


# Module 3 Defining the Club Model (Mission, Vision, and Values)



-  Introduction
-  1. Club Profiles
-  2. Philosophy/Idea
-  3. Context/Preliminary Analysis
-  4. Mission and Vision
-  5. Internal Analysis
-  6. Organisational Chart
-  7. Roles and Functions. Qualities and Skills

 8. Interventions of the Sports Manager in Different Departments

 9. Role of the Team Manager

# Introduction

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The role of the sports manager is becoming increasingly prominent within the realm of football. This position emerges in an era where specialisation plays a significant role in the distribution of tasks within a club.

In this module, we will analyse different profiles of sports managers, taking into account the club context/type, organisational structure, philosophy, etc. It is crucial for the work to be well-structured so that everyone knows their functions and responsibilities. This will help to generate good synergies in the work environment, keep the information well-organised, and ultimately lead to optimal performance. This will enable effective management of both the club and the coaching staff, providing optimal resources for a successful sports season.

## **Factors Influencing Role Allocation within a Sports Management**

### **Methods Used in the Past** —

It is important to understand how sports managers have worked in the past and whether these methods have created good synergies among workers and achieved desired results.

### **New Technologies** —

Understanding which tools are used to access, organise, and filter information is crucial. For this reason, we will focus on processes and their optimisation within the Technical Department.

### **Club Profile/History** —

Knowing the club you are working for, is fundamental for optimising our work. We need to consider its history, experience with player's signings, context, etc. All these factors can influence our work performance.

### **Organisational Chart** —

Analysing how the Technical Department is organised is essential. From there, we can establish different roles and functions. Every participant in the Technical Department must know their responsibilities and who is responsible for each process throughout the season.

From here, we will detail the functions and responsibilities within a sports management and how we can distribute them to keep the information well-organised and make the most of the resources available in our work.

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# 1. Club Profiles

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Not all clubs follow the same pattern. We are in a context where each club has different distinctive features. Often, when analysing a club from an external perspective, we find that the internal reality is completely different. Therefore, it is important, before starting a working relationship with any club, to gather as much information as possible to control these variables and avoid issues during the adaptation process.

Knowing the history and values of the club will be a key factor in determining whether our work can be productive within the institution.

TOOLS FOR INFORMATION GATHERING

TYPES OF CLUBS

All information is useful for analysing the state of a club and the context in which we are to establish a professional relationship.

From a legal standpoint, we can analyse the type of club:

- Membership-based club.
- Sports limited company (SLP).
- Private ownership.
- Etc.

This will help us understand the decision-making process.

To determine if a player is suitable for a negotiation, we need to know the steps to follow. From filtering and monitoring the player in our workspace to the incorporation process, including various negotiation stages. While this example focuses on one aspect, we can apply similar processes to other cases.

Who makes the decision and how is it made? It is important to know who is responsible for each type of decision, how they conclude that a decision is best for the club, and how they implement it. This process will define the style and approach of the club's work.

We also need to understand part of the club's philosophy and history, including its successes, challenging moments, what the fans value, and so on. This will help us connect with the fan base, which we always want to keep happy and excited about the team.

Additionally, we can document the club's historical achievements, important players, recent seasons' performance, and types of signings. For example, the analysis of the line-up of the 2024 Copa del Rey final reveals that seven players (Abdón Prats, Antonio Sánchez, Javi Llabrés from RCD Mallorca, and Galarreta, Vivian, Prados, and Imanol García from Athletic Club) were on loan when they began their professional careers at CD Mirandés.

This fact indicates that CD Mirandés' signing policy involves having many young players on loan from higher-level teams to develop and project them for the future.

Finally, it is always important to have conversations with professionals currently working at the club or who have worked there. In this case, it should be considered whether the information is objective or influenced by other factors.

#### TOOLS FOR INFORMATION GATHERING

#### TYPES OF CLUBS

### **FC Barcelona**

It is a private, non-profit association with legal personality, where members elect the board of directors every four years. Its primary activity is football. The club's statutes state that the general assembly of members is the governing body, while the board of directors is the collegiate governing body, assuming all competencies not reserved for the general assembly.

### **Borussia Dortmund**

A significant particularity of BVB is that it has been the only sports club publicly traded on the stock exchange since October 2000. This means the economic factor is fundamental in its structure and organisation. The club bases its economic performance on player's transactions. It aims to sign players, enhance their value within the organisation, and then sell them in the market. This approach can be seen in cases like Jude Bellingham and Alexander Isak, among others.

## **CD Mirandés**

All Spanish football fans remember the two times CD Mirandés reached the semifinals of the Copa del Rey. The first was in 2012 against Athletic Club, and the second was in 2020 against Real Sociedad.

CD Mirandés is known for its unique club model characterised by the profile of the players on its squad each season. The club primarily features young players, mostly on loan from higher-level teams, aiming to showcase them and facilitate their development in a second division club. Statistically, in the most recent Copa del Rey final between RCD Mallorca and Athletic Club, there were several players who had initially played for the jabato team.

## **Athletic Club**

As one of their motto's states, Athletic Club is "unique in the world." Athletic is a clear example of a club model based on having players from its area of influence, which in this case is Euskal Herria (what they consider the Basque Country.) Their market and player's profile are limited, but they always emphasise the following aspects:

- Players trained in Lezama (their youth academy.)
- Potential players with Euskal Herria heritage.
- Preserving their current talent to prevent players from leaving for other clubs.

With this philosophy, Athletic Club is one of the most prestigious clubs in La Liga. In recent years, they have reached several Copa del Rey finals, winning the championship in 2024, and are often close to securing a spot in European competitions (Europa League.)

## **Manchester City**

When we talk about Manchester City, we are referring to a club model with a very high financial capacity, with access to the best footballers in the world and the ability to acquire any player on the market. Manchester City is owned by an Arab sheikh and is part of the City Football Group, which owns various teams worldwide (India, the United States, Australia, Italy, etc.), including Girona FC. With this type of organisation, City Football Group can move players among their different clubs to control the career paths and development of the footballers they deem promising.

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## 2. Philosophy/Idea

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Once we clearly understand the **profile** of the club, we are establishing a professional relationship with, we need to analyse the club's **philosophy** to set a foundation for the **ideas** we want to implement in our professional environment.

The first step is to conduct a brief analysis of the club's resources and factors. To do this, we will use various strategies:

- Interviews.
- Study of working methods.
- Anonymous surveys.
- Others.

In this regard, it is crucial to maintain a highly observant and open-minded attitude, always considering both the positive aspects and potential areas for improvement. If we approach this with rigid and inflexible ideas, conflicts are likely to arise during the process of getting to know the club.

We cannot go against the club's philosophy and history; instead, we need to ask ourselves the following questions:

- How has the club historically operated?
- What does the fan want?
- How has the club achieved its best results?

La **Masia** at FC Barcelona is a historic and evident model deeply internalised in the club. The operation of FC Barcelona's youth system is based on two objectives: primarily to develop players for the first team and to create value in those who do not make it to the first team in the club. The idea is to combine market value and economic performance.

A notable detail is that, in the past ten years, most players who have reached the first team have been part of the youth system since the early stages of seven-a-side before the age of twelve. This highlights the importance of good scouting at these ages and the prolific nature of FC Barcelona's academy, **La Masia**.

Players who have reached the first team include Carles Aleña, Oscar Mingueza, Alex Collado, Eric García, Arnau Tenas, Nico González, Ansu Fati, Ilaix Moriba, Alejandro Balde, Gavi, Aleix Garrido, Ilyas Akhomach, Hector Fort, Marc Guiu, Pau Cubarsí, and Lamine Yamal.

Examples of professionals outside FC Barcelona include Dani Olmo, Sergio Gómez, Víctor Gómez, Adrià Bernabe, Takefusa Kubo, Mika Marmol, Adria Altimira, Sergi Altimira, Pablo Moreno, Robert Navarro, Fode Fofana, Xavi Simons, Arnau Martínez, José Martínez Marsa, and Iker Bravo.

Currently, FC Barcelona is a well-defined club model. The first team has a strong presence of players trained at **La Masia**.

A DETAILED ANALYSIS OF FC BARCELONA'S SQUAD FOR THE 23/24 SEASON REVEALS THE FOLLOWING ASPECTS:

- **Goalkeepers:** Both Iñaki Peña (1999) and Ander Astralaga (2004), despite not being Catalan, are goalkeepers trained at La Masia. Iñaki Peña joined in

the first-year infant category, and Ander Astralaga joined in the first-year cadet category.

- **Defenders:** Regarding the defensive line, considering that Araújo joined for the reserve team, we can say that Alejandro Balde, Héctor Fort, and Pau Cubarsí are players coming from La Masia. These three footballers have been with the club since the seven-a-side football stage. This speaks highly of the type of work that can be done from the youth academy.

- **Midfielders:** When it comes to midfielders, we can talk about different cases.

- Gavi, a player who joined during the alevin stage, has had his entire development career at La Masia and is currently one of the players with the highest market value.
- Sergi Roberto, through perseverance, has secured a spot in the FC Barcelona first team and has always remained there. He is a role model for future generations.
- Fermín López was brought to La Masia as a child and is currently starting to gain prominence in the first team.
- Lastly, among midfielders, we must highlight the case of Oriol Romeu, a player trained at La Masia from a very young age. However, after performing well at various clubs (Chelsea, Valencia, Stuttgart, Southampton, Girona FC), he has had the opportunity to join the first team. He understands the model and concept of football, a factor that contributed to his integration.

- **Forwards:** Despite this being a very challenging position, the case that has had the most impact among the forwards is that of Lamine Yamal, a young player with proven potential who joined FC Barcelona during the seven-a-

side football stage. Currently, he is one of the most prominent players on the football scene, with a very high market value despite his youth.

During the season, Marc Guiu has had some playing time. A player from La Masia who, despite his youth (2006), has shown a lot of personality in the first and reserve teams.

Lastly, there is the case of Ansu Fati, a player currently on loan at Brighton FC in the Premier League, but who belongs to FC Barcelona and was trained at La Masia since the alevin stage.

The question we can ask ourselves is this: How much has it cost FC Barcelona to develop these footballers? How much value do these footballers have in the market?

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### 3. Context/Preliminary Analysis

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In this section, the word "analysis" will be the transversal axis around which all our content will be developed. When we arrive at a sports management position, the first thing we must do is gather all the information, ask all kinds of questions to have a good conceptual map of the operations.

**KNOWING THE CONTEXT CAN  
CONTRIBUTE TO THE  
FOLLOWING:**

**FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS:**

**HISTORICAL ANALYSIS:**

- Accelerating processes of preliminary or internal analysis. This should not condition our perspective or future decision-making. That is, we should avoid making premature value judgements.
- Anticipating things that might happen if we act in a certain way.
- Knowing what types of behaviours are caused by certain decisions.
- Other aspects.

Some sports managers talk about establishing a sort of "internal audit" when they are new to an organisation. This would involve conducting an internal analysis of the sports management to be able to draw a conceptual map of the context.

The first step is what we call "reality analysis," based on two key elements: functional analysis and historical analysis.

**KNOWING THE CONTEXT CAN  
CONTRIBUTE TO THE  
FOLLOWING:**

**FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS:**

**HISTORICAL ANALYSIS:**

Conducting a study of the efficiency and effectiveness of the processes and working methods of the Technical Department. In this section, we will analyse:

- Work team.
- Economic work.
- Economic resources.
- Club added values.

**KNOWING THE CONTEXT CAN  
CONTRIBUTE TO THE  
FOLLOWING:**

**FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS:**

**HISTORICAL ANALYSIS:**

Evaluating how the work has been done previously, not with the aim of establishing a critical view, but to establish the foundations of a new or optimal method. We will use quantitative criteria, such as:

- Players signed in relation to cost and performance.
- Players sold (price in relation to market value.)
- Analysis of leaks (players leaving at zero cost.)

- Value of the current squad.
- Others.

From here, we will focus on conducting an internal analysis, emphasising the work team, processes, and measurement of results.

- **Work team:** On the one hand, we must consider the quantitative analysis, that is, how many people are part of the Technical Department, how many resources we have to do the work, etc.

On the other hand, for the qualitative analysis, we focus on the quality of human capital and the optimisation of their functions.

- **Processes:** In this section, we will analyse how the different functionalities within the sports management are established. It is about seeing what the day-to-day within a sports management can be like, the processes of recruiting footballers, the stages within different negotiations, etc.

- **Measurement of results:** It is based on extracting all kinds of statistics to obtain a good conceptual map of the context we are facing. It is about seeing if what is done and how it is done is truly optimal and productive to achieve the goals of the sports management.

Finally, we must consider, regarding the preliminary analysis, the economic and financial resources. Understanding the historical and current financial capacity of the sports management will help us anticipate different situations we might face in the future. Knowing the financial history, we can foresee where future investments can be made, see the current economic state, etc.

- **Infrastructure:** This involves the spaces we have to carry out the work activity, that is, dimensions, characteristics, etc. This is a fundamental

aspect as it can help optimise resources, contribute to a good working environment, etc.

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## 4. Mission and Vision

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These two concepts will help us synchronise the sports management model we want to introduce with the process we aim to set over time, taking into account the factors explained above.

Mission: It is the purpose or reason for being of the organisation. We are talking about what identifies us as a work team/sports management.

### IT ANSWERS THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- What do we do?
- What is our purpose?
- What is our competitive advantage?
  
- It represents the orientation and purpose for all the functional areas of the organisation.
- It establishes the foundations for the design of the organisational structure.

### OBJECTIVES AND GROWTH STRATEGIES

The mission will help us establish how we organise ourselves within the work of sports management. How do we work? What are the processes to follow? These are some of the questions we need to answer.

**Vision:** It describes what the organisation wants to be in the future, that is, how it wants to be perceived or remembered. It answers the following questions:

- What will we be like in the future?
- What will we do to achieve our goals?
- What activities will we develop?
  
- It must be realistic and, at the same time, constitute a challenge.
- It should indicate the direction towards which the whole team must work.
- It will reinforce the organisation's values and strengths.
- It must be motivating and generate enthusiasm within the organisation.

In this aspect, we will focus on the place we want to reach in the short/medium term. We are talking about outlining a possible goal, that is, where we want to go. It is important for a sports management to be clear about where it wants to go because this is where the foundations of the model to follow are built. This is one of the reasons why many sports management teams always try to have a margin of two or three seasons. It is a prudent time that helps us visualise whether the work being done can lead to the achievement of the aspects reflected in the vision of the sports management.

**Values:** These are the convictions of an organisation, the guiding principles that dictate how the people who work in it should behave and act.

- They help to identify what is right from what is wrong in the professional development of the teamwork.

- They are closely related to the organisation's culture.
- It will be essential for any organisation to identify, agree upon, and periodically communicate these values.

The question is: What would be the values of FC Barcelona? What would be the values of the club you work for?

From here, the idea is to relate these concepts to specific clubs to identify management models and methods.

Identifying the mission, vision, and values of a club helps to understand many situations that can be experienced in relation to it, such as the type of decision-making, types of signings, player profiles, team profile, etc.

For this reason, it is important to establish a good relationship among the mission, vision, and values of the club and see if these are accepted within the organisation. This will imply the necessary working time to see and evaluate if this is well formulated. An organisation that can adapt these elements can help generate good synergies within the work environment and optimise the resources we have.

Having defined this, we can shape the goals of the sports management and seek growth strategies.

**IT ANSWERS THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:**

**OBJECTIVES AND GROWTH STRATEGIES**

In setting objectives, we need to consider that we will need time and space to execute them. For this reason, we must consider the following:

- Objectives define the functioning and policy of the sports management/club.
- Objectives should not be too extensive or numerous.
- These objectives must be measurable and revisable over time.
- Objectives should be clear and understandable to all club members.
- Objectives should be motivating and provide a stimulus to all club members.
- All members of the sports management team must be committed to the club's objectives (in this case, the sports management objectives.)

In this sense, we must always keep in mind different growth strategies that help us anticipate the next step to continue evolving within the world of football. Growth strategies in sports management can be directed towards the following aspects:

- Optimisation of processes for detecting and selecting football players. Keeping the player at the centre of the structure to provide all necessary services.
- Optimisation of economic resources. We must always focus on achieving a good economic balance.
- Increasing and developing a training programme for youth football.
- Creating a stable work team. This will help stabilise processes.
- Striving to have a professionalised structure.
- Maximising the use of new technologies (big data and AI), while not neglecting traditional methods that have always worked (live observation of players).

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## 5. Internal Analysis

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Within the internal analysis of the structure of sports management, we must consider different factors.

### **Internal Organisation and Management** —

In this regard, we must consider the following:

- How is the sports management organised? Governing bodies.
- Who makes the decisions and how? Decision-making process.
- Level of autonomy in management.
- How much "power" does each position have in decision-making? Levels of qualification and competencies of positions with executive responsibility.
- Organisational chart of the organisation.
- Management style.
- Delegation of functions.
- Organisational culture.

### **Club/Entity Added Values** —

Here, we focus on what makes our identity distinctive compared to others. This will help us understand what type of market we have access to, which players are the most suitable, the profile of the coaches, etc.

### **Work Team Management** —

How many people are working in sports management? How are they organised in their work? How can we optimise that work? What types of profiles do we have working in our sports management? What are the working hours of the employees?

These are questions that need to be answered in the internal analysis, considering the working and economic conditions of the employees.

What profiles might be the most suitable for working in sports management? In this aspect, we can talk about a very flexible and multifunctional profile:

Negotiation skills.

Experience in the sector (consider ex-footballers.)

People who have a sense of belonging to the club.

Organised, professional individuals with knowledge of the sector.

### **Economic and Financial Resources** —

Depending on the type of club, we will know the margin we have available to work with. This will depend on the ownership or the club's economic margin, as well as any economic limits that may be imposed by

administrations (e.g., LFP) It is important to know, before each market starts, the margin we have to work with.

## **Workspaces** —

Knowing the workspaces will help us make a good internal assessment of the working conditions. In this case, we will focus on two important elements: What workspaces do we have available for our activities? In what condition are these workspaces?

Any sports management needs these characteristics to function coherently: having a unique direction and planning.

It is important to establish a roadmap. All sports management employees need to know the work processes, how the work is divided, and the roles and responsibilities of each person. Depending on the style of the sports management, we can determine if these decisions are more or less consensual.

Regarding the work team, the fundamental principles can be as follows:

- Generate a sincere and clear work environment.
- Establish simple and optimal processes.
- Commitment always comes before mere involvement.
- Make all employees feel part of everything that happens in the club.

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## 6. Organisational Chart

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The organisational chart determines how we are organised, whether it concerns sports management or the club/organisation. It answers the question, "how are we structured?"

Regarding the structure within sports management, we need to have a drawn organisational chart that shows the company's idea and the possible connections among departments. This will give us an idea of the philosophy and working method.

DEPENDING ON ITS DESIGN, WE CAN DISTINGUISH  
AMONG THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF  
ORGANISATIONAL CHARTS:

THE TYPE OF DESIGN CAN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING  
QUESTIONS:

- **Vertical Organisational Charts:** Top to bottom branch units. This allows us to see the different hierarchical levels.
- **Horizontal Organisational Charts:** In this case, the units go from left to right, placing the most important figure on the left. From there, an order is generated.

- **Mixed Organisational Charts:** This type of organisational chart combines vertical and horizontal structures. This can help us see the different levels and the types of internal relationships that may exist.
- **Circular Organisational Charts:** In this type of organisational chart, the most important figure is in the centre; from there, different branches emerge. The closer a branch is to the centre, the more significance it has within the organisation. The outermost circle indicates the lowest level within the hierarchy. Units at the same level are positioned in the same circle, equidistant from the centre.
- **Block Organisational Charts:** These are a variant of vertical organisational charts but with the idea of grouping as many units as possible within the same space.

DEPENDING ON ITS DESIGN, WE CAN DISTINGUISH  
AMONG THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF  
ORGANISATIONAL CHARTS:

THE TYPE OF DESIGN CAN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING  
QUESTIONS:

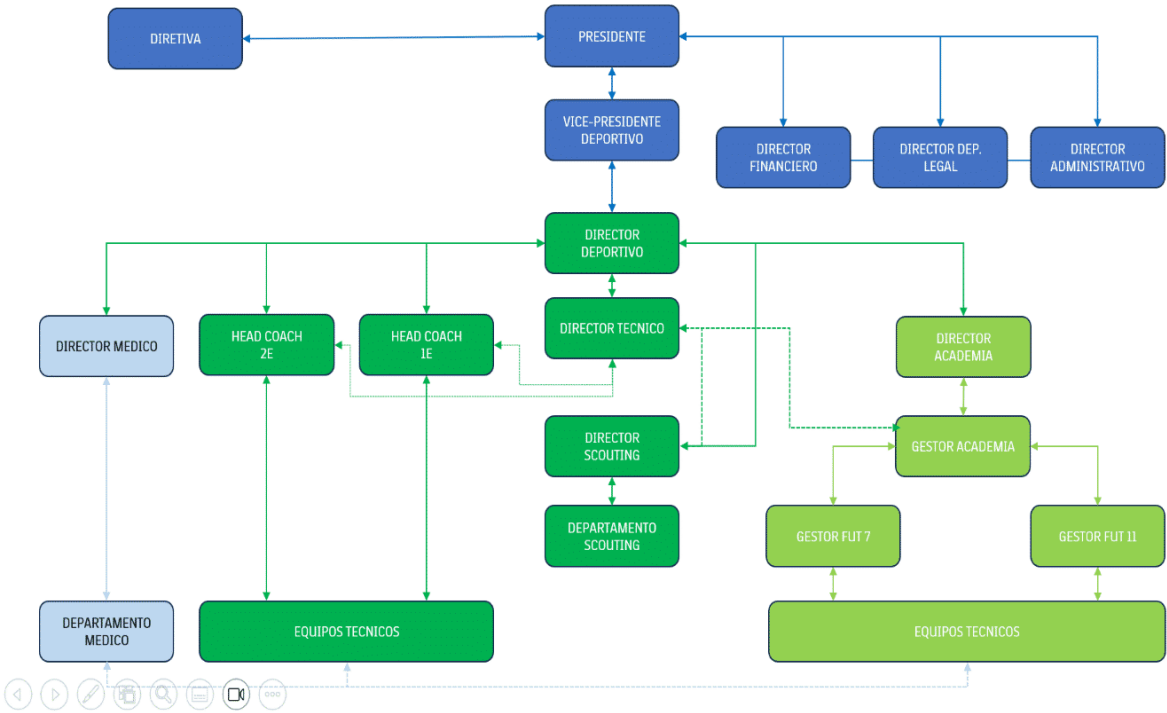
- How are decisions made?
- How do the different departments relate to each other?
- What types of relationships are the most important?

It is important to note that each sports management team must have a unique and different structure. It must be flexible and adaptable over time. Its update and review will be key elements to adapt to new contexts that may arise.

In our case, it is always a priority to have a department/area that manages all the club's information. It is important to note that the work done within sports management belongs to the club, not the individuals. For this reason, it is always important for the club to have a neutral space where this information is stored. The information generated from the work done in the club is the club's asset. All this is done with the following objectives:

- To demonstrate the quality of the work done within sports management.
- To leave a legacy for future professionals who work at the club.

**Image 1: Organisational Chart in a Sports Entity**



Source: own elaboration.

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## Image 1 Translation

ADMINISTRATION – PRESIDENT

SPORTS VICE PRESIDENT – FINANCIAL MANAGER – LEGLA SPORTS  
MANAGER – ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER

SPORTS MANAGER

MEDICAL MANAGER – HEAD COACH 2E – HEAD COACH 1E – COACH –  
ACADEMY MANAGER

SCOUTING MANAGER – ACADEMY AGENT

SCOUTING DEPARTMENT – 7-A-SIDE AGENT – 11-A-SIDE AGENT

MEDICAL DEPARTMENT – COACHING STAFF – COACHING STAFF

**CONTINUE**

## 7. Roles and Functions. Qualities and Skills

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Once we have the organisational chart defined, we need to establish the roles and functions of each of the areas or departments. This will help us develop our activities within sports management in a coherent manner. In this section, decision-making will be the most important element

**It is essential to know the following:** —

- What is the scope of action of each department.
- Maintain good communication within each department and among departments.
- Know who makes the decisions and how they are made.

**It is important that all decisions are made with the following objectives:** —

- Develop the vision and general strategy of the club.
- Build a high-level and responsible work team.

- Define and represent the values and history of the club and its shareholders or members.
- Define growth models and strategies. Anticipate what may happen.
- Provide the organisation with a modern and efficient management system.
- Make decisions with a focus on sports as well as economics. The concept of profitability.
- Generate commitment within the different departments.
- Lead and motivate all club employees.

It is important to note that the sports manager is the highest authority in the football sector and, in some cases, in the non-sports sector as well. For this reason, it is essential to know how to manage all types of situations, both in sports and in institutional matters.

### **Skills and Qualities of the Sports Manager** —

A sports manager, on an emotional level, must possess certain specific **qualities**, as these will influence the rest of the employees and their team. For this reason, we will focus on some qualities that we consider essential. However, given that each person has their essence, we must know how to handle these concepts to optimise our work and make it productive for the club:

- Leadership (leading to influence.)
- Hard working attitude: "leading by example."
- Initiative in decision-making.
- Identification with the club's philosophy.
- Actions aimed at achieving the aspects described in the club's vision.
- Generating good synergies between the coach, staff, sports management, Technical Department, and scouts. This will facilitate communication and keep us updated on needs and issues to address.

· Organisation. Creating work routines that help the entire department function. This includes organising regular meetings, managing reports, handling information, and holding periodic updates (weekly, monthly, etc.).

We always propose creating a calendar to know where to prioritise and focus our efforts at each moment of the season. The Gantt chart is a method that helps organise all functions within a specific time and space.

For example, regarding meetings, we can establish the following:

- Technical Department: weekly meetings.
- Objective updates: monthly meetings.
- Technical committee and succession planning: quarterly reviews.
- Meetings with scouts: quarterly/monthly meetings.

Another way to be organised is by evaluating players by levels and categorising each type. General labels should be generated for each position, such as "right-back; level 2; offensive projection".

This will help classify players and access information optimally.

Each sports management department will establish its method, considering the club's resources and the philosophy.

· Ability to reformulate and evaluate situations that were previously established in a certain way and now need re-evaluation. For example, when an objective is not met, it is important to know how to reformulate it to find a viable solution.

Professionally, what **skills** should appear?

- Knowledge of professional football. Having a database of players acquired before signing them for the position is crucial. Experience is very important. Understanding high-performance operations.
- Familiarity with federation rules and regulations.
- Proficiency in using computer tools, staying up to date with the latest technologies and management tools.
- Communication skills. For this, knowledge of different languages is essential. It is a fundamental added value for entering various international markets.
- Understanding the functioning and organisation of formative football to develop a talent management programme.
- Applying a working method that guarantees succession planning in sports. It is about creating a legacy for the future of the organisation. For example, if we had to sell a right-back, do we know the options within the club? What market opportunities exist?
- Having a good mentality. We analyse this aspect according to two concepts. Firstly, mentality in terms of personality: a mindset of improvement, growth, and a winning spirit. The second relates to negotiation skills. We believe the emotional aspect is important for handling timing in negotiation to reach an agreement, always considering that both parties must be satisfied.
- Public speaking skills.
- Relationship with agents.

These skills and qualities must be relevant, important, and fundamental.

Finally, it is often said that a sports manager must anticipate events, going one step ahead. But this is not always positive; it does not mean anticipating movements to seek improvement in a specific aspect only. We can also prepare to face more challenging situations. Having a stoic mindset (preparing the mind for situations that may not turn out as we would like) can be a skill that helps us face what is to come in the future.

## Functions —

As a general idea, a sports manager must, on the one hand, know how to delegate functions, but, at the same time, have direct influence over everything that happens in the club's environment. To summarise, their functions should be related to the following elements:

- Sports coordination/management of the professional part of the club (first team/reserve team).
- Coordination/management of the Technical Department.
- Ultimate responsibility for the club's sports area. The main function is managing the first team's roster: signings, releases, and renewals.
- Organising the club in terms of sports processes and working methods.
- Signings: first team, reserve team, Technical Department, etc.
- Having control over the different areas of the club, especially those that can have a direct influence on sports work: communication, legal area, etc.
- Acting as a channel and filter for all types of information (from the first team, sports management, ownership, Technical Department, etc.).
- Generating good synergies with the first team's coach and coaching staff.
- Negotiating functions. In this aspect, we need to introduce two concepts: relationship with agents and player contracts.

- Being aware of the economic margin we have in order to move players.
- Using the figure of the team manager to know the possible situations that the squad experiences on a daily basis.
- Relationship with ownership. Keeping the leaders informed of everything involved in the day-to-day running of the club.
- Monitoring players.
- Knowing the day-to-day of the youth academy. Delegating to the academy managers everything related, but always from an objective perspective.

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## 8. Interventions of the Sports Manager in Different Departments

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A sports manager has influence over various departments within the club. Depending on the type of club ownership, the sports manager will have different kinds of influence. In this section, we will analyse them

**In this regard, we must consider the following:**

- All decisions made by the sports manager must aim to develop the club's football policy and identity.
- At the first level of action, they will have direct influence over the first and reserve teams. From

### **Football/Professional Football Department**

When talking about the football department, we refer to: first and reserve teams. We can say that many decisions will have a direct influence on this department.

### **First Team**

Knowing that there must be certain limits, it is important for the sports management to be involved in the day-to-day activities of the team. Understanding what happens within the staff and among the players will help us make decisions, always for the benefit of the team, with the goal of fulfilling our mission within the club. In this sense, we need to establish good synergies between the first team (staff) and the sports management. A key tool would be to schedule pre-competition and post-competition meetings to analyse the state of the squad and the short-term context we are facing.

The characteristics of this relationship will be as follows:

- Fluid and respectful.

- Daily communication.
- Establishing communication protocols (promotions and demotions of players).
- Always considering the club's idea/philosophy.
- Creating a context of trust and security.
- Respecting different decision-making processes.
- Establishing roles and responsibilities.
- Always considering the limits, for example: technical-tactical situations under the responsibility of the coaching staff.

Within the first team's structure, which is related to sports management, we must consider the reserve team manager. This is, the person who will monitor the day-to-day activities of this squad, addressing the reserve team's own needs and assisting with the first team's needs as they arise. Controlling the working dynamics between the first team and the reserve team is crucial to creating a stable working context and helping both teams achieve different objectives.

### **Youth Academy**

The sports manager will intervene in the youth academy with the objective of producing players for the first team or players who can provide economic value to the club. In this case, as we have described earlier, FC

Barcelona is a clear example of a club that applies a method guided by two lines:

- Producing players with potential for the first team. It is important to consider that the market value of these players is very high.
- Producing players who can generate economic returns for the club. Players for other clubs. In this aspect, loan and purchase strategies (with a percentage of future sales) are very important.

In this sense, the sports manager can have influence in the academy regarding the following aspects:

- Creating and developing a youth academy training programme.
- Providing order to the structure and method to the working processes in the youth academy.
- Nurturing and enhancing talent, both of players who may have a future in the first team and of staff members who are part of the organisation. Developing new loyalty programmes.
- Publicising the work done at the club to the outside world (to families, affiliated clubs, etc.).
- Developing methodological and training programmes that help players grow and move closer to professional football.
- Viewing the player as the centre of everything. They are the most important asset of the club. For this reason, all necessary services must be provided: psychological support, conditioning aspect, health department (medical services), residence, etc.

## **Technical Department**

Its structure, operations, dynamism, and planning will allow for a global view of the market and its adaptation to the club's strategy and needs.

Protocols must be established for negotiations:

- Considering the needs that must be met and the opportunities the market offers.
- Always evaluating the possibility of entering a negotiation. Time optimisation is crucial, especially during market periods or at the end of these periods.
- Knowing the available resources (both economic and others.)
- Maintaining a good negotiation tempo. Each negotiation must have steps, and these must be recorded.
- Establishing limits within negotiations, this is, knowing how far we can go and where we need to start.

The next aspect to analyse is the scouting or monitoring process:

- Considering recommendations from the head coach to understand necessary criteria or profiles.

- Identifying possible profiles based on criteria set by the sports management.
- Evaluating the club's economic level and its position in the market. We need to know in which negotiations we have possibilities and in which we do not.
- Always having different options (between two and four per position.)
- Establishing a succession line by players. Always knowing how we can replace players/positions at specific times. These succession lines must be by position and age.

### **Types of Players Monitoring During the Season**

- **Quantity Concept:** During the first part of the season (the first three months), watch as many leagues and players as we have access to and that are within our reach. Establishing a system of filters, tags, and player categorisation.
- **Quality Concept:** Based on these filters, try to see the players live. This aspect will give a feeling that can help us move to the next step.
- From here, alternate between direct observation and video monitoring.
- Rely on statistical data from this and previous seasons.

- Know their curriculum, experience, and professional career. This last point will provide very significant data.

For this, it is important to always have teams, leagues, and players well categorised and tagged. This way, we can establish a good analysis to reach the player with whom to start a negotiation. At each level/category, there are specific parameters. For example, scoring twenty goals in the Premier League does not have the same value as scoring twenty goals in the Latvian league.

Finally, regarding player monitoring and its influence on the Technical Department, we must consider all types of information about the athletes:

- Contractual situation of our players. This will allow us to know the status of each player and see how we can approach different situations (renewals, termination, sale, etc.).
- Contractual situation of the players we are monitoring.
- Knowing under-23 players in different competitions. Having a figure responsible for scouting and monitoring potential players for the reserve team.
- Events where we can get to know young or potential players.

## **Relationships with Players' Agents**

In the context we are in, we cannot eliminate any element that participates in football. Although, in some respects, the relationship with agents can be more or less positive, we must consider that agents always try to do their job by seeking the best conditions for their players. For this reason, from the sports management perspective, we must consider agents and their participation/space within the football world. In this regard, we believe that the relationship with agents should have the following characteristics:

- Respect. Not all negotiations with agents will reach a good understanding, so we must understand each situation and always treat all agents with respect and cordiality.
- Establishing a trusting context to facilitate the flow of information.
- Being firm and establishing boundaries within each negotiation.
- Currently, there are many intermediaries, so we should always try to negotiate with the player's actual agent.

By considering the agent, we will have more possibilities of reaching good agreements. We must remember that good negotiations are always those where both parties benefit (club and player/agent).

We consider this the most important area of the club. It must be the nexus where all information related to the club can be gathered. Based on the idea that information is the property of the club, not individuals, we consider this area a key element in the organisation of a club. When we arrive at a club, we always try to see what information is available, if there is a database, among other things.

For this reason, in this department, we will base our work on the analysis of different reports. It is important to note that reports must always be up-to-date and that the aspects to be analysed must be optimal to help us make good decisions. It is usually recommended to produce monthly, quarterly, semi-annual, and annual reports.

Each area will have its reports and items to manage. All of this must be shared with the information department, so it always has access.

#### INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

#### COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

- Using software for entering reports and information.
- Incorporating big data and artificial intelligence.

- Managing licenses and programmes for internal club monitoring and team/player tracking.
- Creating a database with filters and tags to efficiently access information.
- Keeping an internal control with updated information. Establishing control methods and evaluation for all these processes.

• **Reports:** Within an organisation, there will be different types of reports. Each department will have characteristic reports. Regarding the Technical Department/sports management, the reports are related to:

- Players scouting.
- Analysis of collective performance.
- Analysis of individual performance.

Each club, according to the philosophy or profile of the sports management, will have a specific type of report. The report profile will always consider:

- The club's philosophy.
- The working style of the sports management.
- How we classify, organise, and tag information.

Regarding the reports, their characteristics should be as follows:

- Brief: They should contain essential and necessary information.

- Updated: They should be current on everything related to what we want to evaluate.
- Using language and tags that align with the club's line.
- Seeking objective values to help categorise items.
- Visualisation: They should be well-organised and designed.
- Following the club's corporate line.

#### INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

#### COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

We view this area as having a direct relationship with sports management, but also as a bidirectional department that can influence or advise sports management on the following aspects:

- Information Management.
- Ways of approaching and interacting with the media.
- Guidance on dealing with various media outlets.

In this regard, we will develop the relationship with the press

- The sports manager should have daily contact with the head of press, especially before and after media engagements.

- Foster a good, or rather cordial, relationship with the press that respects the professional boundaries of each role.
- Always keep spaces for discretion and confidentiality regarding certain work-related matters (e.g., potential signings, terminations, etc.).
- Understanding communication processes and being aware of and follow communication protocols and commitments.
- Working to build trust to avoid leaks to the media.

On the other hand, sports management will use the communication department to enhance visibility and value of the work done within the club. The way in which sports management's work is projected to the outside world will be a crucial value in connecting with fans.

There may be other departments/areas where sports management can have influence, depending on the type of club/ownership. For example, the medical area, where medical protocols may take priority due to the speciality of the department. The economic area is also relevant for informational purposes to understand how we can impact the budget and the margin available for player transactions in the market.

**CONTINUE**

## 9. Role of the Team Manager

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In the world of sports, particularly in football, there is a role that is becoming increasingly prominent. It is the team manager. The team manager is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of the team, including players and staff, and assists with matters that are not 100% related to coaching or tactical aspects.

### Functions of the Team Manager

- Player logistics management (travel, commitments, schedule management, meals, among others.) The most critical aspect here is managing everything related to matches and training. For example, develop travel plans, oversee security arrangements, hotel bookings, and meal planning. All these details are communicated to the staff, and many decisions are made in consultation with them.
- Assist players with daily matters that are not 100% related to football activities
- Serve as the contact person for managing match tickets for family, friends, and other commitments.

- Resolve short-term conflicts and issues.
- Assist and advise media representatives when appropriate.
- Provide support to players' families during training sessions, matches, etc.
- Promote the club's history and philosophy.
- Address issues related to player availability for training. Act as a communication link with the reserve team to cover for absences. It is crucial to avoid burdening the coach and their staff with these logistical concerns so they can focus on coaching and tactical work.
- Remain operational and available as much as possible (24/7.)
- Attend training sessions and first team events whenever possible.

The team manager acts as the liaison between the club's management/sports management, and the locker room. This role involves channelling information. The communication is both ways.

While the team manager is part of the club's Technical Department and structure, their role is to experience daily locker room life, always with the aim of supporting players and coordinating various activities.

It's important to note that the team manager is not 100% part of the staff; they should not participate in or influence coaching decisions made by the staff.

At times, the team manager may serve as the club's institutional representative if no executive or sports director is available to attend. In this sense, the team manager's multifunctionality is key. They should possess

strong communication and public speaking skills, as they may interact with the media.

Additionally, the team manager should consistently generate positive synergies, whether in good or bad dynamics. Their mindset is crucial to avoid being overwhelmed by emotions following a match, tournament, etc. Maintaining good relationships with all club staff will facilitate their role.

### **The Team Manager Relationship with The Players** —

The team manager must be a supportive and advisory figure for the players, facilitating their daily lives. The primary goal for players is to remain 100% focused on football-related matters. Therefore, the team manager should always provide support, ensuring that off-field issues do not interfere with the player's performance.

The team manager does not exercise authority over the player but rather stands as an equal, providing assistance as needed.

They must advise and guide the player in various situations (e.g., dealing with the press, attending events.) They also manage the players' schedules (e.g., sponsorship events, vacation control, etc.).

The relationship between the team manager and the player is professional but can sometimes become personal. The team manager can offer motivation and emotional support during difficult personal or professional times.

Lastly, the team manager's role is crucial when a player joins a team. They help the player adapt and organise their daily routine. While the team manager may not directly influence a player's acceptance within a team,

they create synergies to help that. They will facilitate the player's day-to-day and their adaptation to the new context. Having someone to assist in adjusting to a new environment is essential. We must consider that training sessions last around ninety minutes, plus additional time for convocations, gym sessions, etc. The question is, "what about the rest of the players' day?" This is where the team manager's role becomes significant.

### **The Team Manager Relationship with The Media** —

We are all aware that having exclusive information is crucial for the media. Therefore, the team manager is the person who must control these flows of information. On the one hand, they must understand and empathise with the role that the media plays in the world of sports, which is why it is always recommended to maintain a good and bidirectional relationship.

Often, the media will use the team manager to verify the authenticity of the information they receive. Thus, managing these information flows is crucial in evaluating the team manager's performance.

If there is a cordial and respectful relationship between the team manager and the media, information will be channelled in a way that ensures fans are always well-informed.

At times, the team manager must interact with the media. Therefore, one of their skills must be the ability to express themselves in public. A good relationship between the team manager and the media will help manage such situations effectively.

## **The Team Manager Relationship with The Sports Management** —

The team manager is part of the Technical Department/Sports Management, but their functions are entirely different from those of a technical secretary or scout. In this regard, we must highlight the following:

- The relationship between a team manager and the sports management must be smooth and bidirectional.
- The sports management must respect the privacy of certain situations. Without this respect, the team manager cannot earn the players' trust.
- The team manager will always act in the best interest of the club in all the interactions and relationships with the sports management.

The team manager's position is always between the squad and the sports management. Therefore, they must handle information effectively, manage it properly, and give it the necessary importance.

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## **The Team Manager Relationship with The Surroundings** —

When discussing the role of the team manager, we must consider their relationship with the surroundings, which includes family, friends, commitments, agents, etc.

There are various situations where the team manager can assist the player regarding their surroundings. Therefore, it is essential to:

- Being prepared to adapt to all kinds of situations in terms of time and space.
- Having the ability to resolve all types of incidents.
- Always looking for solutions to ensure the surroundings are comfortable.

- Maintaining a good mindset and a positive attitude in all situations.

Ensuring the comfort of the player's surrounding provides security for the players, allowing them to focus on what happens on the field.

On match days, this relationship becomes even more crucial. This includes managing commitments for tickets, providing parking facilities within the stadium, arranging places to eat/dine, and granting access to locker rooms and mixed zones, etc. The team manager's skills and the boundaries they set will be critical to their success and performance evaluation.

**CONTINUE**