

## **Human Resource Portfolio Analysis**

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## **Human Resource Portfolio Analysis**

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has a unique human resource management (HRM) since the organization attracts both employees and numerous volunteers. The IOC's HRM focuses on the recruitment process, training, and motivation system. The sports industry is structurally complex, which is especially true for international organizations. In particular, the IOC, coordinating the efforts of various entities to organize sporting events, is an important organization on a global scale. HRM of sports organizations has a number of key features that require special attention at all stages of operation. Despite the fact that the IOC has a relatively small number of employees, it attracts a large number of volunteers to organize events. This aspect makes HRM unique with a special emphasis on the recruitment process, training, and motivation system.

### **The IOC Overview**

The global sports industry has a complex structure and includes local, regional and international governing bodies. The IOC is headquartered in Lausanne, Switzerland, and represents the Olympic Movement, which incorporates 205 National Olympic Committees (NOCs) (Ruta & Sala, 2018). The IOC administration, in turn, is engaged in the coordination of smaller structures for the organization of the Olympic Games, as well as promoting Olympism and leading the Olympic Movement ("IOC administration," n.d.). The complex structure of the IOC includes national and international federations responsible for various sports disciplines promotion. There are also sports leagues, which are primarily responsible for organizing sports events in a particular country, as well as numerous committees and federations.

### **Human Resource Management Challenges**

The IOC's HRM deals with engaging volunteers, as well as short-term contract workers by generating additional motivation through engagement and commitment. The

HRM department of a global sports organization performs a number of tasks due to the unique nature of such entities. Organizations such as the IOC often do not have sufficient resources to pay for the activities of all the people they need since their main sources of income are “public financing, fundraising activities, and sponsorships” (Ruta & Sala, 2018, p. 190). Additionally, they require seasonal employees to work on organizing events, which implies short-term contracts. Thus, the IOC relies heavily on volunteers and short-term workers to organize events and conduct their activities. In addition to the economic benefits, volunteers are more committed and engaged, which is a significant motivating factor.

### **Employees and Volunteers**

In a global organization like the IOC, volunteer workforce is of particular importance. As Cuskelly (2021) remarks, the engagement of volunteers requires “a critical strategic consideration” (p. 129). The complex structure of the IOC necessitates a special approach to both recruitment and collaboration of various entities. In particular, IOC employs only around 630 people with the status of a global sports organization (“Meet with us,” n.d.). However, many volunteers take part in every event held by the IOC and its entities. In particular, at least 30 thousand volunteers participate in the preparation and conduct of the Olympic Games (“Volunteers,” 2019). Cuskelly et al. (2021) note that the “highly functional volunteer workforce is a critical strategic consideration and a key factor in the success of major sports events” (p. 129). Thus, this aspect is the main challenge in the management of human resources by IOC.

### **Formalization**

The main organizational structure for the Olympic organizations in general and for the IOC is formalization. It includes remuneration conditions, individual roles and responsibilities, hierarchical relationships, interactions between the organization and its members, and hours of operation (Tripolitsioti, 2017). For salaried workers, these aspects

imply the existence of an employment contract, which prescribes the relations of the two parties. The same procedure is provided for volunteers who have short-term contracts. The contracts outline “the length of nature and of the assignment, and the resources that will be allocated, such as equipment, premises, personnel, allowances, and funds” (Tripolitsioti, 2017, p. 65). Contracts are also stipulated for elected members who are representatives of the IOC to the National Olympic Committees.

Formalization allows the IOC to define operational and hierarchical relationships within an organization. In particular, for each position of an employee, responsibilities are defined, which are described in the staff handbook (Tripolitsioti, 2017). Working hours are also prescribed for salaried workers, while for volunteers and elected members, they are not formalized (Tripolitsioti, 2017). Building such a structure requires IOC’s HRM to have an accurate understanding of the goals and the means necessary to achieve them. Effective HRM of an international sports organization includes strategic analysis and planning as key aspects of functioning.

### **Recruitment and Selection**

Human resource planning for the IOC includes an assessment of both salary and volunteers’ manpower based on organizational goals. In particular, international sports organizations consider factors such as “recruitment, selection, training and development, orientation and rewards” (Weerakoon, 2016, p. 18). Within the framework of the IOC, this stage is the most difficult since the activities of the organization include constant international collaboration. This aspect implies the involvement of various legislative issues, as well as the need for close communication with local entities. Moreover, due to a large number of volunteers, the IOC experiences a tension between formality and informality, which presents an additional obstacle (Weerakoon, 2016). Thus, the organization pays special

attention to the processes of recruitment, development, motivation, and measuring performance.

The selection and recruiting process are key for an international sports organization, as it needs candidates who have expertise in both sports and management. Thus, recruiting at the IOC is multi-stage and depends on the position and status of cooperation. Ruta and Sala (2018) note that international sports organizations are characterized by networking and a high value of peer recruitment recommendations. This aspect leads to the lack of competence of many employees, who often have an exclusive passion for work. The process is further complicated by the fact that the IOC requires a large number of seasonal workers, which requires consideration of specific factors for each event.

The selection and recruitment process for salaried workers in the IOC comprises several stages. First of all, there is an application phase since the organization publishes its vacancies (“Recruitment,” n.d.). the acceptance of CVs for each position is open for 15 days, after which the organization starts reviewing them for selection (“Recruitment,” n.d.). Then, the remote termination of the interview takes place, the successful message of which is obtained as a result of a personal interview at the IOC headquarters (“Recruitment,” n.d.). The candidate can take part in additional interviews with department heads if necessary. This stage is the final one, and upon successful completion of the selection, the candidate is hired.

The recruitment process for volunteers is conducted independently by the organizational committee. For each event, volunteers are selected separately; the start of accepting applications usually begins two years before the event (“Beijing 2022,” 2019). The main requirements are the age above 18 and the ability to communicate in English and the language of the country hosting the event (“Beijing 2022,” 2019). The number of working days for volunteers is predefined, whereas the number of working hours depends on event schedules, activities, activity sites, and other similar factors (“How to become an Olympic

volunteer,” 2016). The IOC members are selected by the IOC session from among active and former athletes, presidents or senior leaders of the International Sports Federations (ISFs) or international organizations recognized by the IOC (“How does one become,” n.d.). Thus, this position does not imply the presence of an application and a selection process.

### **Induction**

Once the recruitment process is over, induction is a critical step to take. At this stage, new employees will become familiar with the organizational culture and environment, as well as the responsibilities that they will perform. Induction is an important step, especially for volunteers who are learning about the purpose of the event and their responsibilities and familiarize themselves with supervisors and procedures. Since the activity of the IOC is mainly project-based, all new members of the organization undergo induction within their team, which greatly simplifies the process. The same goes for volunteers who are busy with project tasks for a specific event. This approach has a significant positive effect on motivation since people are united by a common goal.

### **Training and Development**

Training and development is an important aspect for sports organizations as it ensures the retention of volunteers and employees. Weerakoon (2016) notes that “employees’ dissatisfaction with their training may lead to their desertion or a lack of volunteers” (p. 19). Training staff in relevant skills ensures not only job satisfaction but also a high level of efficiency. The IOC provides all volunteers with a training program before starting work on the event, and taiga skills development is one of the key benefits offered to the candidates (“How to become an Olympic volunteer,” 2016). Salary employees are selected on the basis of relevant skills and competencies, which implies they can effectively carry out the work of organizing the activities of the Committee. The same holds also true for all the IOC members.

### **Performance Assessment**

Performance evaluation is also an important aspect of HRM in sports organizations. In particular, international organizations use traditional metrics such as KPI and ROI (Ruta and Sala, 2018). At the same time, organizations should include specific indicators in their performance metrics, which depend on their mission. For sports organizations, the influence and acceptance of both the public and the shareholders are extremely important. In particular, the IOC considers it a priority to promote Olympism, that is, to popularize international sports practices on the basis of social accountability and respect for basic universal ethical principles (“What is Olympism?” n.d.). Thus, for the IOC, performance metrics include not only the success of events but also support for the principles of fair competition.

### **Rewards and Motivation**

Motivation and rewards are the main ways of maintaining employees’ job satisfaction. In particular, an organization can offer both monetary rewards and various benefits to employees to make them satisfied and increase retention. The IOC volunteers do not receive monetary remuneration, in contrast to Committee salary workers who receive periodic remuneration. In addition to monetary rewards, employees receive various bonuses in the form of health insurance, occupational pension, rail check tickets, lower prices for various goods and services, sports activities from the IOC Sports Club, and refunds for private sports activities (“What are the employee benefits?” n.d.). Volunteers, in turn, receive volunteer accreditation, insurance, coverage of food and beverage expenses, access to medical services, and an official uniform (Callos, 2020). Thus, the IOC offers its employees different bonuses to ensure comfortable work.

### **Leadership**

Leadership is an inherent characteristic of HRM of sports organizations. It is noteworthy that the IOC is currently capable of attracting a sufficient number of sponsors and private funding to realize its vision. In particular, the organization earns mainly on

broadcasting rights and spends 90% of the funds on the development of athletes and the Olympic Games (“Funding,” n.d.). For an international sports organization, relevant leadership is essential to motivate its members to achieve a global goal. Moreover, within the framework of organizing sports events that involve many people and resources, it is extremely important that the leader is competent and consolidates efforts effectively.

### **Conclusion**

The sports industry is significantly different from other areas of business and holds a special approach to HRM. In addition to the involvement of employees and volunteers in the process of conducting sports events, organizations need effective revenue generation in order to realize the vision. Social responsibility is another important factor supported by international sports organizations, including the IOC. The management of the human resources of such entities is based on attracting the most committed and engaged individuals to collaborate at the international level. Employees must have both a high level of management skills and competencies in sports, which requires a focus on recruitment, training, and motivation.

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