HUMAN RESOURCE ISSUES ANALYSIS IN MEGA EVENTS INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

As the representatives of mega events, The Olympic Games has attracted more attention for a long time. Human resources management is an important part of the management of sports events, and hosting large-scale sports games is highly dependent on volunteer service project. Unlike the human resource management of common enterprises, the volunteer management of mega events is obviously special. Aiming at the problems in mega events in recent years, this paper analyzes the motivation, attitude, satisfaction of mega events volunteers which influence its behaviour s. And the result is that management must forecast demand according to the type and number of volunteer event scale, the nature, content and other factors; the main problem facing Volunteer Recruitment links should be considered as types and the recruitment of volunteers, volunteer time professional accomplishment.

Keywords: Mega events; the Olympic Games; Human resource management; Volunteer.

INTRODUCTION

This research sets out to investigate Human Resource (HR) issues faced by people managers in the mega events industry. Three major issues specific to mega events including: human resource planning, volunteer recruitment, and volunteer motivation will be identified, which will be explained using typical examples. Relevant HR theories and literatures will be applied to each issue though human resource planning will be regarded as the main issue and investigated more deeply. The research will identify the key challenges of these issues and provide recommendations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The international events industry has matured as a result of rapid development and deepening economic integration. The economy in many countries and regions is increasingly dependent on the events industry, and the incorporation of information technology further deepens the globalization of the industry. Following the development of global economic integration, all organizations are faced with a more open market and fiercer competition, and the competition of talent is at the core of market competition.

Roche (2000, pp.1) stated that mega events are large-scale cultural events, including commercial and sporting events, which have a dramatic character, mass popular appeal, and international significance. The Olympic Games may be considered the most representative of all mega events.

Human resources are the sum of the people with labour capacity inside and outside an organization. Human resource management is the strategic and comprehensive management of human resources - the most important resources in an organization (Rayner and Smith,

2009). Typically, mega events are one-off project activities and, as such, mega events have obvious timeliness and the human resource management for mega events has very specific requirements (Australia Sports Commission, 2000). Therefore, it is extremely important to formulate and implement a human resource management plan for sports events.

METHODOLOGY

Secondary data is used for this paper as it can be relatively easy obtained. For this paper, secondary data has been collected from previous studies and research about 'human resource management' and 'event management'; meanwhile, there are some cases about mega events have been hold in the past for exploring several major issues in volunteer management. There are also secondary data related to volunteer management specific to event industry collated through the previous study and websites.

FINDINGS: THREE MAJOR ISSUES
Human Resource Planning

One of the major human resource issues in the mega events industry is human resource planning.

In the mega events industry human resource planning can be defined as determining current and future demands for volunteer work with regard to existing and planned programmers, services, and events before a recruitment process begins (Australian Sports Commission, 2000). As a starting point in the human resource management area, these people managers are responsible for understanding the qualifications, skills, education level and experience of the individual volunteers as well as the volunteer positions that they hold. Moreover, this information should be kept update. One of the key points for a people manager in human resource planning is to know the target number of volunteers required, and to separate volunteers according to the Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) according to their skills, qualifications and experience. O'Toole (2011) indicated that WBS is a technique to identify all the work that needs to be delivered and performed during the events, and then to subsequently break the huge task into small units in order to be easier to manage. Stone (1991) defined the purpose of human resource planning as assuring a certain expected number of persons with the right skills are available at a specified time in the future. The people manager should strive to manage activities through human resource planning management and make sure the recruited personnel adapt to the requirements of the events, as well as realize the appropriate allocation of volunteers to positions.

Human resource planning is very important for the mega events industry. It aims to forecast the demand and supply of manpower, and requires evolving plans to suit both demand and supply. According to Australian Sports Commission (2000), human resource planning specific in the events industry focuses greatly on the demand and supply of volunteer labour. However, human resource requirements are usually unpredictable. For many mega sports-events, forecasting the volunteer demand and supply is a tough task. For example, the volunteer turnover rate reached 4 percent in the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games. The Sydney Olympic Committee in 2000 officially identified that due to the voluntariness of volunteers for various reasons some volunteers changed their mind in middle of their assignment and approximately 4% failed to accomplish the task assigned to them during the Sydney Olympic Games. In addition, because of the incomplete plan, some departments had to recruit essential volunteers temporarily, which was an extremely hard task given the time pressures of

meeting such a high pressure goal(Beijing Planning Office of Philosophy and Social Science, 2008).Despite the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games recruiting more than 100,000 sports events volunteers and 400,000 city volunteers (Manual for Beijing Olympic Volunteers, 2008), the volunteer turnover still reached 5 percent (Beijing Planning Office of Philosophy and Social Science, 2008). As long as medium- and large-scale sports events of various kinds are held, a certain number of volunteers will need to be recruited. In recent years sports events organizations have seen the number of regular employees significantly increase, and the demand for volunteers maintain a steady increase, which is even larger than that of regular employees (Manual for Beijing Olympic Volunteers, 2008). Moreover, mega sports events usually are not annual events, so human resource planning may need to cope with volunteer labour changes. Human resource planning also need to cope with environmental changes as mega sports events are held in different countries and have multicultural participants.

Volunteer Recruitment

The second human resource issue for people managers in the mega events industry is volunteer recruitment.

Wagen (2007) has defined recruitment as the process of attracting potential candidates to an organization. Meanwhile, Hall et al., (2003, pp.28) mentioned that the human resources capacity issue was often identified by the demand for more volunteers. At present, all sports management organizations have numerous volunteers. Volunteers play an important role in the mega events industry and their contribution is significant. Baum, Deery, and Hanlon (2009) found that the 2000 Sydney Olympic Games had 47,000 volunteers, who contributed 54,500 hours of labour, which is equivalent to 110 million Australian dollars. If the service provided by volunteers had been assumed by recruited employees or contractors, the overall budget of Sydney Olympic Games would have increased by 4.5%. Therefore, the contribution of Olympic volunteers may be considered a source of capital for the Olympic Games. Getz (1991) considered that a key step for short term event volunteers 'management is recruitment.

Volunteer recruitment is a tough task for people managers and can easily cause problems. Holmes and Smith (2009) mentioned that the approach to volunteer recruitment depends on the type of events. For regular periodic events, most volunteers are seconding volunteers who have volunteered at this event before. Periodic events are normally held in the same location annually, and volunteer recruitment heavily relies on local residents where volunteers have loyalty to the event. In contrast, mega events are one-off events. Compared with periodic events, mega events have no pool of veteran volunteers. So recruitment plays an important role. As the situation illustrates above, people managers need a recruitment drive for determining the needs of different types of volunteers. The Australian Sports Commission (2000) suggested a two-phase approach to recruitment and volunteer placement by separating human resource management planning into supervisory and operational level volunteers. Supervisory volunteers refer to the professional and technical talents with specialties in certain fields. Supervisory volunteers in sports events mainly refer to high-tech professionals, those with talents for organizational capacity and leadership skills, and relevant professionals who can assist leaders in completing work that is relatively scarce in sports events and relevant services, such as skills in aspects of information technology, sports law, finance in the field of sports events, venue managers, and project managers. Operational volunteers refer to the specific operating personnel able to undertake general work in sports events and

relevant services such as the clerical staff of different departments and venue staff during the operations of sports events.

Bussell and Forbes (2002) recommend the '4W Volunteering Model' (table 1) as a guide for volunteer recruitment process.
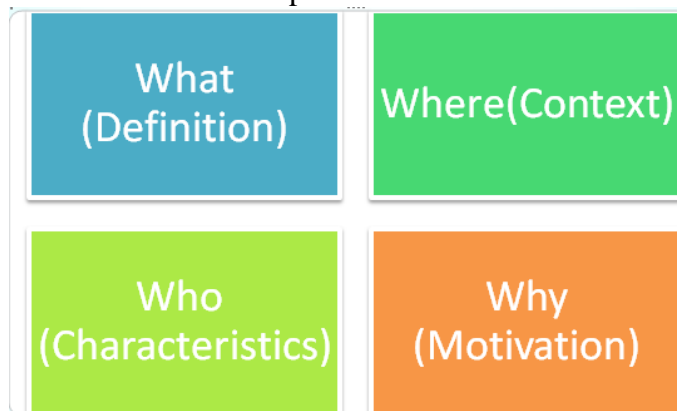

| What (Definition) | Where(Context) |
| Who (Characteristics) | Why (Motivation) |

Table 1：4W Volunteering Model （Bussell and Forbes ,2002)

The aim of recruitment is to attract more candidates. For mega events, the potential candidates may have multi-cultural backgrounds as the participants come from all over the world. Wagen (2007) identified several methods of recruitment for attracting potential candidates in the events industry including: internet advertising, newspaper, agencies, students, and search engines. Wagen found that the most popular method was to use internet recruitment.

Furthermore, the timing of the volunteer recruitment process is also a key point. Holmes and Smith (2009) indicated that the recruitment start time would depend on the size of the events. For example, the 2002 Salt Lake Winter Olympic Games presents a successful model. This organization started its recruitment drive for 35,000 volunteers two years before the event through social media platforms. The 2008 Beijing Olympic Games also started its recruitment drive for 100,000 volunteers two years before the events.

Volunteer Motivation

The third human resource issue for people managers in the mega events industry is volunteer motivation.

Reber (1995, pp.472) defined motivation as "an internal process or a state of an organism that leads to activation". Bussell and Forbes (2002) indicated that an understanding of volunteer behaviour is necessary to recognize the primary motives of those who give their time and work in an organization as volunteers are a group of people who love society, would like to help others without expectations of payment or tangible gain, and make selfless contributions. Volunteers are an important human resource in society. Motivation for volunteers is different from motivation for normal employees. According to Giannoulakis, Wang and Gary (2008), there are several features of volunteers, which lead to difficulties with volunteer motivation. Firstly, voluntary service is a voluntary action with high arbitrariness and personal dispositions. People managers cannot restrain behaviour s of volunteers using their powerful administrative authority, strict rules and regulations in the way that formal organizations such as governments and enterprises operate. Thus, the management and stimulation for volunteers is totally different from those for employees of formal organizations. Secondly, since

voluntary service does not pursue tangible rewards, the economic means of rewards and punishments adopted by enterprises cannot be used to stimulate volunteers. The fact that volunteers make contributions to society and care about others free of charge does not mean volunteers have no need for economic rewards but rather that they have high-level needs of social contact, respect, and self-actualization. According to the theoretical analysis of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, the needs at high levels are difficult to satisfy, so it is more difficult to stimulate volunteers. Thirdly, due to the difference in the environment, educational background, occupation and experience, volunteers have diverse motives for participating in voluntary service. Therefore, it is quite complicated to manage and stimulate the numerous volunteers who have diverse motives.

Holmes and Smith (2009) investigated that volunteer motivations are slightly different indifferent types of events. But the common motivation is to ensure the event success through their volunteering work. In mega events, Holmes and Smith (2009) found that volunteers are mainly motivated by "once in a lifetime experience". Moreover, the research of Bang and Ross (2013) found that volunteers' motivation may have a strong relationship with the satisfaction of volunteers. From a managerial view, satisfaction seems to be uncertain in other parts of the organizers' role in event management. Therefore, people managers are attempting to fulfil volunteers' motivation by understanding the key motivators which influence volunteers 'satisfaction.

Alexander (2013) pointed out that it is necessary to understand why people volunteer before implementing the motivation theory. She separated volunteers' intentions into altruism and egoistic. Altruism is where an individual devotes himself/herself to a voluntary behaviour in order to help others without taking and any return. Altruistic behaviour s focus on selfless behaviour and not expectation for self-gain. Egoistic behaviour s are where an individual's behaviour directly benefits him/her and any type of benefits is given to themselves. Egoism is also dependent on self-interest and is a key factor in most decision making.

Research by Barron and Rihova (2011) introduced multiple-factor motivation modules, namely the Volunteer Functions Inventory, which was created by Clary et al., (1998). This theory divided volunteer motivation into six distinct dimensions: Values, Understanding, Enhancement, Career, Social and Protective. This framework is a useful tool for examining volunteers' motivation at a certain time, and has been widely used in different types of volunteers' contexts.

Wagen (2009) elaborates on the five-factor module created by Jackson (2003) for volunteers in the event industry: Material factor, Purposive, Leisure factor, Egoistic factor and External factor. The material factor includes tangible rewards or social position. The purposive factor can be social appraisal towards voluntary work. The leisure factor can be personal interests, for example; some mega events volunteers are already sports fans. The Egoistic factor can be the individual gaining self-esteem from voluntary work. The External factor can be influences from outside such as family traditions.

Williams *et al.,* (1995) researched and investigated volunteers at a World Cup downhill skiing event and found the key motives were helping the national team, community morale improvement, and reinforcing the community picture along with other tangible factors. Farrell *et al.,* (1998) investigated an elite Canadian women's curling competition and found the most important factor influencing volunteers' motivation was to help to make the

event successful through supporting the community. The motivational factors were a combination of purposive, external traditions, and commitment.

DISCUSSION

Volunteer recruitment in the mega events industry is different from normal employee recruitment as that volunteer labour is instable

The first challenge faced by people managers is to attract more volunteers. According to Graff (2005, pp.24), the volunteer labour force changes quickly, and the number of volunteers goes down. There are three potential factors contributing to the decline in volunteer numbers. The first is that people do not want to spend much time on voluntary work (Nichols et al., 1998). The volunteer participant rate in many western countries has declined. Eisnes et al., (2009) found that in an economic crisis people are willing to do voluntary work, which is unpaid. The second factor is that the younger generations do not like to volunteer as much as previous generations. According to the European Commission (2010) and Sport England (2002) a survey identified a shortage of volunteers especially for young volunteers. The third factor is that the sports and events industry has developed fast, so the human resource recruitment heavily relies on volunteer workforce. The table below explains the increasing demand for Olympic Games volunteer workers in the mega events industry (Table 2).
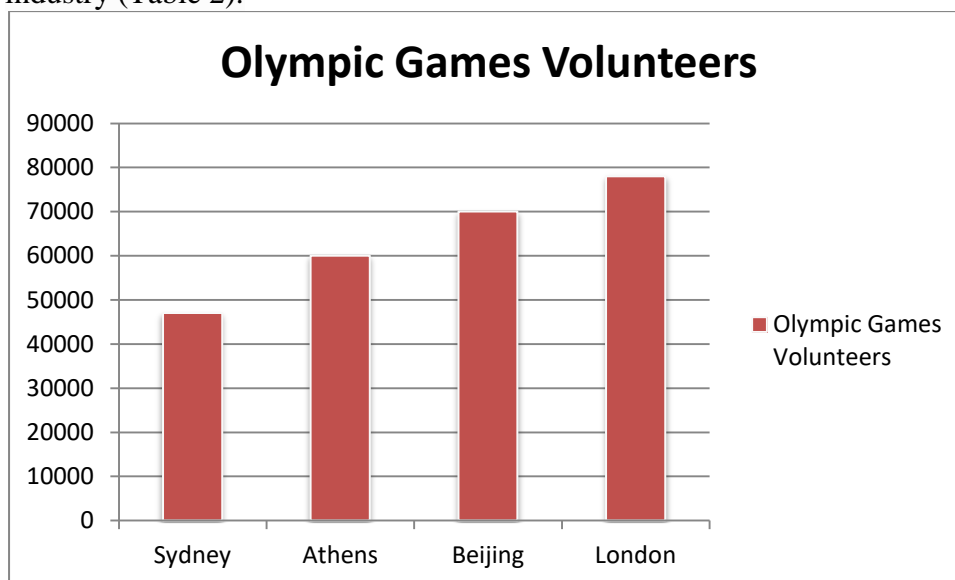

Olympic Games Volunteers

Table 2: Volunteer Number in the Past Olympic Games (Data comes from Sochi2014.com)

The second challenge faced by people managers is the increasing demand for professional and technical volunteers (Nichols et al., 1998). The recruitment standard is rising, some volunteers' skills are not matched to the assignments. Professional volunteers refer to the relevant professional talents that can assist the leaders in completing the work. The auxiliary talents for sports events refer to the professional volunteers assisting the managers of sports events in reaching the objective of such events, such as professional volunteers for information and communication technology and doping control during the management and operations of sports events. Technical volunteers refer to the volunteers participating in the technical work of the relevant departments of sports events, such as the technical data statisticians, events announcers, translators and interpolators, venue liaisons, maintenance

personnel for venue facilities, official liaisons, accompanying liaisons, and media coordinators.

The third challenge is that volunteers 'attitudes have changed. Most organizations face challenges from recruiting new volunteers. Most statistics showed that the size of the volunteer pool has been reduced over the past years (Graff, 2005, pp.24). Many organizations find volunteers today care more about time; they prefer short-term tasks and less responsibility than in the past (Graff, 2005 pp.24). Eisner et al., (2009) suggested the reason why volunteers are less responsive to voluntary activities could be that they do not feel their work is as valued as the paid staff.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This report is concentrated on the three major human resource issues particularly in the mega events industry and identified the human resource issues in mega events industry as being different from those in normal HR practice. These three major issues are: human resource planning, volunteer recruitment, and volunteer motivation. For human resource planning, people managers should focus on the demand and supply of manpower in the events industry. For volunteer recruitment, people managers have to consider the timeline and classify volunteer types. Lastly, for volunteer motivation, people managers need identify volunteers 'satisfaction and their specific motivators. This report also examined volunteer recruitment and investigated its major challenges. The first two challenges faced are concerned with the shortages of volunteers in the workforce. The third one challenge is regarding the changed attitude of volunteers. The recommendations in this paper are based on some previous volunteers' research in the events industry. There are several suggestions for the challenges faced by people managers which are identified above.

Attract More Young Generations

In order to attract the young generation to volunteering, people managers need to investigate and identify the motivation for young generations to be involved involuntary work before the recruitment process begins. People in different age group have different needs. A survey by YouthNet (2012) questioned 2748 respondents and compared two age groups' motivations for volunteering (Table 3). The volunteer recruitment team can first collect this type of data and identify the needs of the target group. They can then implement different strategies to attract potential volunteer candidates.
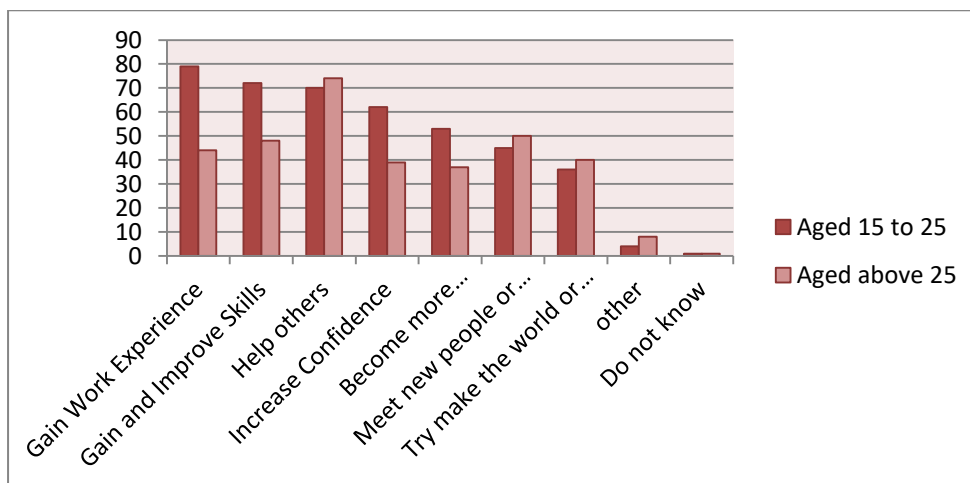
(Volunteer Satisfaction Survey, 2012)

Moreover, another survey by YouthNet (2012) investigated 221 respondents aged 15 to 25 and showed that 46% of them do not know where they can find volunteer opportunities. Graff (2005, pp.28) recommended the use of technology such as e-recruitment, which can increase communication with young generation. Young people do not spend a lot time reading newspapers compared with using the internet. The volunteer recruitment team can also build relationship with schools, colleges and universities to provide easy access to the volunteer application process.

Training Programme for meeting the demands of technical volunteers

For the second challenge, the increasing demands of professional and technical volunteers lead the recruitment standard to become higher. Some volunteers are no longer suitable as they do not have the relevant skills. Eisner (2009) put forward that the recruitment team could lower the recruitment standards, and give support and training to these volunteers as the volunteer turnover is high. For example, half of the volunteers in the 2000 Sydney Olympics had never been engaged in volunteer work and had to be trained for a dozen of hours or dozens of weeks (Flick et al., 2002). The training for volunteers, sponsored by the government, was carried out at many training locations across states and using schools (Flick et al., 2002). The training consisted of three stages: orientation training, venue training and training for specific work (Zeng and Sun, 2006). During orientation training, volunteers learnt the history and spirit of the Olympic Games, the significance and symbol of the torch, customer service, code of conduct, etc.; in venue training, they learnt to be familiar with the work place and work team; and for training for specific work, the volunteers were required to learn related work content in detail (Zeng and Sun, 2006). Three months before the Olympic Games, volunteers had received as many as 1 million hours of training (Parry et al., 2004).

Volunteers Attitude

For the challenge about changed attitude and less responsibility of volunteers, Eisner et al., (2009) pointed out that many voluntary roles are not recognized as valuable contributions to events. So volunteers feel they are not needed. According to Maslow's hierarchy (1954), people want their work or performances to be recognized by others. Fox (2010) suggested that giving volunteers personal thank you notes could motivate them greater than a general thanks to the entire group.

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