersonal skills are important at all levels.

These concepts are very relevant to sports settings if we are to bridge the gap between different levels of management in sports organizations. The implication is self-evident: acquiring these skills to become a successful sports manager requires not only sound educational base and continued life-long educational experiences but the special preparation and learning of basic management skills assisted by initial job experiences, and continued experiences through a variety of job assignments. Self-made managers in top sport might be a big problem considering not only their roles and skills, but also the tasks and especially environments they operate.

The nature of organizational environments

The key issue for any managers and people working with them (for instance sports psychologists!) is to understand their environment. There are a few useful concepts developed in OP which could be very helpful in sports settings:

- *external environment* - is everything outside an organization that might potentially affect it and usually is composed of two layers: the general environment (nonspecific dimensions and forces in an organization's surroundings) and task environment (specific

organizations and groups that are likely to affect the organization).

- *internal environment* - consists of the general conditions and forces within the organization (board of directors, employees, and organization's culture).

Now if we look at the *general environment*, five dimensions should be considered:

- the *economic* dimension refers to the overall health of the economic system in which the organization operates (inflation, interest rates, unemployment, and demand - all these affect funding for top sports, and its professional status).

- the *technological* dimension refers to the set of processes and systems used by the organizations to convert resources into products or services.

- the *sociocultural* dimension is made up of the customs, mores, and values, and demographic characteristics of the society in which the organization functions. Sociocultural processes determine the products, services and standards of conduct that the society is likely to value.

- the *political-legal* dimension refers to government regulation of business and general relationship between business and government. It is important for three basic reasons: a) it imposes certain constraints on an organization; b) the extent to which it is pro- or anti-business significantly influences management policy; c) its stability is an important element in long-range planning.

- the *international* dimension refers to the extent to which an organization (sports club, team, federation) is involved in or is affected by business in other countries.

It is interesting to note that the impact of the general environment is often ill defined and long-term, and therefore, more organizations focus more precisely on task environment which is easier for managers. There several task components in the task environment: competitors (competing for resources),

customers (paying money for products and services), suppliers (providing resources), regulators (government agencies and interest groups with potential to control, regulate, or otherwise influence the organization's policies and practices), owners, partners.

In the sport setting we are all concerned mainly with the internal environment, at best (the board of directors and employees). Similar description of sports clubs or federations could be done using this model, which would give us a big picture of the complexities of modern top level sport.

Another important aspect is that organizations and their environments *affect each other* in several ways. Environmental influence on the organization can occur through uncertainty (degree of homogeneity and change), competitive forces (threat of new entrants, jockeying among contestants, threat of substitute products, power of buyers and suppliers), and/ or turbulence.

Organizations, in turn, use information management, organization design, strategic response, mergers, acquisitions, direct influence, and social responsibility to influence their task environment, and they occasionally try to influence broader elements of their general environment as well.

The relevance of concepts and approaches of Organizational Psychology to sports settings is best seen through considering some of the similarities in the problems. Let's have a short overview of several such ideas which will demonstrate that fitting organizational perspectives into top level professional sports will be a challenge and a promising step towards enriching sport psychology.

1) Splitting organization into formal and informal might be fruitful and there's nothing new about the informal part for sport psychologists doing research and applied work with athletes and teams (in fact, here are personality and group factors of top performance).

2) Manager's activities illustrate several new tasks for sports administrators and managers and a lot of potential psychological problems for those with an athletic background and no previous experience in a managerial job.

3) The features of the total job situation might represent a way to look at professional athlete's training and competition which is not very traditional at this point, but soon top performers will be treated like an elite workers group and the OB approach will be no doubt useful in sports settings.

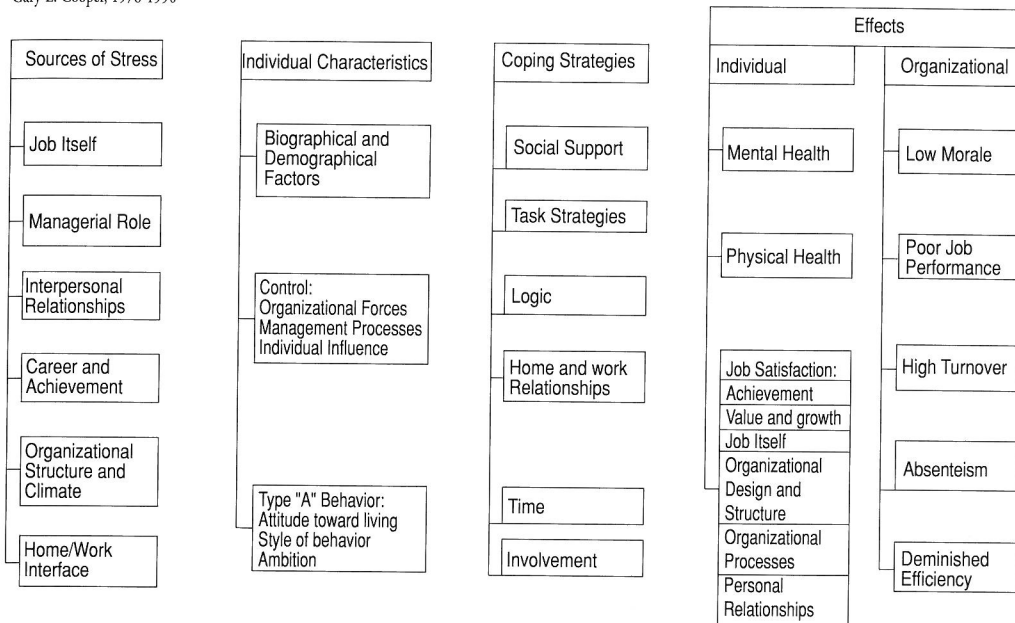
4) Motivational problems in organizations are of course the key issues both theoretically and practically. The concepts used here are well known in social and industrial psychology as well as in sports psychology (Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs), Herzberg's famous factors affecting job satisfaction/dissatisfaction.

5) And of course, performance-arousal relationships come immediately to our mind as we look at Conflict Intensity and Organizational Outcomes and Demand - Response Imbalance. But here in this area it looks as if we in top sport are way ahead with our Individual Zones of Optimal Functioning (IZOF), Y.L. Hanin, 1975-1990.

6) As to the Sources of Work Stress, OB has indeed a lot to offer. A more recent development, though, Occupational Stress Index (C.L. Cooper, Figure 1) is quite promising for top sport (sources, personality factors, stress reactions, coping strategies).

7) Common Career stages is another interesting concept and very relevant for top sport settings (well related for athletes, coaches and sports managers). A person's career is the set of work related experiences, behaviors, and attitudes encountered throughout his or her working life. All four stages might be completely different for top sports but the key issue here, specially for a sport psychologist working with teams, is to view the current work in the context of career. Changing the paths and jobs through Exploration, Establishment, Maintenance, and

Figure 1. *Stress on the Job*.
Gary L. Cooper, 1978-1990

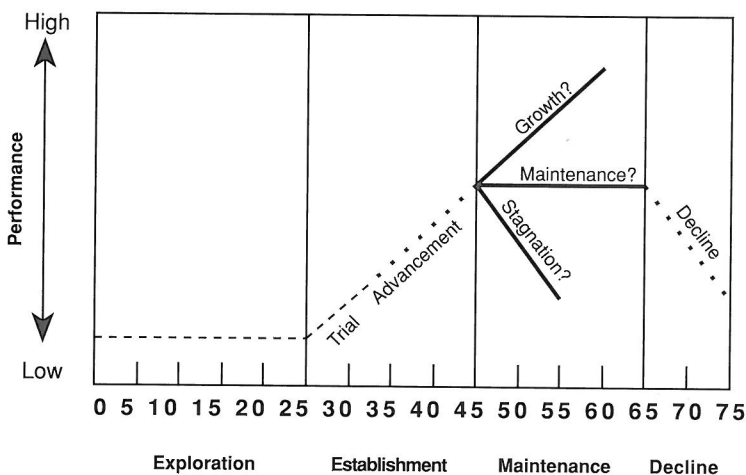


Decline stages can be traced in top performance sport as well, but here more commonly would be repeated the cycle (Athlete — coach — administrator — manager — executive). Majority of sport managers are in fact “retired”

athletes starting new careers “late” in life, and starting them from scratch! (see, Figure 2).

Given this basic understanding of how careers unfold, and given the importance of a career to the person involved, we should not be

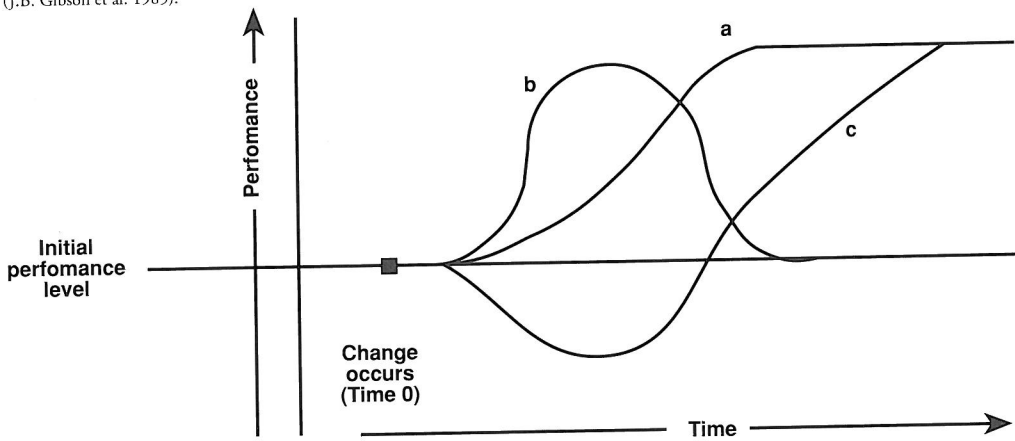
Figure 2. *Common Career Stages*.
(D.I. Hall, 1976)



surprised to learn that managing career is important both to individuals and to organizations. In fact, at last year's Colorado Springs World Congress the whole session was devoted to the management of post active performance career stage of top American athletes.

8) Patterns of Change (Figure 3) is also a very promising avenue of research and applied work with individual performers, units and

Figure 3.- *Three Patterns of Change.*
(J.B. Gibson et al. 1985).



whole organization. Besides performance level over time, there are for Phases of Change: diagnosis (finding the problem, selecting a solution), unfreezing (preparing for change), movement (making or implementing the changes) and refreezing (institutionalizing the changes). The topic of planned change and changed management is going to be very relevant for all the areas of top performance including top level sports. So the Psychological readiness for change is one of the key issues today for sport psychologists.

A list of all these problems is relevant to the situation in top level sports. But perhaps the issues of the transition to a managerial role and psychological readiness for change are the most urgent in view of the prospects of closer cooperation between sport psychologists and sport administrators and in the context of Barcelona Olympics.

The Inner Game of Management

Management is typically defined as the process of using resources to achieve organizational objectives. This concept of management is based on the view that management is a set of activities or functions (such as planning, organizing, leading, staffing, and controlling) the manager must perform.

Although that is not a totally incorrect view of management, it is sufficiently encompassing.

Management can also be viewed as a game. In its broadest sense, a game involves "procedures or strategies for gaining certain ends" (Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary). From this perspective, the desired end of the game of management is to use resources (people, money, ideas, equipment, tools) to gain certain ends desired by the organization.

But what is important is that all games are played at two different levels. First, there is the *surface of outer level*, which involves the specified tasks or activities of the game (W. Timothy Callway, "The Inner Game of Tennis", N.Y.: Bantam Books, 1974; or R.M. Niddefer "The Inner Athlete", T.C. Crowell Company N.Y. 1976). The *inner side* of the game involves the mental and emotional (psychological) processes

of the players: the extent to which one is willing to take a risk, to be aggressive, and to be confident about the "moves" one makes. And this is, in part, determined by the personalities of the players.

It turns out that winning any game depends not only on how well you play the outer or surface game of nominal activities but also on how well you play the inner game.

Like other games, the game of management has outer and inner components. We've already discussed the outer or surface game of management involving performing the tasks of planning, budgeting, decision making, time management, performance appraisal, and the like. These tasks or management functions are well known and learned in business courses. Yet, in spite of the fact that former athletes know what they are supposed to do as sport managers, many fail to do it (Example: I. Rodnina -famous figure- skate, "several top Soccer players as coaches"). And people fail to manage effectively because the basic management tasks we have cited are not merely technical functions to be performed. They have a mental and psychological component as well. For example, people who are managers know what delegation is and they ought to delegate but many still do not do it well.

Many of those who experience difficulties in delegation or any other management functions do so because they have not developed the intellectual and emotional mindsets that would allow them to feel comfortable performing such functions, even though they know what they ought to be doing. In other words, they have failed to master the Inner Game of Management (IGM), which is an essential prerequisite to effective performance of basic management functions.

The IGM is the game that takes place in the mind of the manager. It is the way an individual deals with the mental and psychological issues of Self-Esteem, Need for Control, and Desire to be Liked. These issues play an important role in the day-to-day performance of the manager's job. Mastering the IGM involves understanding

and acceptance of one's role as manager and developing the mental and psychological perspectives that are consistent with the requirements of this role. A role as a set of expected behaviors is usually based on the position a person occupies in the organizational hierarchy. This hierarchy defines the typical career progression of people in organizations.

I. Entry level position involves direct performance (Doer's role an athlete)

II. First-line supervisor (a coach): performance of some technical work, but primarily management of people rather than the direct performance of work.

III. Middle-manager (sports administrator): managing others managers (coaches).

IV. Senior management: managing several levels of managers.

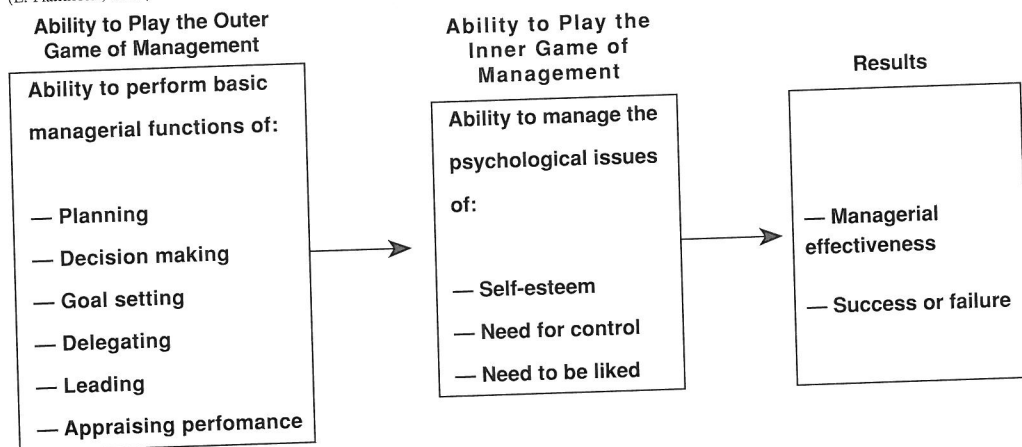
V. President or Chairman (chief operating officer).

The role of IGM in managerial success

To be a successful manager as you move from one level to the next in the organizational career hierarchy, you not only have to learn different skills such as planning, organizing, and controlling (other game activities); more importantly, you need to develop different ways of thinking (Inner Game Activities). Taken together, these two things determine, in turn, overall managerial effectiveness and success, as shown schematically in Fig. 4.

Ability to play the IGM, then, may be a critical variable that determines whether or not a person succeeds or fails as a manager. In fact, on the basis of research conducted by Dr. Eric G. Flamholtz from UCLA who proposed this concept and our studies and experience in working with managers it was estimated that more than 90% of people who experience difficulties in their management careers or ultimately fail as managers do so not because of their lack of intelligence or motivations, or a lack of technical skills as a manager, but because

Figure 4.- Factors influencing managerial effectiveness and success.
(E. Flamholtz, 1987)



of a failure to understand and play the Inner Game of Management effectively.

In fact, there are three key dimensions or requirements for playing the IGM successfully:

a) Being able to manage your self-esteem so that you derive satisfaction from the things managers are supposed to do.

b) Being able to manage your need for direct control over people and results.

c) Being able to manage your need to be liked so that it does not interfere with performing the managerial role.

If, for example, former athletes are promoted into managerial roles, they can begin to experience a variety of symptoms indicative of a failure to master the IGM. These symptoms, if not "cured", can eventually result in a failure or, at the very least, can cause people to play a game other than that of an IGM.

The eleven most common symptoms of inability to master the Inner Game are as follows:

1. Tendency to emphasize performance rather than supervisory activities.
2. Inability to deal with the ambiguous nature of the managerial role.
3. Inability or unwillingness to make decisions in a timely fashion.
4. Feeling in competition with subordinates for the position of technical "guru".

5. Tendency to hire people who are technically or interpersonally less skilled than oneself.

6. Desire to be recognized by others as a powerful person.

7. Inability or unwillingness to delegate tasks to subordinates.

8. Inability or unwillingness to delegate decision-making responsibility to subordinates.

9. Need to be evaluated on one's personal performance rather than on the performance of subordinates.

10. Tendency to avoid rather than deal with conflict.

11. Inability or unwillingness to praise subordinates.

For measuring the effectiveness of IGM playing, Dr. E. Flamholtz has developed a 14-Item questionnaire (IGM-Q) to identify various aspects of symptoms of ineffective Inner Game Playing (1987). Using the Russian form of the scale a group of 47 soviet middle managers was assessed to find out the cross-cultural validity of the proposed concepts and of the instrument. The results, although tentative due to the small sample used, are still very impressive:

- 93,7% of subjects did have problems ranging from some areas requiring attention (36,2%) and very significant problems (44,7%) to high potential for managerial failure (12,8%).

Most interesting was the fact that only 2,1% of managers were in the "Everything is OK" category and in the "Some thing to watch" group (4,2%).

In sports settings most of the managers are self-made experts not getting systematic training even in outside management skills, and their psychological problems might be even more severe, therefore, one could expect more pressure on athletes and coaches from these ineffective Inner Game Players (examples are numerous: interference in training sessions, competition, team management, etc.). Cross-cultural relevance and utility of concepts and interpretations proposed initially by E. Flamholtz was especially clear in group discussions of the IGMQ items as related to the real life behaviour and interactions of Soviet managers. And I believe it would be very useful to introduce the programme of Inner Game Management Development for the Spanish sports administrators and high level officials.

Psychological readiness of managers for change (PRC)

From the previous discussion it is clear that one of the priority issues of managers, and in sport settings as well, is their readiness for dynamic changes. As a working definition of the PRC concept I would suggest the following: PRC is a situational and dispositional characteristic of a person's (group's or organization's) resources enabling him/her to successfully get involved in the performance of a new task and to achieve comparatively high results. Thus, PRC level is important in predicting future performance and achievement in new difficult, intensive and risky tasks.

The key components of PRC, the content of which will be specific in various tasks, includes the following:

1. Cognitive. Information and knowledge necessary to perform a new task,
2. Affective. Positive, negative or neutral feelings about new tasks.

3. Motivational. Intentions, needs, interests to be met in the process of performance or in achieving the results.

4. Behavioral (connative, operational, motor). Skills and strategies to handle technical aspects of the tasks, people problems (interpersonal, intragroup, intergroup, organizational), and coping with stresses and possible failures.

5. Past experiences in handling new tasks:

- a) cognitive style and dispositional perceptions of new tasks.
- b) emotional stability, constructiveness of emotions.
- c) motivational saturation, energy, drive level, self vs. environment motivation.
- d) motor behavior flexibility/rigidity.

The first four components are all situational and characterize PRC for particular tasks at hand. The fifth component is, in fact, dispositional or trait dimension and represents a cross-section of the situational components across several experiences in coping with new tasks.

The proposed components (situational as well as dispositional) could be integrated into a two-factor contingency model to identify both levels of the PRC and the categories of managers. These two factors include:

1. Willingness (W, to perform a new task): "I want to do it", a person is highly motivated, interested, and positive about the performance process, sees a lot of opportunities, and is achievement oriented.

2. Competence (C, to perform a new task): "I can do it", enough knowledge, information and skills for the task, highly professional, and well qualified to transfer available skills to new situations.

By combining W and C factors into a contingency table we get 4 types of managers to be found almost in any organization all over the country. It is of course interesting to see the cross-cultural validity of the proposed model and its validity. A short list of categories of managers within each of the four types are described below:

Type I. "*Willing and Competent*": top professionals, enthusiastic about their jobs, middle aged, and young, good starters, opportunity-oriented, no big failures in the past, comparatively long record of successful work in the organization. Could be well adjusted into the existing system or a bit strained by it. Both old-timers and new comers to the field usually know how to beat the system, very skillful in coping with red-tape. Their strength is in their being potential change leaders with no problems in values and motivation. Could be sources of assistance and support for other group members in learning new ways.

Type II. "*Willing, but incompetent*": people just starting their professional careers or newcomers to the field, usually are highly motivated and interested but lacking necessary knowledge and/or specific skills and practical experience in performance of new tasks. Sometimes they include also "forced" transitions. Here's no problem with the system or environment yet, but mainly with one's resources and capacity to learn new ways. Support and consistent guidance are badly needed. Advantages and strong points of this group usually include their sensitivity and perception of change, no resistance, high motivation, no problems with status-role relationships or stereotypes and prejudices, lack of past negative experience or barriers, might indirectly influence other group members with low motivation. Possible limitations and difficulties of handling this group include additional time and efforts for their special training is required as well as patience and consistency on the part of their supervisor. Also support system from their peers might be a necessity, especially at the beginning.

Type III. "*Unwilling and Incompetent*": top level experts and/or former executives, informal leaders with sufficient knowledge and skills to successfully perform a new task. This is an elite and/or privileged workforce disappointed and dissatisfied with the organization/system,

sometimes afraid to loose old and comfortable ways and gains/advantages, distrustful of any promises of the system, resisting change and ignoring possible opportunities. They might be very quick to get involved in new tasks, if sufficiently motivated.

Getting high results with positive impact on peers and improvement of psychological atmosphere and morale in the organization, also increasing their supervisor/manager status. On the other hand, they are too independent from management, might reject supervisor, might bring about overdependency of supervisor on them, hidden motivations sometimes are operating.

Type IV. "*Unwilling and competent*": completely lacking any interest in new tasks, unmotivated to work in general, pathologically lazy, passively resisting the system and not caring about anything, lacking minimum knowledge and skills ("a square peg in a round hole"), "forced" on the unit or organization by the outside "support system" imitating performance, using their position as a cover for another job. Might have hidden potential talent for a job elsewhere. Helping them to realize that saves a lot of time and effort from a supervisor and team members and alleviates conflicts and frictions/hostilities in the working unit/organization.

Practical implications of organizational psychology perspective for top sport

From a short review of basic concepts of organizational psychology, description of management process, types of managers, their roles and functions, organizational environment, and particularly from the examination of specific problems of the transition to managerial roles as well as the model of psychological readiness for change in organizations it is quite clear that all these have direct and indirect practical implications for research and practical work of sports psychologists.

First of all, from these perspectives, we can see that athletes and coaches are not the only consumers (customers, clients) of sport psychologists. Top level professional sport is in fact a very complicated area, like industry, and its social economical environment has a very strong impact on the processes of training and competition. Sports managers are creating a particular environment for athletes and coaches. So a new way improve the performance of both athletes and coaches is to enhance organizational effectiveness of sports administrators, help them talk the same language with the performers in the field.

Secondly, concentrating on management in the sport setting is important in view of the fact that, like in many other areas and industries, professional level of those organizing the activities of other people is not always really high. There are many newcomers to the field with no previous record or background or special preparation for management functions. Former athletes are usually not born managers and more often than not experience stresses and problems of Inner Game of Management, unable to solve their needs in self-respect, control and need to be liked. Sport psychologists might explore this area and predict possible or existing difficulties and sources of stress and then devise special programmes for beginner managers to cope with the psychological side of their new responsibilities. Special support systems might be needed at the start of careers of sport managers or those planning or already in transition.

Thirdly, better understanding of psychological problems in organizations and especially in managers might be useful in bridging the gaps existing between sport administrators and coaches. Their working contacts and relationships might be greatly improved.

The fourth implication for sport psychologists is the problem of change management and stresses of change which coaches, athletes and sport administrators are facing at present and will be experiencing more

and more often in the future. The concept of psychological readiness for change might be very relevant here in introducing new approaches, intervention programmes and methods. Planned change in top sport is difficult to realize without the assessment of the level of psychological readiness for change of the key figures and participants.

And finally, there's a fifth practical implication which might enrich applied work of sport psychologists. And this is the application of the best scales and instruments developed in the OP which might be directly applicable/relevant to the top level performance sports as an area. Two most promising scales from the OP could be mentioned here: a) Occupational Stress Indicator (developed by Prof. Cary Cooper from University of Manchester, UK) enabling assessment of sources of stress on the job, individual characteristics, coping strategies and effects of stress on the job, individual and organizational); b) Systematic Multi-Level Observation of Group (SYMLOG), developed by R.F. Bales and his associates, to assess various aspects of behavior and values of people functioning in various organizations.

As a result of new orientations of sport psychologists they will:

- perceive their role in a new light, in a new context.
- be more effective in working with their environment.
- see new areas of their practical work not limiting it only to athletes and coaches.
- be able to help both operators (athletes and coaches) and managers.
- be more useful for supporting and training of different levels of sports organizations.
- be more sensitive to new problems and approaches.

It looks as if organizational and sport psychology can enrich each other by enhancing the performance level of top participants in both fields including operators, managers and consultants.

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