

New Trends in Sports Management – Reengineering

Claudiu MEREUȚĂ

cmereuta@ugal.ro

Elena MEREUȚĂ

emereuta@ugal.ro

"Dunărea de Jos" University of Galați

Abstract: The paper presents a new approach regarding the management in sports that is based on the principles of reengineering. Applying that modern and pure management system, called reengineering, in sports activity, we hope to get better and better results, in order to increase both the health state and the performances of trained athletes. The paper also presents the similarities between BPR (Business Process Reengineering) and Sports Managements, as well as the proposed solution for a proper implementation of such model of management. The five components of the basic BPR model are presented, together with their features for Sports Management.

Keywords: Business Process Reengineering, Sports Management, training activities

Jel Code: D83

1. Introduction

The evolution of sports management reveals the necessity of a radical change in organizing that activity. The substantiations for that new approach are related to the unilateral training of those authorized to manage the sports activities, to the confusions produced by misunderstanding the general interest and the specific interest of one compartment or field and, not at least, the conservatism of most leaders of sports activities.

If we take into account the experience in the application of reengineering process, we see that the possibilities to use that new management process in sports management are promising.

Thus, improvements in productivity were the main objective of industry and, within it, those strictly related to production activities. Less attention was given to support and administration sectors. Therefore, their potentiality to be improved or redesigned is bigger.

On the other hand, the approach is focused on complex processes, involving a large number of individuals and departments (sectors) that should be properly coordinated. All these elements are characteristics of sports activities, which consist of multiple data and facts, considered to be inputs and outputs in different sectors and organizations that interact in a complex pattern of relationships. Therefore, it is not surprising that reengineering finds application within this framework of sports management.

2. Fundamentals

Business Process Reengineering (BPR) is a management process that implies fundamentally rethinking and redesigning the business processes necessary to maximize customer satisfaction and profits and to achieve dramatic and permanent improvements of all economical indexes. This radical approach seeks to interpret the standard business model in a new way, making more efficient use of available resources by seeing the function and purpose of those resources in new ways. This approach doesn't necessarily require the complete abandonment of all aspects of the standard business model. However, the approach requires redefining each component in the model and altering the function in a manner that would produce a business structure relevant and more performing.

Reengineering means, in fact, a complete redesign of processes, starting all over again from point zero, being self confident and accepting any risks that might occur. Business Process Reengineering refers to discrete initiatives, which claim new and radical redesign of processes in a limited time frame. This doesn't consist of improving inefficient processes and assumes their total transformation. The idea that supports Business Process Reengineering can be summarized by the question: If this process does not exist, how could we sketch it?

It would start, therefore, from a white sheet of paper on which you have nothing to change, just to add something, from the beginning. That wouldn't be an improvement, it would be an innovation. Fundamental difference between BPR and process improvement is that reengineering involves a total review process, whose results are translated into changes in organizational structures, systems, culture and competencies. The improvement process accepts, in a certain way, the current process, eliminating the activities with little or no value added. Table 1 presents both alternatives, pointing out the differences between them.

Table 1 Comparative analysis reengineering / continuous improvement

	Reengineering	Continuous improvement
Change level and profit	Radical changes with 80-85% profit rate	Changes with 10-40% efficiency rate
Extension	A complete process or sub processes developing over different functional fields	Usual processes or sub processes within the same functional sector
Time for implementation	Between 9 and 18 months	Less than a year and even smaller, related to the extension of intervention.
Leadership	Indispensable agreement with top management	Sustained support of top management
Approach	Total and complete redesign and reorganization of processes	Automation and elimination of some functions of the process
Risk level	High risk due to the fact that the process requires personal involvement and resources. The changes will be strong and they will generate strength.	Small and medium risks, depending on the spread of changes and the number of activities involved.
Important factor	Information technology	Statistical control and other tools used for quality improvement
Changing type	Cultural and structural changes	Cultural changes

To fulfill this task, the manager has to abandon all ancient rules and norms and has to start with searching answers for the following question "Why are we doing this?"

3. Reengineering and Sports Managements

Many scientists have studied that new approach regarding the Business Process Management, which sometimes lead to unsuccessful results. Five fundamental issues were revealed for a proper development of BPR, considered to be the basic model of reengineering as follows (fig.1):

- ✚ Marketing concept;
- ✚ Top management involvement;
- ✚ Fundamental questions;
- ✚ Radical changes;
- ✚ Eight common problems for reengineering.

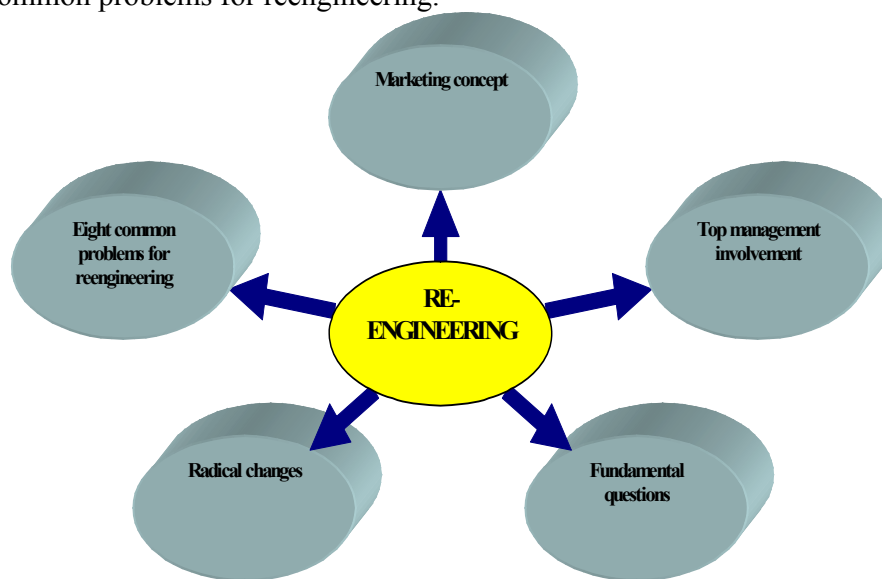


Fig. 1 –Reengineering - basic model

3.1. The marketing concept

Three important parts of the marketing concept are emphasized: effort for integration, consumer orientation and profits. As for the first part, effort for integration, we can point the fact that sports management must be aware of consumer's needs, thus all its activities must be redesign, in order to integrate the management process and to engage all people in the process (top management, trainers, athletes, administrative staff, supporters etc.). As for the second part, consumer orientation, we have to point out that all efforts must be turned to the benefit of consumers, which in sports activities are both the athletes and the supporters. The third part of the marketing concept, profits, we agree that for this general aim, in sports management and mainly in business process reengineering, "profits" means performance in all sports activities. The qualitative indexes are, as follows:

- ✚ The general rating of performance in international, national and regional classifications;
- ✚ The number of medals gained in most important competitions: Olympic Games, World Championships and European Tournaments etc.

3.2. Top management involvement

Reengineering is a management process that requires total involvement of top management, meaning that all details should be taken into account. Reengineering can be successful or not, depending on the level of engagement. Only when top management leads the reengineering process, positive achievements are certain. As for the Sports Management, it is necessary to

point out a continuous cooperation of all departments, to strategically establish objectives, to ensure a total engagement of all factors, including trainers and athletes.

3.3. Fundamental questions

Two important questions must be the focus of all activities demanded by the reengineering process:

- a) Why are we doing this?
- b) How are we doing this?

The answers might prove that the traditional way of thinking is overcome and the important changes must be reinvented. Sports management must also find the answers for these questions and for much more that will arise. Thus, it is important to point out some issues (fig.2), like:

- a) Why are we developing and supporting only some sports fields?
- b) Why many sports fields neglect the physical training and focus on the technicality?
- c) Are all sports fields accessible to everyone?
- d) What are we doing to promote other sports fields?
- e) Are sports activities depending on mass-media?
- f) How can we attract younger people to sports activities?
- g) Why the curriculum has changed in such a way that in school only 1 hour/week is for physical activities?

3.4. Radical changes

This is a concept that is characteristic to Business Process Reengineering, but it doesn't refer to formal changes of the existing facts. Business Process Reengineering requires radical changes, revolutionary ones, not evolutionary changes. In sports management we have to perform radical changes, meaning that we have to rethink and reorganize all activities, in order to develop a flexible system that can adjust to all changes required by social development, by the most revolutionary training systems, by human development etc.

3.5. Eight common problems for reengineering

There are some special issues in Business Process Reengineering, which can be also revealed in sports management (fig.3):

- a) Combined specializations

In sports management all trainers have to be prepared not only in their sports field, but also in some related fields, such as: physical development, psychology, pedagogy, nutrition, health and management.

As result, the athletes will be aware of all the consequences of their activity and they will be able to perform better and better.

- b) Everyone is a decision factor

The decisions are no longer the privilege of top management, because everyone can make a statement regarding his activity and can make decisions of his own.

Thus, the team should work as one, involving in its activity all factors related to the program, all their opinions and all the tasks that need to be fulfilled.

- c) Less control activities

Business Process Reengineering reduces the control activities, if the management programs are well organized and scientifically based. Thus, some forms of control can disappear: the simultaneous control, the direct control and the compliance one. It would remain the anterior control, which would estimate the input parameters of sports activity, mostly on training, the subsequent control, which will provide assessments on the progress of athletes, and the

collateral control, which is now transformed into a periodical appreciation of all the aspects regarding the training activity.

The self-control must not be neglected; it really should prevail in sports activities, as one of the most important control types

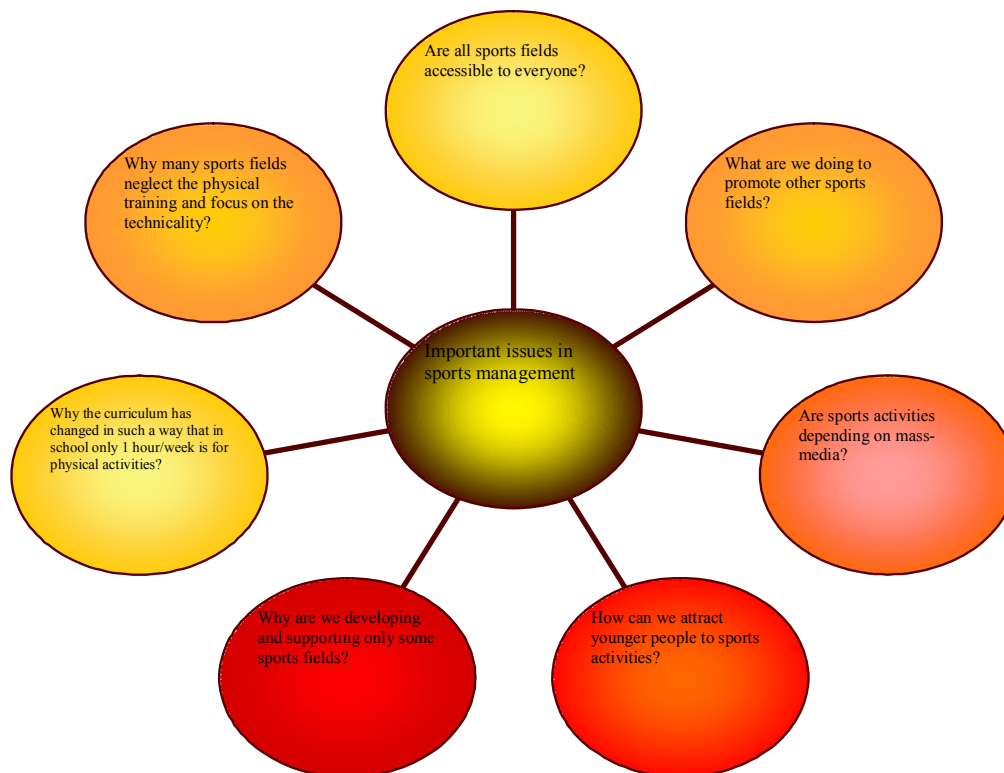


Fig.2 - Fundamental questions

d) The domination of centralized/non centralized hybrid activities

Top management, the leader support and the decision of all members of the team are some factors that determine the centralization of all decisions.

All the trainers, athletes are responsible for their decisions and activities, proving that the Business Process Reengineering has hybrid non centralized operations.

e) Multiple versions of the process

The decision process and the management process don't have an unique form, for each sports field there are particular decisions and processes and the trainers and athletes have to act accordingly. The same organization can be proficient in many sports field, which are not connected and which require different approaches.

e) Business Process Reengineering is useful when it proves to be rational

If we consider a small sportive organization, reengineering is not a proper solution for management, as it might be not so opportune.

When we are dealing with bigger organizations, it is necessary to rethink the sports management, in order to render it more and more useful and rational.

f) The project manager is the essence of connections

The coordinator must ensure a free way of thinking, to move the management into the desired direction, to ensure a proper link between the members of the team, the trainers, the athletes and other administrative staff involved in sports processes.

He is the central point of all connections, thus he has to prove leadership abilities, communications and teamwork skills.

g) Natural connections of the phases of process

All the sports field of an organization must be equally developed, taking into account a natural sequence of these fields. We can not develop a team sport activity, if we don't have a proper physical development, which requires running fields, weight lifting etc.

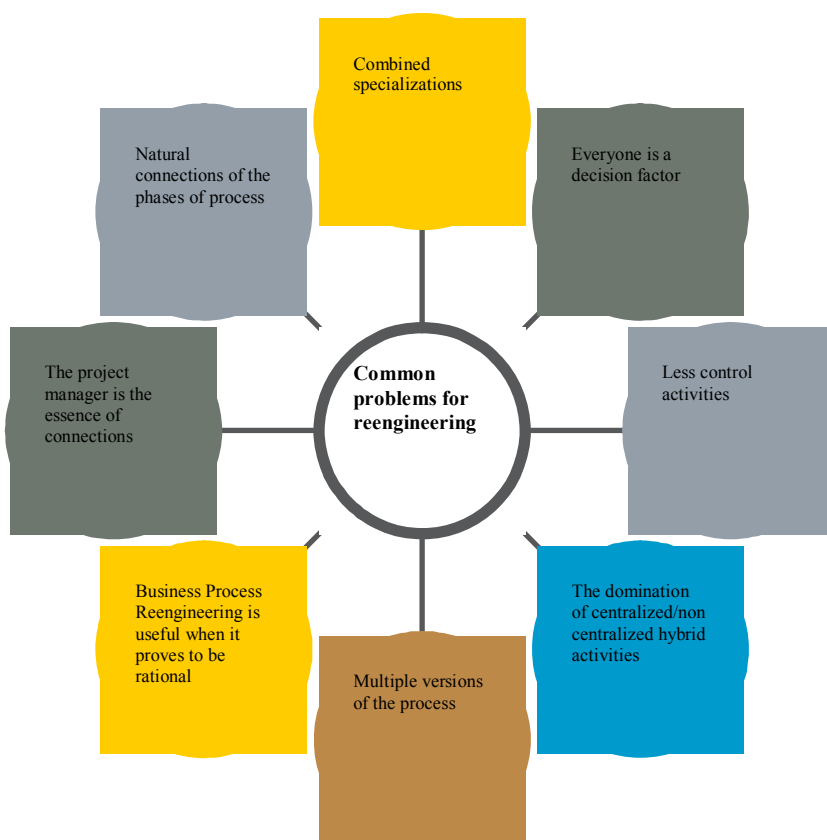


Fig.3 – Common problems for business process reengineering

4. Conclusions

The evolution of sports management reveals the necessity of a radical change in organizing that activity Business Process Reengineering is a general management process, which can be successfully used in sports management. We can use all the reengineering concepts to develop a new way of managing the sports activity.

References

1. Balaiş, F., *Managementul și Legislația Educației Fizice și Sportului – Galați, 1997*
2. Furey, Tim R. and Garlitz, Jennifer L. and Kelleher, Michael L., *Applying Information Technology to Reengineering, Planning Review, November 1993; Pg. 22.*
3. Manganelli, Raymond L. and Mark M. Klein. *The Reengineering Handbook. New York: American Management Association, 1994.*
4. Mereuță, C., Talaghir, L. G., – *Management și Marketing Sportiv, Editura Valinex, Chișinău, 2002;*
5. Morris, D. and J. Brandon. *Reengineering Your Business. New York: McGraw Hill, 1993.*
6. Schnitt, David L., *Reengineering the Corporation Using Information Technology, Journal of Systems Management, January 1993; Pg. 14.*
7. Whiting, John T., *Reengineering the Corporation (book review), Industrial Management, November 1994; Pg. 14.*