

Introducing “From the Field” A New Section of *JSM*

The article that follows, “Hiring Internal Employees: A View from the Field,” inaugurates *JSM*’s new *From the Field* section—a section of the journal that is intended to strengthen the link between sport management theory and sport management practice. In the 20 years since its founding, *JSM* has played a vital role in the development of theory for sport management. This new section of *JSM* represents a significant step forward in the maturation of our field. As sport management research has advanced, so has the range of its applications. Sport management researchers are increasingly incorporating various forms of action research into their work. These include organizational development, market research, impact assessment, strategic forecasting, feasibility study, policy analysis, and program evaluation. Effective consultation to industry using any of these techniques requires relevant theory because theory gives meaning to data. It is rare, however, for any theory to fully inform practice.

The world of sport management is complex and dynamic. The industry’s complexity and dynamism challenge us to broaden, deepen, and sometimes synthesize the theories we have. To become both meaningful and practical, our theories must engage with the exigencies of sport governance and the heuristics of sport management practice. In some instances, this points the way to the development of new theory. Thus, sport management theory is not something that is merely applied, nor does it simply emerge from practice. Rather, the relationship between sport management theory and sport management practice is a dialectical one in which theory informs practice, and practice informs theory.

From the Field articles help to build sport management theory dialectically by providing critical reflections on action research and consultations in sport settings. *From the Field* articles can take a number of different forms depending on the kind of action research or consultation that is undertaken, reported, and analyzed. Nevertheless, they will typically achieve the following:

1. Explain the problem(s) to be solved,
2. Describe the action research or consultation context,
3. Specify relevant theory,
4. State why the action research or consultation was undertaken, what was accomplished, and how it was undertaken,
5. Describe what was found or learned, including relevant data or analyses, and
6. Consider implications for sport management theory, practice, and research.

Manuscripts submitted for *JSM's From the Field* section should adhere to the journal's guidelines for submission of manuscripts. Manuscripts will be peer reviewed in the normal manner. It will be helpful if authors inform the Editor that their manuscript is intended as a *From the Field* contribution. We expect that development of this new section of the journal will enhance the already central role that *JSM* plays in our field's growth and maturation.

—*Laurence Chalip and Lucie Thibault*