Major Sport Event Operational Planning Issues and Strategies:

A Multi-Case Delphi Study

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Abstract

This study examined the operational planning, implementation and execution issues of major sport events, as well as the mitigation and management strategies used to address these issues, with the aim of determining best practices in sport event operational planning. The three Research Questions were: 1) What can previous major sport events provide to guide the operational management of future events? 2) What are the operational issues that arise in the planning and execution of a major sport event, how are they mitigated and what are the strategies used to deal with these issues? 3) What are the best practices for sport event operational planning and how can these practices aid future events? Data collection involved a modified Delphi technique that consisted of one round of in-depth interviews followed by two rounds of questionnaires. Both data collection and analysis were guided by an adaptation of the work of Parent, Rouillard & Leopkey (2011) with a focus on previously established issue and strategy categories. The results provided a list of Top 26 Prominent Issues and Top 17 Prominent Strategies with additional issue-strategy links that can be used to aid event managers producing future major sport events. The following issue categories emerged as having had the highest impact on previous major sport events that participants had managed: timing, funding and knowledge management. In addition, participants used strategies from the following categories most frequently: other, formalized agreements and communication.

*Keywords:* Delphi, major sport events, issues, strategies, best practices

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**Chapter One: Introduction**

**Background**

Major sport events are highly prominent in today's sport culture. They are often referred to in different ways, including mega-events (Roche, 2000), mega sporting events (Byers, Slack & Parent, 2012) and hallmark events (Ritchie, 1984). The varying terms share similarities, with common themes being mentioned, such as size of the event, economic and tourism impact, being held regularly but often on a one-off basis per city, and duration of event (Bowdin, Allen, Harris, McDonnell & O'Toole, 2012; Byers, Slack, & Parent, 2012; Getz, 1997; Ritchie, 1984). Throughout this document a large-scale sporting event will be called a major sport event, which Doherty (2009) referred to as a one-time or perhaps annual sport competition, as opposed to a league. Examples of major sport events that can be categorized this way include the Olympic Games, the Pan Am Games, the Commonwealth Games, the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup tournaments and various other local, collegiate, national and international sport competitions. The prominence of the aforementioned major sport events has led to an abundance of event management literature utilizing these events as case studies, with a focus on various event management topics, which is discussed in detail in Chapter Two.

**The Researcher.**

The researcher's interest in major sport events stemmed from a volunteer experience with the Canadian Olympic Committee (COC) at the London 2012 Olympic Games. This experience became possible when the researcher took a semester abroad in

England as part of her four-year Sport Management undergraduate degree from Brock University. During this volunteer experience the researcher was able to acknowledge that her volunteer position, with one Olympic team, was small in comparison to the overall size of the event. This thought process has led the researcher to want to understand major sport events on a wider scale, specifically in regards to their operational planning. With major sport events taking place so frequently it is the hope of the researcher to contribute to the literature on the operational planning of these events in order to aid in the efficiency and effectiveness of future events. The researcher also seeks a career in event management, with a specific focus on major sport events, and feels this research will assist in this goal.

## Outline of Research

The purpose of this study was to examine the operational planning, implementation and execution issues of major sport events, as well as the mitigation and management strategies used to address these issues, with the aim of determining best practices in sport event operational planning. The research questions underlying this thesis are as follows:

1) What can previous major sport events provide to guide the operational management of future events?

2) What are the operational issues that arise in the planning and execution of a major sport event, how are they mitigated and what are the strategies used to deal with these issues?

3) What are the best practices for sport event operational planning and how can these practices aid future events?

Data collection was comprised of two methods, which combined to form a modified Delphi technique (Martino, 1983). The methods included in-depth interviews (Liamputtong, 2009), and questionnaires. The Delphi technique is defined by Day and Bobeva (2005) as "a structured group communication method for soliciting expert opinion about complex problems or novel ideas, through the use of a series of questionnaires and controlled feedback" (p. 103). Three rounds of the modified Delphi technique were completed, as this is common across published Delphi study literature (Costa, 2005; Day & Bobeva, 2005; Powell, 2003).  A full description of the Delphi technique and the use of a modified Delphi technique for this thesis is described in detail in Chapter Three.

Both data collection and analysis were guided by an adaptation of the work of Parent, Rouillard & Leopkey (2011). The study conducted by Parent et al. (2011) was utilized to underscore this examination as it closely examined operational planning in relation to major sport events.  Data collection was influenced by eight guiding strategy categories provided by Parent et al. (2011) that included: (1) communication processes; (2) decision-making frames; (3) engagement; (4) flexibility; (5) formalized agreements; (6) human resource management procedures/principles; (7) strategic planning and (8) structural framework. Further, data analysis was framed with the previously stated strategy types, in addition to15 issue categories identified by Parent et al. (2011) that included (1) time; (2) geography; (3) funding; (4) other resources; (5) political situation; (6) accountability/authority; (7) activation/leveraging;(8) knowledge management; (9) legal; (10) operational; (11) planning; (12) power; (13) relationships; (14) social issues; (15) structure; and (16) turnover (Parent et al., 2011).

As indicated, a modified Delphi technique was utilized that involved the use of three rounds. As is common in Delphi studies, participants may not participate in every round and dropouts do occur (Martino, 1983). Reflecting that statement, data was collected from 15 participants in Round One, 13 participants in Round Two and 10 participants in Round Three. All participants were sport event managers, responsible for organizing operational plans at local, collegiate, national or international major sport events. Communication was made primarily via email, including the invitations to the study, followed by the distribution of the questionnaires. A detailed account of participant selection and communication is provided in the section entitled Chronological Synopsis of Data Collection and Analysis.

**Overview of Chapters.**

This thesis consists of five chapters, which includes this chapter, Chapter One: Introduction. This is followed by Chapter Two: Literature Review and Chapter Three: Methods. Finally, Chapter Four: Results and Discussion is presented and the document ends with Chapter Five: Conclusions.

Chapter Two examines literature related to event management topics, which includes the economic impacts of events on host cities (Baade & Matheson, 2004; Crompton, 1995; Preuss, 2005), tourism in relation to events (Gibson, 1998; Lee & Taylor, 2005; Solberg & Preuss, 2007), event legacies (Cashman, 2005; Horne, 2010; Preuss, 2007), event volunteers (Allen & Bartle, 2014; Allen and Shaw, 2009; Cuskelly, Hoye & Auld, 2006) and event operational planning (Mallen, 2008; Parent, 2008; Parent, 2010; Parent et al., 2011). Chapter Two concludes with an overview of operations management, issues management and best practices literature.

Chapter Three offers a discussion of the methods utilized for both data collection and analysis. Contained in this chapter is the purpose statement and research questions for this thesis, followed by the theoretical perspectives underlying the research, which include stakeholder theory, resource theory and coordination theory. Research participant selection is then outlined, followed by detailed sections on both the data collection methods and data analysis methods employed in this research. The data collection section includes descriptions of the methods that were utilized by the researcher. The data analysis section discusses the adaptation of Parent et al.'s (2011) research. This section also clearly provides the step-by-step process of data analysis, which contained three stages and provides a chronological synopsis of both data collection and analysis. This chapter concludes with a section on rigor, which includes a discussion on the credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability and reflexivity of this study. Ethical considerations, specifically confidentiality, are also discussed.

Chapter Four: Results and Discussion presents the results of the research organized in four sections: Round One: Interviews, Top 26 Prominent Issues, Top 17 Prominent Strategies and Issue-Strategy Links. The results presented emerged from the three rounds of the modified Delphi technique, Round One: Interviews, the Round Two: Issues Questionnaire and the Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire. As the results are presented connections are made to the previously highlighted literature outlined in Chapter Two, when applicable. It is important to note the limited literature on this topic and the contribution from this thesis to fill this gap, in part. Finally, Chapter Five: Conclusions summarizes this thesis and provides comparisons to the work of Parent et al. (2011). In addition, limitations and suggestions for future research are highlighted.

**Chapter Two: Literature Review**

**Event Management**

There is a variety of management literature available on event management with a primary focus on major sport events. For instance, prevalent literature examines economic impacts of events on host cities (Baade & Matheson, 2004; Crompton, 1995; Preuss, 2005), tourism in relation to events (Gibson, 1998; Lee & Taylor, 2005; Solberg & Preuss, 2007), event legacies (Cashman, 2005; Horne, 2010; Preuss, 2007), event volunteers (Allen & Bartle, 2014; Allen and Shaw, 2009; Cuskelly, Hoye & Auld, 2006) and event operational planning (Mallen, 2008; Parent, 2008; Parent, 2010; Parent et al., 2011). Each of these areas will be outlined in the literature offered below as all of these topics are ultimately related to the operational planning and execution of major sport events. In particular, the issues in conducting economic and tourism impact and event legacy studies will be offered. Next, operational planning of major sport events, operational management and issues management will be outlined. However, there is limited literature on arising issues in major sport event operational planning and execution. Further, the gap extends to research on successful issue management strategies aimed to guide event managers completing operational planning and executing major sport events. Finally, best practices will be defined and discussed, as it is a key focus of this research.

**Economic Impact of Events.**

A number of economic impact studies in the event management literature include economic impact analyses conducted on major sport events (Baade & Matheson, 2004; Lee & Taylor, 2005; Preuss, 2004). An analysis of the literature revealed that some of

these economic impact analyses have been conducted seemingly to provide support for

political administrators to justify the expense associated with a major sport event

(Késenne, 2005). Frequently, the analyses were conducted so that the often-favourable

results could be utilized in order to influence public support and to justify the use of

taxpayer money and public subsidies in order to fund the event (Baade & Matheson,

2004; Chalip, Green & Hill, 2003; Lee & Taylor, 2005).

Unfortunately, literature suggests that there are many issues with conducting an

economic analysis of a major sport event and inaccurate results are often reported

(Crompton, 1995). Crompton (1995) identified eleven sources of error in economic

impact analyses that emerged from a study that assessed the impact of sports events and

facilities. These included the failure to define the area of interest accurately and the

inclusion of local spectators in an analysis, among others (Crompton, 1995).

Preuss (2005) indicated that the lack of knowledge on consumption patterns of

visitors and the number of people visiting the event was a key hurdle in determining the

economic impact of a major sport event. Yet, the calculation of the economic impact of

these events has been a focal point for researchers for many years (Preuss, 2005). Baade

and Matheson (2004) identified the exaggeration of benefits as an issue with economic

impact analyses and stated that "a fundamental shortcoming of typical economic impact

studies, in general, pertains not to information on spending by those included in a direct

expenditure survey, but rather to the lack of information on the spending behaviour for

those who are not" (p. 345). In addition, McCartney et al. (2010) identified three factors,

impacting the validity of economic impact analysis: (1) heavy reliance on estimated data,

(2) short post-event data collection periods, and (3) failure to consider opportunity costs.

Finally, recent economic impact evaluation research of major events indicated, "the calculation of new money introduced by holding a major event is crucial in the estimation, and efforts are needed to further improve the estimation of event tourism expenditure" (Li & Jago, 2013, p. 605). This demonstrates that the methodologies of economic impact analysis are still imprecise. Crompton (1995) maintained "despite its weaknesses and limitations, economic impact analysis is a powerful and valuable tool if it is implemented knowledgeably and with integrity" (p. 34).  Regardless of reports on the issues associated with the economic impact analyses conducted on major sport events, many researchers continue to conduct these types of analyses.

**Event Management & Tourism.**

In addition to, and often times in conjunction with, economic impact analyses, there are studies on the tourism impact of major sport events. Gibson (1998) acknowledged that most literature about sport tourism focused on large sport events that attracted spectators as tourists. Gibson (1998) also identified that those cities and countries that sought to host events recognized the opportunity for economic development. An example of this connection involves a study by Lee and Taylor (2005) that focused on the 2002 FIFA World Cup, held in South Korea and Japan, and aimed to conduct an economic impact analysis with a focus on tourists attending the event.

Similar to economic impact analysis research on major sport events, issues also exist when attempting to measure the impact of event tourism. Much of the research on major sport events focused on the event tourist themselves, the spectators of the events, with a focus on their spending patterns as an indicator of the economic impact of the event for the local community (Gibson, 1998). Gibson (1998) maintained that, "one of

the issues surrounding much of this work is methodological accuracy" (p. 58). For example, when asked to project their expenditures while attending an event, it was found that tourists consistently underestimated their spending, which ultimately affected the results of the studies (Irwin, Wang & Sutton, 1996). Solberg and Preuss (2007) maintained that there was no guarantee that a major sport event that was successfully hosted in one city would have the same impact when hosted elsewhere. Therefore it is evident that studies produced varying results; this may be due to methodological issues when measuring the impact on tourism.

In addition, other tourism related studies have been conducted in event management literature with varying topics of focus. Examples include research on the motivations of tourists to attend events (Neirotti, Bosetti & Teed, 2001) and on the intent to return to events or their host cities (Shonk & Chelladurai, 2008). Additionally, Kim and Chalip (2004) focused their research on the FIFA World Cup and examined not just motivations of tourists but also constraints to their attendance. Overall, the economic impact studies and tourism impact studies, as well as those studies that examine both topics, have difficulties producing replicable and long-standing results. This makes assessing major sport events difficult. These issues can hinder our understandings of events based on replicable research.

**Event Legacies.**

According to Horne (2010) "one of the most powerful discursive resources utilized to frame sports mega-events in the past two decades has been that of 'legacy'" (p. 854). Despite the presence of the concept in event management literature, Preuss (2007) stated that a clear definition of the concept is still absent in the research and then set out

to define the term. Preuss' (2007) definition was derived from his suggested five dimensions of legacy and was stated as the following: "irrespective of the time of production and space, legacy is all planned and unplanned, positive and negative, tangible and intangible structures created for and by a sport event that remain longer than the event itself" (p. 211). Preuss' (2007) definition evolved from the work of Cashman (2005) who categorized legacies into six fields that include (1) sport; (2) economics; (3) infrastructure; (4) information and education; (5) public life, politics and culture and (6) symbols, memory and history. Cashman's (2005) contribution also demonstrated the overlap of event management topics with the impacts of an event's legacy.

Horne (2010) suggested two types of analysis for legacies; the first focused on the impacts or outcomes of the event for material development (economic, technological, urban infrastructure) and the second addressed the ideologies in media representations of the locations and actors involved – especially the fans, athletes or teams – and the relationship of these to national identities. The second offered representational types of legacies that include intangible effects on awareness and imagery of host cities and countries, whereas material legacies may be more long lasting (Horne, 2010). Further, Horne's (2010) approach to legacy focused on the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) Euro™ football championships and reflected Preuss' (2007) definition by identifying both the positive and negative, tangible and intangible legacies. It is evident that the term can be used in a variety of ways throughout event management literature to highlight the different legacies of events. The different types of legacy add to the complexity of evaluating major sport events.

**Event Volunteers.**

Volunteers are fundamental to the success of major sport events at the local, state/provincial, national and international level (Cuskelly et al., 2006). For sport events to be continuously successful there must be motivated and enthusiastic volunteers who are able to perform their roles satisfactorily (Allen & Shaw, 2009). This is because major sport events generally rely heavily on volunteers to complete many roles at the event in various areas related to sport event management.  Much of the research on sport event management volunteers includes case studies that focus on motivation, legacy and satisfaction, with several studies examining volunteer experiences in relation to overall satisfaction with the event (Doherty, 2009; Allen & Bartle, 2014).

In a study by Farrell, Johnston and Twynam (1998) that examined the 1996 Canadian Women's Curling Championship held in Thunder Bay, Ontario, the researchers found that volunteer motivations could be grouped into four categories, and included purposive, solidary, external traditions and commitments. In addition, they determined that volunteer satisfaction with the event experience overall was not only a function of fulfilling volunteer expectations but was also related to the volunteer satisfaction with the facilities and the organization of the event (Farrell, et al., 1998). Allen and Shaw (2009) acknowledged more needs to be known about the complexities and interrelatedness of motivation, satisfaction, performance, and retention of sport event volunteers. Their research indicated that historically "research on these topics has been atheoretical and lacks explanation of the cognitive and social processes involved" (Allen & Shaw, 2009, p. 80). Their study looked to further sport event volunteer literature in relation to motivations and experiences and involved interviewing volunteers at the 2006 New

Zealand Master's Games (Allen & Shaw, 2009). The ultimate purpose of the research

was to explore the utility of a social psychological theory to understanding volunteer

motivation at a multi-sport event (Allen & Shaw, 2009). Most recently, Allen and Bartle

(2014) sought to expand the research on sport event volunteers in three ways by (1)

examining engagement as a positive affective-motivational state relevant to volunteering;

(2) exploring sport event volunteers' experiences of "being managed" through an

examination of the relationships among motivation, manager support, and engagement;

and (3) adopting a theoretical approach to explain the psychosocial processes associated

with volunteering and managing volunteers.

According to Cuskelly et al. (2006) "the unique environment of sport events, in

particular their episodic nature and the increasing commodification of major sport events,

has a number of implications for volunteer motivation, satisfaction, commitment,

performance and retention" (p. 145). Cuskelly et al. (2006) stated that "the scale of

volunteer involvement in sport events is significant, enabling major sport events to create

the potential for a range of economic, social, physical, cultural, technological and

psychological legacies" (p. 145). This demonstrated the connection between sport

volunteer event management literature and the various other topics being discussed in this

literature review in relation to event management.

**Operational Planning of Major Sport Events.**

The available event management literature on major sport events revealed a lack

of research focusing on the operational planning of these events. Currently, much of the

literature with a focus on planning for major sport events relates specifically to the topics

presented in this literature review, i.e. economic, tourism, legacy, or volunteer planning.

Within this group of limited literature on operational planning, the operational planning

phases of events was offered by Mallen (2008) who focused on creating and writing

operational plans from an instructional point of view. A study conducted by Emery

(2010) adopted an operational perspective and aimed to provide a review of current

practice (manager profile, management practice, skills required, and critical success

factors) while reflecting on the past and looking towards the future development of the

evolving industry. The objective of this study was to collect empirical data from sport

event organizers in an attempt to provide a benchmark of current industry practice

(Emery, 2010). Similar to the focus of this thesis, Emery (2010) focused on a macro level

view of the sport event industry, with hope that the information gained would lessen the

frequency of negative incidents occurring at events.  Similar to the work of Emery (2010)

both interviews and questionnaires were methods utilized in the data collection of this

thesis.

The work of Parent (2008) *Evolution and Issue Patterns for Major-Sport-Event*

*Organizing Committees and Their Stakeholders* influenced both the work of Parent

(2010) *Decision Making in Major Sport Events Over Time: Parameters, Drivers, and*

*Strategies* and Parent et al. (2011) *Issues and Strategies Pertaining to the Canadian*

*Governments' Coordination Efforts in Relation to the 2010 Olympic Games*. The purpose

of Parent (2008) was "to develop a framework of how organizing committees

operationally evolve and the types of issues with which they and their stakeholders must

deal" (p. 135). Parent (2008) described the evolution of a sport event as having three

major organizing-committee operational modes which consist of 1) a planning mode,

where it must prepare the bid book, business plan, operational plan, and division-specific

operational plans; 2) the implementation mode, halfway-through its existence, where

venue-specific plans are prepared and lead to the actual Games time and 3) the wrap-up

mode for the final six to twelve months of its existence, where the final reports are

written for the various stakeholders, and where the event's legacy is managed and

distributed (Parent, 2010). The issue categories identified by Parent (2008) were as

follows: politics, visibility, financial, organizing, relationships, operations, sport,

infrastructure, human resources, media, interdependence, participation, and legacy.

Parent (2010) sought to identify how the decision-making process changes as the

event moves through the operational modes, previously identified by Parent (2008). This

case study of the 1999 Pan American Games provided sport event managers with specific

strategies that they could use to increase the effectiveness of decision-making in relation

to their event (Parent, 2010). Parent (2010) suggested, "future research should examine

issue-specific strategies to build the project and sport event management literatures" (p.

314). This statement underscored this thesis, as there is a focus on the issue-specific

strategies in major sport event management operational planning.

Finally, Parent et al. (2011) utilized a case study of the 2010 Olympic Games "to

understand the government stakeholder group's coordination issues and strategies in

mega-events" (p. 337). This study specifically focused on government stakeholders while

still focusing on issues and strategies, comparable to the previous works of Parent (2008)

and Parent (2010). This article differs from Parent (2008) and is similar to Parent (2010)

by identifying specific strategies, though the focus of each study differs, i.e. decision-

making (Parent, 2010) versus government stakeholders (Parent et al., (2011).

Research by Parent (2008), Parent (2010) and Parent et al. (2011) closely

addressed operational planning in relation to major sport events, and reflected what the researcher of this thesis sought to examine. Therefore, their research framed this thesis, specifically the work of Parent et al. (2011). The direct influence and usage of Parent et al. (2011) is highlighted in detail in Chapter Three: Methods.

This thesis aimed to fill the gap in sport event management operational planning literature by understanding the operational planning of a major sport event and seeking to identify best practices, in the form of strategies, in the operations management of a major sport event. This literature also examined the issue-specific strategies as suggested by Parent (2010). The remainder of the literature review was focused on operations management, issues management and best practices literature in order to provide an understanding of these topics that underscore this thesis.

**Operations Management (OM)**

Operations management (OM) is "the business function responsible for managing the process of creation of goods and services" (Council of Supply Chain Management Professionals (CSCMP) & Sanders, 2014, p. 2). OM "involves planning, organizing coordinating and controlling all the resources needed to produce a company's goods and services" (CSCMP & Sanders, 2014, p.2). OM also involves the management of people, equipment, technology, information and various other resources needed to assist companies in their production of goods and services (CSCMP & Sanders, 2014). CSCMP & Sanders (2014) identified OM as the central core function of every company.

Recent literature called for more cross-disciplinary research within OM (Handfield, 2002; Kickul, Griffiths, Jayaram & Wagner, 2011; Linderman & Chandrasekaran, 2010). As the Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Operations*

*Management*, Handfield (2002) identified important characteristics for authors to consider when submitting literature to the journal. The first element described by Handfield (2002) was for research to reflect management challenges associated with cross-functional and cross-enterprise decision-making when approaching management problems. In their study, that investigated the exchange of ideas within OM and between OM and other management discipline literature, Linderman and Chandrasekaran (2010) supported a need for OM literature to be more cross-disciplinary in nature. In addition, Kickul et al. (2011) stated "from an operations management perspective, cross-disciplinary research and practice is a fruitful approach that leads not only to new insights but also results in tangible benefits for firms" (pg. 78). Similarly Amundson (1998) emphasized that many OM areas of study are interdisciplinary and therefore required attention to theoretical perspectives from other domains. Current OM literature reflects the call for more cross-disciplinary research. Other disciplines such as entrepreneurship (Kickul et al., 2011, Shepherd & Patzelt, 2013), finance (Kumar & Turnbull, 2008), human resource management (Cook et al., 2002) and marketing (Ho & Tang, 2009) have all been featured in recent OM literature.

Linderman and Chandrasekaran (2010) asserted "the field of Operations Management should not only influence, but also be influenced by other management disciplines" (p. 357, capitalization used in original). However, no cross-disciplinary research was found between OM and sport management. Therefore, in this thesis OM will be associated with sport management, with a particular focus on sport event management.

**Issues Management**

Ansoff (1987) stated that organizations must continuously evolve their organizational capabilities to account for the increased demands from the environment. This includes, but was not limited to, the evolution of the organization's culture, management, structures, systems and power structure (Ansoff, 1987). In the process of evolution, organizations also manage the issues that emerge. Issues management is, therefore, defined as the process by which a corporation can identify, evaluate and respond to issues, which impact it significantly (Johnson, 1983). Issues management has been identified as a managerial function that assisted corporations in areas such as identifying, analyzing, and responding to social and political concerns that have the potential to significantly affect them (Greening and Gray, 1994; Heugens, 2003; Jones, 1983; Nigh and Cochran, 1987; Wartick & Rude, 1986). Meanwhile, Johnson (1983) recognized "that the earlier a company can identify a potential threat, or opportunity, and commit itself to appropriate action, the more likely it will be able to influence an issue" (p. 22); this being the process of issues management. In this research, the definition of issues management is extended to include operational issues in the planning and execution of the operational plans of major sport events.

Heugens (2003) categorized issues management literature into two groups, the macro level public affairs cluster and the micro level organizational behaviour cluster. The first group focuses on "the organization of the public affairs function in large complex organizations" (Heugens, 2003, p. 4). The second group explores the social-psychological foundations of issues management (Heugens, 2003). Heugens (2003) suggested that "relatively little issues management research is conducted which (a)

bridges the micro-macro divide; (b) spans across multiple organizational functions and

(c) links issues management to organizational outcome variables" (p. 6). Further, Wartick

and Heugens (2003) also provided three future directions for issues management, similar

to those suggested in the operations management literature. These directions included:

> (1) infusing orthodox issues life cycle research with theories from
>
> other social sciences; (2) seeking cross-fertilization with research in
>
> the stakeholder management tradition and (3) integrating issues
>
> management research more strongly with the burgeoning literature on
>
> the management of corporate reputation." (Wartick & Heugens, 2003,
>
> p. 13)

Overall, the concept of issues management originated from a corporate background

(Johnson, 1983). Wartick and Heugens (2003) have recognized that "issues management

has evolved into a widely adopted and endorsed corporate activity as well as a legitimate

object of academic study" (p. 8).

In recent years issues management has matured and grown in significance (Lawal,

Elizabeth & Oludayo, 2012), with the primary function of planning, monitoring and

analyzing still being recognized as integral parts of strategic management (Ansoff, 1980;

Ottensmeyer & Dutton, 1987). Overall, the issues management process has a primary

purpose of achieving three organizational goals that include: "(1) to promote successful

monitoring and evaluation of issues; (2) to involve management information system

(MIS) managers in the planning process; and (3) to bring the appropriate technical

expertise to bear on broad planning questions" (Dansker, Hansen, Loftin & Veldwisch,

1987, p. 223). Dansker et al. (1987) identified, that "through the process of monitoring

and evaluation, managers obtain an improved awareness of business issues, and

unexpected demands on MIS resources are diminished" (p. 224).

Wartick and Heugens (2003) stated that a professional accomplishment of issues

management thus far is its' emerging best practices. They asserted, "most commentators

now agree that issues management excellence requires the proficient execution of three

interrelated activities" (p. 9). Their description of these best practices for issues

management is as follows:

> The first of these is environmental scanning (Aguilar, 1967; Fleming,
>
> 1981), which involves mapping the business environment for weak
>
> signals appearing on the corporate radar. The second activity is issue
>
> interpretation (Dutton, 1993; Gioia and Thomas, 1996), which
>
> corresponds to keeping a close eye on previously detected issues to see
>
> whether they evolve into something requiring significant managerial
>
> attention. As a third activity, organizations must select an issue
>
> response pattern through which they actively address the most urgent
>
> and threatening of the previously identified and monitored issues
>
> (Ackerman, 1975; Greening and Gray, 1994). (Wartick & Heugens, p.
>
> 9)

According to Wartick and Heugens (2003), combined, these three activities are the best

practices of most issues management systems. These best practices also reflect the

primary functions of planning, monitoring and analyzing, as outlined earlier.

**Best Practices**

Dembowski (2013) described best practice as "the process of developing and following a standard way of doing things that multiple organizations can use" (p. 12). In Dembowski's (2013) research that focused on benchmarking, best practices and innovation in organizational effectiveness, he also stated, "best practice is the optimization of the effectiveness of an organization" (p. 13). In addition to best practices contributing to effectiveness, Voss (2005) suggested that best practices will lead to superior performance and capability, which in turn will lead to increased competitiveness. The continuous development of best practice within all areas of a company is supported as a valuable endeavour, as multiple research studies show links between the adoption of best practices and improved performance (Cua, McKone & Schroeder, 2001; Flynn, Schroeder & Sakakibara, 1995; Fullerton, McWatters & Fawson, 2003; Hendricks & Singhal, 1997; Jayaram & Droge, 1999; McKone & Schroeder, 2001). A focus of this thesis has been to contribute best practices in sport event management that can be utilized by major sport event managers.

Best practices literature has predominately focused on manufacturing but can also have connections to operations management, including operations applied to major sport events - the focus of this thesis. Current best practice literature focuses on manufacturing operations (Sousa & Voss, 2008), healthcare (Hamilton, 2011) and technology such as software development (Meso & Jain, 2006). Additional best practices literature exists in relation to environmental sustainability (ES) (Christmann, 2000). All of these best practices, however, may potentially underscore some aspects of sport event management.

To assist organizations with best practices several standards and codes exist.

Robins (2005) identified a variety of standards and codes utilized to identify the level of

corporate social responsibility (CSR) displayed by organizations. Programmes identified

by Robins (2005) included The United Nations Global Compact and The Global

Reporting Initiative (GRI). Programmes offering standards and codes identified by

Mallen, Stevens, Adams, & McRoberts (2010) included the Leadership in Energy and

Environmental Design (LEED) third-party certification programme and the International

Standard Organization (ISO). Additional programmes include, the Canadian Standards

Association (CSA) Z2010-10 (Canadian Standards Association, 2010) and the

Sustainable Sport and Event Toolkit (SSET) (Dolf, & Duffy, 2010). Though the majority

of these standards relate to ES, ISO standards address various aspects of corporations. No

standards or codes exist with respect to best practices in relation to the operational

planning of sport events; thus, this need is identified, and a potential contribution to this

can be made via this thesis.

**Chapter Three: Methods**

**Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this study was to examine the operational planning, implementation and execution issues of major sport events, as well as the mitigation and management strategies used to address these issues, with the aim of determining best practices in sport event operational planning. The examination intended to identify best practices in major sport event operations management that may potentially aid event managers in producing future events. Two data collection techniques were employed in this study, together forming a modified Delphi technique (Martino, 1983). The first technique consisted of in-depth interviews (Liamputtong, 2009) and the second involved the use of two separate questionnaires.

**Research Questions**

1) What can previous major sport events provide to guide the operational management of future events?

2) What are the operational issues that arise in the planning and execution of a major sport event, how are they mitigated and what are the strategies used to deal with these issues?

3) What are the best practices for sport event operational planning and how can these practices aid future events?

**Theoretical Perspectives Underscoring the Research**

   **Stakeholder Theory.**

   A theory underscoring this research involves stakeholder theory. According to Freeman (1984), "the seminal text on stakeholder theory, an organization's general success is directly linked to the needs, goals and motivations of the parties with whom the organization interacts" (in Friedman, Parent and Mason, 2004, p. 172). In addition he acknowledged that managers need to "take into account all of those groups and individuals that can affect, or are affected by, the accomplishment of the business enterprise" (Freeman, 1984, p. 25 in Laplume, Sonpar & Litz, 2008, p. 1157).  According to Friedman et al. (2004) "stakeholder theory is also concerned with the nature, quality and management of the relationships between the organization and its stakeholders" (p178). In addition, Donaldson and Preston (1995), maintained that stakeholder theory is justified in the literature through various researchers' use of three different aspects/approaches in their work: a descriptive/empirical approach, an instrumental approach, and a normative approach.

   Stakeholder theory has been present in the work of researchers for over 20 years, and recent literature included the work of Laplume et al. (2008) who analyzed 179 articles that directly addressed or utilized Freeman's (1984) work. Laplume et al. (2004) maintained that "stakeholder theory's rise in prominence is evidenced by the growing acceptance of the theory across functional disciplines and explained by its relevance in addressing practical concerns of unethical and irresponsible behavior of some organizations" (p. 1180). This thesis reflects that statement in reference to the stakeholder

theories' use across functional disciplines as it discusses the theory in relation to sport management.

Parent (2008) utilized the theory to underpin her study on major sport event issues and stated, "stakeholder theorists are concerned with studying the relationship between a focal organization and its stakeholders" (p 137). This statement, in addition to this theory, is applicable to this thesis as there are many stakeholders involved in major sport events and it is important to consider these relationships in connection with the various issues that occur in the operational planning of these events. The previously referenced article by Friedman et al. (2004) sought "to integrate stakeholder theory and issues management in order to provide sports managers with a useful framework for issues analysis" (p. 172). Earlier work by Nigh and Cochran (1987) supported this idea when they stated a major part of issues management is "to bring a more coordinated, proactive and sustained approach to the management of an organization's relationships with its stakeholders (p. 4). This demonstrates the connection between two concepts related to this thesis, issues management and stakeholder theory.

**Resource Theory.**

In addition, this research was underscored by a resource-based view, referred to as resource theory. Barney (1991) argued that a sustained competitive advantage derives from the resources and capabilities a firm controls that are valuable, rare, imperfectly imitable, and not substitutable (Barney, Wright, Ketchen Jr., 2001). These resources and capabilities can be viewed as bundles of tangible and intangible assets, including a firm's management skills, its organizational processes and routines, and the information and knowledge it controls (Barney, Wright, Ketchen Jr., 2001). The foundations within this

theory include that the resources that an organization possesses are directly related to their competitive advantage. These resources can include financial, technological and/or human resources. According to Rumelt (1984) a firm's competitive position is defined by a bundle of unique resources and relationships and the task of management is to adjust and renew these resources and relationships as time, competition and change erode their value (in Conner, 1991). This theory explains the internal sources of a firm's sustained competitive advantage (Kraaijenbrink, Spender & Groen, 2010). As stated, resource theory includes human resources, which is also one of the strategy types identified by Parent et al. (2011) that will be used to frame data collection and analysis, along with additional strategy types.

**Coordination Theory.**

An additional theory that underscored this research was coordination theory. Malone and Crowston (1990) defined coordination theory as "a body of principles about how activities can be coordinated, that is, about how actors can work together harmoniously" (p. 358). The theory originated in the late 1980s from the field of computer sciences and draws upon a variety of different disciplines including organization theory, management science, economics and psychology (Malone, 1988). Crowston (1997) indicated that organizations that perform the same task often perform essentially the same activities. He goes on to state, while these general activities are often the same, the processes differ in how they are coordinated; however with this coordination comes common patterns (Crowston, 1997). Coordination theory can be applied to all other concepts that were also utilized in this research which include issues management and best practices. In addition, the coordination of resources is present in

organizing major sport events demonstrating the relationship between resource theory and coordination theory.

**Potential Frameworks of the Study**

To understand how the researcher came to decide on a study framework, an overview of the various study frameworks that were considered for use in this thesis are provided. There were three options considered by the researcher, including: framework i (a single case study of a major sport event); framework ii (a multi case study of a selection of major sport events) and framework iii (a study of event managers – individuals in the industry that have coordinated major sport events). These three options will now be explained.

According to Luck, Jackson and Usher (2006), who assembled a definition from several prominent case study researchers, a case is a single phenomenon and case study research has particular boundaries; therefore the case is a system that is bounded by time, place, event or activity and these boundaries can assist in limiting data collection (Creswell 1994, 2003; Ragin, 1992; Stake, 2000; Yin, 2003). The first option considered by the researcher was an instrumental (Stake, 1994) case study where one particular event was to be examined. As described by Creswell (2007) an instrumental case study is when the researcher focuses on an issue and then selects one bounded case to illustrate the issue. The case is of secondary interest, chosen because it is expected to advance our understanding of the other interest (Stake, 1994), which for this thesis were the issues and strategies that may emerge. The case considered for this option was the FIFA U-20 Women's World Cup Canada 2014, selected due to the researcher's interest in the game of soccer and location of the event. Toronto, Ontario, Canada was a host city for the

event, which took place August 2014.

The second option was for this thesis to be a multi-case study where various major sport event cases would be examined. According to Chmiliar (2010) "multiple-case design is a research methodology in which several instrumental, bounded cases are examined using multiple data collection methods" (p. 583). Chmiliar (2010) maintains that this design "is more powerful than single-case designs as it provides more extensive descriptions and explanations of the phenomenon or issue" (p.583). Similar to the single case study approach, the multiple cases are of secondary interest, chosen because they are expected to advance our understanding of the other interest (Stake, 1994). The cases were to be selected with help from the thesis advisors. The cases selected could have been located anywhere in the world, due to the opportunity to use available technology such as Skype to interview participants. However each event must have been hosted recently (specifically between the years of 2010 and 2014) and must take place at the national or international level.

The third option considered was a study of event managers that have coordinated major sport events. In this option, each participant is considered a case and they would all work for different major sport events. The events themselves are no longer considered cases, as the focus would be on the actions of the various event managers participating in the study. The events that managers were responsible for must have occurred in the most recent time period, between the years of 2010 and 2014, though managers may have drawn on their experiences from events they have been involve in prior to this time period.

**Framework Utilized.**

The framework chosen for this research study was framework iii (a study of event managers – individuals in the industry that have coordinated major sport events). This framework was ultimately selected for a number of reasons including access issues surrounding the other framework options. Framework i (a single case study of a major sport event) was ultimately unattainable due to access issues surrounding the selected case. Whereas framework ii (a multi case study of a selection of major sport events) was also not selected due to access issues. In addition framework ii limited the wide-range of participants the study could have, by restricting participants to a small number of events. Framework iii was utilized because of the freedom it provided the researcher to acquire a wide variety of participants from numerous major sport events, diversifying the participant pool. In addition this framework limited any confidentiality issues that could have arisen if the other frameworks had been utilized. Since no two participants came from the same event there was less of a chance of confidentiality being breached. Details of how this framework was utilized will be provided in the Chronological Synopsis section found on page 37.

## Data Collection

**Modified Delphi Technique –Interviews & Questionnaires.**

The two data collection methods utilized in this thesis were combined to create a modified Delphi technique, which consisted of in-depth interviews (Liamputtong, 2009) and questionnaires. The Delphi technique is defined by Day and Bobeva (2005) as "a structured group communication method for soliciting expert opinion about complex problems or novel ideas, through the use of a series of questionnaires and controlled

feedback" (p. 103). Dietz (1987) outlined the basic process for the Delphi technique as follows:

> First, a panel of experts on the topic(s) under study is created. A series
>
> of questionnaires is sent to each member of the panel, soliciting both a
>
> forecast for each event being studied and a brief statement as to why the
>
> panellist has made that particular forecast. The second round
>
> questionnaire…[provides] summaries of the overall panel response on
>
> the previous round and a brief summary of the reasons offered for each
>
> forecast. The third round questionnaire provides panellists with
>
> information from the second round, and so on. (p. 80)

In this study a modified Delphi technique was employed and included the use of both interviews and questionnaires, as previously mentioned. Dietz's (1987) definition outlined that during the first round, questionnaires are sent to the panel. The modified Delphi technique utilized for this study altered Dietz's (1987) process and instead interviews were conducted with the panel during the first round. The second and third rounds of this modified Delphi technique were optional for participants but did follow Dietz's (1987) process by involving questionnaires. The original process was also followed by providing panellists with their previous responses, as indicated by Dietz (1987).

Three rounds were utilized in this study, as this is common across published Delphi study literature (Costa, 2005; Day & Bobeva, 2005; Powell, 2003). The first round consisted of in-depth interviews (Liamputtong, 2009). According to Liamputtong (2009) in-depth interviews "aim to elicit rich information from the perspective of a

particular individual and on a selected topic under investigation" (p. 43). In addition, according to Best and Kahn (1986) in a sense, interviews are oral questionnaires, which reflects the modification of the Delphi technique being utilized for this study. As mentioned, the second and third rounds consisted of questionnaires and were optional for participants.

In addition, as is acceptable practice when utilizing the Delphi technique, panellists remained anonymous (Costa, 2005; Day & Bobeva, 2005; Martino, 1983). Please refer to the section on confidentiality found on page 45 as it relates to this technique. A modified Delphi technique was chosen to be utilized for this study as the researcher recognized that it had the ability to possess the advantages that come from utilizing a group, while also overcoming the commonly associated disadvantages (Martino, 1983). Some of these commonly associated disadvantages include the social pressure a group places on its members and the vulnerability of a group to the dominance of one or few individuals (Martino, 1983). Due to the anonymity provided by the use of the modified Delphi technique, and the fact that panellists did not come in direct contact with each other, such as in a focus group setting, these disadvantages were avoided. When it comes to the advantages of utilizing a group, Martino (1983) maintained that the total information available to a group can be many times that possessed by any single member and that the number of factors that can be considered by a group can be at least as great as the number which can be considered by a single member. The researcher believed that utilizing this technique allowed for more information to be collected due to the wide variety of participants and the different information they all possessed. In addition, together they are able to consider at least the same amount of factors, as one

participant would be able to.

The interview guide and questionnaires were designed with a focus on operational planning and execution issues arising in the management of a major sport event and the strategies used to address these issues, following an adaptation of the work of Parent et al. (2011). The eight strategy types identified in Parent et al. (2011) were utilized to frame interview questions (refer to Appendix A) concerning managing the issues participants have previously encountered and the strategies used to deal with these issues. These guiding strategy types include: (1) communication processes; (2) decision-making frames; (3) engagement; (4) flexibility; (5) formalized agreements; (6) human resource management procedures/principles; (7) strategic planning and (8) structural framework (Parent et al., 2011).

These strategies types were adapted slightly for use in this research. "Communication processes" was edited to simply read, communication and "decision-making frames" was shortened to decision-making. In addition, "human resource management procedures and principles" was changed to read, human resource management. These slight modifications were made in order to make the topics more straightforward, while also aiming to not limit participant answers. The category of "flexibility" was not utilized in this research due to the idea that individual flexibility issues may not occur, as it was too specific a topic. In addition it was omitted to shorten the interview guide to a suitable length, as to not take up too much of each participant's time. Finally, the category of other was added to allow participants to discuss issues and strategies that may not have fit into the previously mentioned categories.

The order that the strategy types were presented by Parent et al. (2011) was also altered as the researcher believed the interview questions were more sequential, by asking about topics important to this thesis first, i.e. decision-making and communication, to ensure that valuable data was collected. Once this adaptation was utilized for the interview guide the order did not change for the questionnaires. Each question in the interview guide (see Appendix A) was structured the same, in order to first elicit issues from participants, followed by allowing them to indicate strategies they have used to solve the issues they stated.

The work of Parent et al. (2011) was utilized to frame both data collection and analysis, which will be discussed further starting on page 34, and was applied in order to organize both methods. Instead of simply asking participants just to state issues they had encountered, the utilization of the work of Parent et al. (2011) allowed the issues and strategies to be categorized. In addition the interview guide was structured using Parent et al.'s (2011) strategy types in order to keep it at a suitable length.

**The Delphi Participants**

Selecting the participants for the modified Delphi Technique involved typical instance sampling, where the participants are chosen because they are typical to the phenomenon being studied (Tracy, 2013). The sample included male and female managers, responsible for the operational planning and execution of previously held major sport events. Martino (1983) stated that experts are considered to be experts in the sense that they know more about the topic to be forecast than do most people. For the purpose of this research, those hired to be responsible for organizing operational plans at local, collegiate, national or international major sport events are considered to be experts.

The use of experts when employing the Delphi technique was one of the reasons the researcher chose this method. The method allowed sport event managers to communicate via this research in a way they normally would not have access to. An aim of this thesis was to facilitate knowledge transfer amongst the participants.

According to Martino (1983) the optimal size of a Delphi panel depends on the study being conducted. Martino (1983) suggested selecting a slightly higher number of panellists than the researcher deems necessary due to the possibility of panellists dropping out. Previous Delphi studies have utilized anywhere from 17 panellists (Costa, 2005) to 31 panellists (Mallen, Adams, Stevens, & Thompson, 2010). Dalkey, Brown, and Cochran (1970) determined that starting with 15-20 panellists was a suitable number. Following these suggestions, the researcher aimed to obtain 15- 20 panellists, which in this study are referred to as participants, in the hopes that those who agreed to complete the first round would be at least 15 in number. Which still allowed room for drop-outs to occur in the subsequent rounds.

Panellists were contacted via email to request their participation with email addresses obtained via event websites and official event documents where available. Participation in the three rounds of the modified Delphi technique utilized for this thesis was as follows: 15 participants contributed to Round One data, 13 participants contributed to Round Two and 10 participants contributed to Round Three, a retention rate of 66.6%. The 15 participants who agreed to be a part of the study were asked to participate in all three rounds but were not required to participate in rounds two and three, if they did not choose to. No new participants were added following commencement of the second round of the modified Delphi technique. The high retention rate of this study

may indicate the interest that participants had in sharing their experience working at major sport events, in order to learn about the issues encountered and strategies utilized by others, to aid in the success of future events.

**Data Analysis**

Data analysis follows an adaptation of the process utilized by Parent et al. (2011). Upon completion of interview data collection, this study followed a five-step analysis process. These steps involved:

(1) human coding;

(2) identifying themes, including identifying the operational planning and execution issues within the themes; the initial themes include context-based issues outlined by Parent et al. (2011) and comprise of time, geography, funding, other resources, and political situation; the other issue types include accountability/authority, activation/leveraging, knowledge management, legal, operational, planning, power, relationships, social issues, structure, and turnover (Parent et al., 2011); this research is also open to additional issue types;

(3) determining the strategies used to manage the issues; following Parent et al's (2011) strategy types previously outlined; this research is also open to additional strategies;

(4) a comparison between issues and strategy management;

(5) examining what went well in terms of issues management or best practices. Similarly to Parent et al. (2011) analysis included identifying issues and strategies and categorizing them. In addition as per Parent et al.'s (2011) analysis process issue-strategy links were identified, which are when a strategy is "presented as being associated with

(linked to, resolving) a stated issue" (p.348). Issues and strategies were coded based upon

the pre-existing issue and strategy categories determined by Parent et al. (2011). As will

be seen in Chapter Four it may appear that certain issues and/or strategies do not belong

in the category they were placed. It is important to note that this placement was strictly

based off of the work of Parent et al. (2011). Data analysis took place throughout the

research process, as is typically done when using the Delphi technique, with primary

analysis taking place in between each Delphi round and following the final round. This is

highlighted in the description of the three stages utilized, outlined below.

**Stage A analysis.**

Stage A analysis occurred between rounds one and two of the modified Delphi

technique and involved the following three steps. Step one is human coding followed by

step two which consisted of identifying themes, including identifying the operational

planning and execution issues. Finally, step three consisted of determining the strategies

used to manage the issues. During this stage the researcher consolidated the forecasts

provided by the participants into a single set, by combining similar items, to keep the

Round Two: Issues Questionnaire at a reasonable length (Martino, 1983). The results

from Stage A analysis, in part, were used to frame the second round of the modified

Delphi technique, the Round Two: Issues Questionnaire and the third round, Round

Three: Strategies Questionnaire.

**Stage B analysis.**

Stage B analysis took place following completion of the Round Two: Issues

Questionnaire provided to participants as part of the modified Delphi technique.

Participant data that emerged from the Round Two: Issues Questionnaire was analyzed in

this stage. This stage of analysis focused on this data, in addition to the original interview

data. During this stage the data was analyzed based on the participants' rankings of the

issues identified during stage one.

**Stage C analysis.**

Stage C analysis took place following the completion of the Round Three:

Strategies Questionnaire provided to participants as part of the modified Delphi

technique. Participant data that emerged from the Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire

was analyzed in this stage. This consisted of the data provided from the participants in

their Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire, while also including data from the first two

rounds of data collection. During this stage the data was analyzed based on the

participants' ratings of the frequency of utilizing strategies, in order to determine best

practices in operational planning. Step four and five of analysis also occurred including a

comparison between issues and strategy management and finally, step five, examining

what went well in terms of issues management or best practices.

**Questionnaire Analysis.**

Additional analysis of the questionnaire results was also completed. The mean,

median and mode of each of the 97 issues and each of the 128 strategies participants

ranked in the questionnaires were determined. This analysis was necessary to organize

the questionnaire data. The results of this portion of analysis were utilized to determine

the prominent issues and strategies identified by participants' rankings. Issues with a

mean of 3.00 and above and strategies with a mean of 4.50 and above were deemed

prominent to this research, as will be highlighted in Chapter Four: Results and

Discussion.

**Chronological Synopsis of Data Collection and Analysis**

The following section is a chronological synopsis of data collection and analysis. Due to the complicated nature of the Delphi technique, modified or otherwise, this section was deemed necessary in order to outline the exact process that was taken by the researcher when collecting and analyzing data. As indicated in the data analysis section, analysis took place throughout the data collection process and a more detailed explanation of how these processes were intertwined will now be outlined.

**Participant recruitment and selection.**

Data collection could not begin until potential participants were contacted and a sufficient number agreed to participate in this research study. A total of 33 potential participants were contacted via email. A number of those who were emailed did not reply at all, but ultimately 16 event managers agreed to participate. The average years of industry experience managing major sport events of all participants was 15 years, with participant experience ranging from five to 33 years. Participants had been involved in several different major sport events at different levels including local, collegiate, national and international events, some sport specific and some multi-sport. Participants either had previous experience as part of the host city/community of an event (ex. local organizing committees) or experience working for the organization responsible for the event (ex. the Olympic Games). In addition, they held titles such as Director, Tournament Director, Assistant Director, Senior Manager, General Manager and Chief Executive Officer, among others. Ultimately there were a total of 10 male participants and 5 female participants who took part in Round One.

**Round One: Interviews.**

Throughout August, September and October 2014, as participants agreed to be a part of the study, interviews were scheduled and conducted at the earliest convenient time for the participant. Though 16 participants agreed to be a part of the study, only 15 interviews were conducted for Round One of this research study. This was due to scheduling conflicts with one participant that simply could not be overcome before the researcher needed to proceed with Round Two of the study. The Round One interviews were conducted utilizing the interview guide (see Appendix A) framed by the work of Parent et al. (2011), as previously indicated. Of the fifteen interviews that took place, nine were phone interviews, four were Skype interviews and two interviews were conducted in person. The use of phone interviews and Skype interviews was necessary as participants were located across North America. There was one anomaly during Round One, as one participant completed the interview with assistance from her colleagues. All interviews were audiotaped.

Throughout the three months that interviews were taking place, interviews were transcribed solely by the researcher. This allowed the researcher to be immersed in the data and to begin to recognize similarities in participant responses. Upon completion of the fifteen interviews and their transcription, Stage A of analysis took place. The first three steps of the five-step analysis process were utilized to examine the transcribed interviews. The data was separated into two charts, one including the issues identified by participants in their interview responses and the other including the strategies identified by participants in their interview responses. Once these charts were completed the development of the Round Two: Issues Questionnaire (see Appendix B) began.

**Round Two: Issues Questionnaire.**

The Round Two: Issues Questionnaire was developed to inquire only about the issues that had been identified by participants in their interviews. This decision was made because there was an abundance of data collected from the interviews and the researcher was concerned about the length of the questionnaire and subsequently the time it would take participants to fill out. Since a modified Delphi technique was being utilized and a third round was imminent, the researcher made the decision to only ask about issues in this round and save the strategy data for the third round, as to not overwhelm participants or take up too much of their time. The Round Two: Issues Questionnaire was developed based of off examples of other questionnaires found on ProQuest (Hess, 2008; Pierce, 2007; Rass, 2008). These questionnaires were part of dissertations that had utilized the Delphi technique.

The Round Two: Issues Questionnaire asked participants to rank, based on their impact, the issues they had encountered, which had been previously identified in Round One. The development of this questionnaire reflects the characteristics of the Delphi technique by utilizing "summaries of the overall panel response on the previous round" (Dietz, 1987, p. 80). These summaries consisted of a list of issues that had been identified by participants in their interviews. These issues were then grouped into categories based off of the work of Parent et al. (2011). The issues were grouped into the following categories (1) timing; (2) geography; (3) funding; (4) other resources; (5) political situation; (6) accountability/authority; (7) activation/leveraging;(8) knowledge management; (9) legal; (10) operational; (11) planning; (12) power; (13) relationships; (14) structure; and (15) turnover (Parent et al., 2011). An additional category was added,

entitled (16) other. This was to include any issues that were identified that may not have

fit under the previously determined categories. The issue category entitled social issues

(Parent et al., 2011) was not utilized in this research, as the researcher was not interested

in examining these types of issues. Parent et al. (2011) described social issues as

"resident housing, homelessness, sustainability" (p. 353,) and these topics did not fit the

research being conducted, as operational issues were the focus as opposed to social

issues. The issues were grouped into these categories in order to provide some structure

to the questionnaire. A total of 97 issues emerged from the interview data and it was

necessary to group them instead of simply providing a long list to participants. As

indicated, participants were asked to rank the issues. They were provided with a scale of

5-1 (see Appendix B) and given two weeks to return the completed questionnaire, which

was sent via email.

As is common with Delphi studies, not all participants who completed the first

round, completed the second round, 13 of the 15 participants participated in Round Two

by completing the Issues Questionnaire. A retention rate of 86.6% between Round One:

Interviews and the Round Two: Issues Questionnaire. Once all completed questionnaires

were returned Stage B data analysis took place. Utilizing Microsoft Excel participant

responses were charted on a spreadsheet with the issues being listed in the left-hand

column and participants listed across the top row. All participant scores were filed in their

respective columns and the mean, median and mode were determined for each issue.

Upon completion of this analysis stage, development of the Round Three: Strategies

Questionnaire began.

**Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire.**

The Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire (see Appendix C) followed a very similar format to that of the Round Two: Issues Questionnaire but instead involved two parts. For Part I a similar rating scale and identical layout to the Round Two: Issues Questionnaire was utilized but instead participants were asked to rank the frequency of use of the listed strategies, instead of the impact. In addition, in order to identify which strategies could be considered best practices for specific issues, Part II of the questionnaire asked participants to write out a strategy or strategies they would identify as a best practice for specific issues. Participants were only asked to write out strategies for the issues that had received the highest score(s) (impact) in each category from the Round Two: Issues Questionnaire. An additional layout for Part II of the questionnaire was considered that included the top eight issues, not categorized, that were identified as having had the highest impact by participants, but this option was not chosen. Written strategies for the top issue in each category was more beneficial to the research as it addressed a wide variety of issues and allowed participants to provide strategies for issues in every category.

As with Round Two, all Round Three questionnaires were sent via email and participants were given two weeks to respond. Again, participation slightly declined and only 10 Round Three: Strategies Questionnaires were returned. There was one anomaly in Round Three responses, as one participant did not fill out Part II of the questionnaire. The participant indicated that they had previously provided those responses during their Round One interview.

Stage C of analysis then took place on the Part I of the Round Three: Strategies

Questionnaire which was analyzed in the same manner as the Round Two: Issues

Questionnaire. Participant responses were organized in Microsoft Excel with the

strategies being listed in the left-hand column and participants listed across the top row.

All participant rankings were filed in their respective columns and the mean, median and

mode were determined for each strategy. Part II of the Round Three: Strategies

Questionnaire was analyzed in a similar way to the Round One: Interviews data. A chart

was made that listed all of the issues participants were asked to provide strategies for.

Participant responses were then inserted into the chart under each issue. The results of all

of the analysis methods previously outlined will be discussed in Chapter Four: Results

and Discussion.

**Rigor**

The rigor of this research was ensured by following Lincoln and Guba's (1985)

trustworthiness criteria, which include credibility, transferability, dependability and

confirmability. The trustworthiness of this research was achieved by utilizing the various

techniques and activities associated with the criteria. These include triangulation, rich,

thick description and adequate engagement in data collection.

**Credibility.**

A technique outlined by Lincoln and Guba (1985) to "make it more likely that

credible findings and interpretations will be produced" (p.301), is triangulation. For this

research, methods triangulation was utilized, which involved using two different methods

to collect data (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006); this consisted of interviews and

questionnaires, as outlined earlier. According to Greene, Caracelli and Graham (1989)

when two or more methods "are used to assess a given phenomenon and the results of

these methods converge or corroborate one another, then the validity of inquiry findings is enhanced" (p. 256). The methods were then triangulated through the use of the three rounds of the modified Delphi technique. The triangulation will ensure the credibility of the research through the use of these methods.

In addition, another technique outlined by Merriam (2009) is to ensure adequate engagement in data collection. This strategy can be used when you are trying to get as close to the participants' understanding of a phenomenon as possible (Merriam, 2009). Due to the methods used for this study and the researcher's interest in the topic, the goal was to get as close to the participants' understanding of the phenomenon as possible. The researcher sought to achieve Merriam's (2009) rule of thumb to ensure adequate engagement by reaching a point where the data and emerging findings are saturated.

**Transferability.**

Transferability is essential to this research if the findings produced are to be applied in other contexts. Therefore thick description was necessary "to enable someone interested in making a transfer to reach a conclusion about whether transfer can be contemplated as a possibility" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 316). Merriam (2009) stated, "the researcher has an obligation to provide enough detailed description…to enable readers to compare the "fit" with their situation" (p.226).  A goal for this study was to identify best practices that can be applicable to future events and in order to accomplish this, rich, thick description of the data was necessary. Merriam (2009) referred to rich, thick description as a highly descriptive, detailed presentation of the setting and the findings of the study. Transferability was applied to this research in the form of rich, thick description of the study and methods utilized.

**Dependability.**

Dependability shares similarities with credibility, as Lincoln and Guba (1985) state there can be no credibility without dependability. According to Schwandt (2001) it is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that the process of research is logical, traceable, and clearly documented. The approaches taken to produce credible research were also employed to ensure dependability. In addition, auditability ensured that the processes of the research were documented as well as traceable to achieve dependability (Liamputtong, 2013).

**Confirmability.**

Confirmability seeks to "establish the degree to which the findings of an inquiry stem from the characteristics of the respondents and the context and not from the biases, motivations, interests and perspectives of the inquirer" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 218). Confirmability is present in this research as the questionnaires in rounds two and three were developed entirely from the participants' responses in previous rounds. In addition, the researcher's supervisor and committee helped ensure the confirmability of the study by assisting the researcher in reducing her biases, motivations, interests and perspectives.

**Reflexivity.**

The researcher strongly believes in being reflexive throughout the research process and acknowledges the influence previous experiences and knowledge may have on the research process. As stated by Liamputtong (2013) researchers "have their own positions and personal perspectives and will inevitably bring these into the research process" (p.30). According to Liamputtong (2013) researchers themselves are an integral part of their studies and it is impossible for them to be objectively distant from their

research. To achieve reflexivity throughout the research process, the researcher

acknowledged her experiences, beliefs and personal history that may have influenced the

research (Liamputtong, 2013).

**Ethical considerations**

This research study was submitted to the Brock University Research Ethics Board

for approval before any data collection took place (REB #13-271). Though the topic does

not appear to be sensitive, it is this choice of the researcher to keep the names of

participants confidential to follow the practices associated with the Delphi technique. In

addition, this allowed for participants to be honest and provide valuable information

without pressure to provide certain answers. Participants were asked to discuss issues

they have encountered while managing major sport events, by keeping their participation

confidential it allowed participants to reveal as much, or as little, regarding their

experiences as they chose. They were not pressured into revealing all issues but the

confidentiality provided them with the opportunity to be as open as they chose to be.

**Confidentiality.**

The researcher aimed to incorporate confidentiality measures in the research by

not using the real names of participants. Confidentiality in this research followed Hess-

Biber and Leavy's (2006) suggestions that participants' names cannot be used in any

written material concerning the research or in discussions of the research project. This

ethical measure is well suited to the Delphi technique as anonymity is a key characteristic

of the data collection method (Martino, 1983). The researcher is aware of the identities of

all participants but participants do not and will never know who else participated in the

study, unless they reveal to others that they participated. The researcher cannot control

whether participants reveal their participation to others. The researcher can only protect

the information provided by participants by not associating it with them by name.

According to Martino (1983) this characteristic of the Delphi technique avoids the

possibility of associating a specific opinion with a particular person and allows

participants to change their minds without publically admitting to doing so. In addition, it

is fitting for Delphi studies, as participants are not referred to individually but as a group,

i.e. participants and/or panellists (Costa, 2005; Mallen. Adams, Stevens & Thompson,

2010). This also relates back to the characteristic of Delphi studies as producing group

forecasts and opinions (Martino, 1983), as the main focus of data collection.

## Chapter Four: Results & Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the operational planning, implementation and execution issues of major sport events, as well as the mitigation and management strategies used to address these issues, with the aim of determining best practices in sport event operational planning. The following section presents the results of this study collected within each of the three rounds of the modified Delphi technique, including the Round One: Interviews, Round Two: Issues Questionnaire and Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire. First, Round One: Interviews will be discussed, followed by a section on the Top 26 Prominent Issues and then a section on the Top 17 Prominent Strategies. The sections discussing the Top 26 Prominent Issues and the Top 17 Prominent Strategies include Round One: Interviews data in the form of participant quotations, in order to demonstrate how this data contributed to the issues and strategies that emerged as prominent. As outlined in the description of the Delphi technique in Chapter Three: Methods, the data collected in Round One: Interviews was utilized to form the Round Two and Round Three questionnaires. Finally, a section on issue-strategy links will be presented, based on data collected from Part II of the Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire.

As previously indicated, the work of Parent et al. (2011) was utilized to frame this research. In addition, this thesis looked to extend the work completed by Parent et al. (2011) by providing more examples of participant identification of issues and strategies. Through the use of the modified Delphi technique participants were able to provide feedback on issues and strategies that they may not have personally identified in their interview, through completion of the Round Two and Round Three questionnaires. This

allowed for more input from the expert participants on all issues and strategies that

emerged from the interview data.

**Round One: Interviews**

Semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted in order to answer Research

Question 2: what are the operational issues that arise in the planning and execution of a

major sport event, how are they mitigated and what are the strategies used to deal with

these issues? The interview guide (see Appendix A) asked participants to discuss

operational issues and strategies and was categorized by an adaptation of Parent et al.'s

(2011) strategy types which included: (1) decision-making; (2) communication; (3)

strategic planning; (4) formalized agreements; (5) human resource management; (6)

structural framework; (7) engagement and (8) other (Parent et al., 2011).

The interview data collected in Round One produced a total of 97 issues identified

by participants (see Appendix D for the complete list of issues, the mean rankings

included will be discussed in relation to the Top 26 Prominent Issues in the following

section). The interview data also produced 128 strategies (see Appendix E for complete

list of strategies, the mean rankings for the strategies will be discussed in relation to the

Top 17 Prominent Strategies starting on page 71). The 97 issues and 128 strategies were

identified based on quotations from the interview data of all participants and this data was

utilized to form the Round Two: Issues Questionnaire and the Round Three: Strategies

Questionnaire. The Top 26 Strategies and Top 17 Issues will now be discussed

separately.

**Top 26 Prominent Issues**

The Top 26 Prominent Issues (see Table 1) emerged from the participant scores of the issues listed in the Round Two: Issues Questionnaire. The Round Two: Issues Questionnaire was framed utilizing an adaptation of Parent et al.'s (2011) issue types which included: (1) timing; (2) geography; (3) funding; (4) other resources; (5) political situation; (6) accountability/authority; (7) activation/leveraging;(8) knowledge management; (9) legal; (10) operational; (11) planning; (12) power; (13) relationships; (14) structure; (15) turnover and (16) other. The Round Two: Issues Questionnaire listed the 97 issues and participants were provided with a scale from 5-1 and asked, "How much of an impact has this issue had on major sport events you have been involved in?" (see Appendix B). In regards to analysis of the Round Two: Issues Questionnaire, the score that each issue received was determined by finding the mean.

The prominent issues that emerged from Round Two were those that had a score of 3.00 and above, out of a maximum of five. Despite a scale ranging from 5-1 only one issue received a score above four. Therefore, a score of 3.00 and above was chosen to demonstrate the prominent issues that emerged. A score of 3.00 and above was necessary due to the diverse issues and the scores they received from participants. Lowering the score that issues needed to receive to be considered prominent would have greatly increased the list of prominent issues and would have put their prominence into question. In addition, increasing the score needed would have greatly limited the number of prominent issues. The issues are organized from one to 25 (see Table 1) but there are only 12 scores listed. These scores range from 3.00 – 4.38. Upon analysis many issues

received the same mean, resulting in the Top 26 Prominent Issues only receiving a total

of 12 different scores.

The Top 26 Prominent Issues will now be presented and discussed. They are

grouped by issue category and presented in order of the category with the most prominent

issues, to the category with the least. Each issue category with only one issue ranking

within the Top 26 is presented from the category with an issue highest on the list to the

lowest. The tables that correspond with each issue category are located in Appendix D

(i.e. for D1, D2 etc., see Appendix D). The issue category of timing had the highest

ranked issue within the Top 26 with a score of 4.38, and also had the highest number of

issues in one category, a total of six. The accountability/authority issue category had a

total of five issues, followed by knowledge management with four, and funding with

three. The planning issue category had two issues ranked in the Top 26 followed by the

legal, geography, activation/leveraging, relationship(s), structure and operational issue

categories all having one issue each within the Top 26. The following issue categories did

not have any issues rank within the Top 26: other resources, political, power, turnover

and other.

Table 1

*Top 26 Prominent Issues*

|  | Issue Category | Issue | Score |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Timing | Timing of formal agreements. If not done early enough in the process the event has no leverage with the host committee and/or local stakeholders such as hotels. | 4.38 |
| 2 | Timing | Not communicating in a timely manner. | 3.92 |
| 3 | Timing | The time it takes for decisions to get made. | 3.77 |
| 4 | Funding | There is never enough funding. | 3.69 |
| 5 | Timing | Not accomplishing tasks outlined in the strategic plan in the time they should be accomplished. | 3.62 |
| 6 | Funding | Trying to balance the financial requirements of hosting with the tighter budgets being faced by hosts. | 3.62 |
| 7 | Timing | Timing of staff hiring. Delayed hiring leads to delays in | 3.54 |

| | | work in certain areas. Hiring too early leads to paying them for a longer period of time. | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 8 | Knowledge Management | Not enough communication takes place. | 3.54 |
| 9 | Legal | Lack of sponsorship. | 3.46 |
| 10 | Accountability/ Authority | Role clarity. If roles are not clear issues arise. | 3.46 |
| 11 | Funding | Loss of revenue streams. | 3.31 |
| 12 | Knowledge Management | Assuming everyone knows the necessary information. | 3.31 |
| 13 | Knowledge Management | Information does not flow from one function/department/area/position to another as well as it should. | 3.23 |
| 14 | Knowledge Management | Misinterpretation of information. | 3.23 |
| 15 | Geography | Hosting events across a large area leads to the financial burden for participants to travel to the event. | 3.15 |
| 16 | Accountability/ Authority | Different stakeholders not responding to communications and/or handing in necessary documents in a timely manner. | 3.15 |
| 17 | Accountability/ Authority | Making decisions based on wants and not on needs of the event. | 3.15 |
| 18 | Timing | Balancing a full time job while hosting an event and/or having host committees that are volunteers and therefore are employed full-time elsewhere. Difficulties juggling one's time. | 3.08 |
| 19 | Accountability/ Authority | Low staff numbers. Being the only one in charge and having to handle everything because there are no other staff members. | 3.08 |
| 20 | Accountability/ Authority | Decisions being made without consultation. | 3.08 |
| 21 | Activation/ Leveraging | Hosting fatigue. | 3.08 |
| 22 | Planning | Employees/volunteers involved in executing the plan are not the same as those who developed it, creating conflict when it comes to changes in the execution. | 3.08 |
| 23 | Planning | Being on different timelines as others involved in the event. | 3.08 |
| 24 | Relationship(s) | Conflicting personalities amongst staff and/or volunteers. | 3.08 |
| 25 | Structure | Managing the motivations, expectations and/or objectives of all the different stakeholders. | 3.08 |
| 26 | Operational | Finding a suitable location and/or venues for an event. | 3.00 |

**Timing.**

The issue category of timing was adapted from Parent et al.'s (2011) issue category titled time. In the work of Parent et al. (2011) these types of issues were described as "unmovable deadlines, decision making pace speeding up" (p. 350). This research expanded this Parent et al. (2011) issue category by including timing issues that dealt with more than just deadlines and decision-making pace. Overall, six timing issues received scores that placed them within the Top 26 Prominent Issues in this research (see Table D1 for complete list of timing issues).

With a score of 4.38, the issue of *timing of formal agreements - if not done early enough in the process the event has no leverage with the host committee and/or local stakeholders such as hotels* was the issue that received the highest score within this research and was thus the most prominent. Six out of the 13 participants who completed questionnaires in this round ranked the issue at a five, the highest ranking on the provided scale. This score illustrated the importance of this issue. Participant 3, who is employed by an organization responsible for an event, stated,

> …we've had a lot of difficulty having these agreements ready to go the moment a community is awarded the [event], and it kind of—we always say communities and its funny because you know, I guess you could call it a bit of a hypocrisy, but what we always say to communities is you should negotiate your hotel rates during the bid phase, because if you wait to negotiate them after you've won the [event], hotels are going to jack up the prices on you because they know you have no choice now…

In addition, when discussing formalized agreements Participant 5 indicated,

I think the big one is just time, everyone wants them done tomorrow and they

don't have them quickly—you can't force people to sign contracts, everyone

needs to do their due diligence and you know, fight for their own best interest and

that takes time.

It is important to note that this issue was the first issue listed in the Round Two: Issues

Questionnaire. Therefore if participants followed the order of the questionnaire, this

would have been the first issue for which they provided a score. The researcher

acknowledges that this could have contributed to the high score the issue received.

Despite this, events utilize a number of formalized agreements and therefore the high

impact of this issue as indicated by participant rankings is not surprising. In addition, the

category of timing was the first issue category participants provided rankings for and six

out of the Top 26 Prominent Issues are from this category.

The second most prominent timing issue was, *not communicating in a timely*

*manner*, which received a score of 3.92. This issue was only mentioned by one

participant during Round One: Interviews but emerged as the second most prominent

issue in this research when participants moved from naming issues to providing scores

for the issues. The third most prominent issue was *the time it takes for a decision to get*

*made*, with a score of 3.77. Participant 7 indicated this was an issue and stated,

The only real issue that I've had is time, just the time that it takes to make those

decisions. I think you know once the decision is made its fine, you know whether

you like it or you don't, you deal with it, but its just the time, because everything

especially with, you know, planning events—so for example if I need approval to

book flights and right now the flights are on sale—so I'm trying to save the

organization money, but then their flight isn't approved until a month later when

the seat sale is gone…

The fourth prominent timing issue in the Top 26 was *not accomplishing tasks outlined in*

*the strategic plan in the time they should be accomplished*, which received a score of

3.62. This issue was indicated by Participant 3 who stated,

…our biggest challenge is timing because if the planning doesn't start when it

should start, it doesn't end when it should end and then all of a sudden you're

running plans—people are still doing planning 6 months after something

should've been done according to their plans.

The fifth prominent timing issue within the Top 26 was the *timing of staff hiring.*

*Delayed hiring leads to delays in work in certain areas. Hiring too early leads to paying*

*them for a longer period of time.* This issue received a score of 3.54 in the Round Two:

Issues Questionnaire. Participant 3 highlighted this issue by stating,

The other thing is…the timing of staff being hired and we struggle with this. So

host societies or any organization or any event really that is on a time frame or a

defined—you know, they have a start and end date. They don't exist forever—

have to plan out their cash flows and an easy way to plan out cash flows is

through hiring and generally delaying of hiring because then you can determine

"can we actually afford this person or not?" The problem with it is, is that if you

delay hiring in certain areas, it delays work in certain areas…

Finally, the sixth prominent timing issue within the Top 26 was *balancing a full*

*time job while hosting an event and/or having host committees that are volunteers and*

*therefore are employed full-time elsewhere. Difficulties juggling one's time.* This issue

received a score of 3.08. Several participants identified a variation of this issue in their

interview responses, including Participant 10 who stated,

> …there is a constant conflict in the years that you host, about you know taking
>
> care of business on your own [institution] on a day to day and getting ready to
>
> deliver a championship, so yea it's a tug of war.

Participant 13 also identified this as being an issue by stating:

> I'd say the one challenge we experience is the people that we use [at institutions],
>
> our primary contacts, you know media relations, event managers, sports
>
> information, all those guys and gals, we're not their only job for the week…. you
>
> know so we don't always get the full attention that we deserve because they have
>
> so many other things on their plate.

Although these quotations come from participants who have been involved in similar

sport events, they represent two different sides of the event, one from the host

city/community and one from the organization responsible for selecting the host for an

event. It is important to note that this issue was identified by other participants involved

in various sport events, such as Participant 2 whose organization is run by a volunteer

Board of Directors. Thus, indicating the issue that volunteers involved in the event also

have full time jobs that demand their time.

Overall, the issue category of timing had the highest number of issues within the

Top 26 Prominent Issues that emerged from this research, with a total of six issues. In

addition, four of these issues were ranked within the Top 5, demonstrating the high

impact these issues have had on events that participants have been involved in (see Table

1). The scores that these issues received and the quotations provided from participant

interview data demonstrate this impact. The prominence of these issues should be noted by managers of future major sport events in order to be prepared for the possibility of their occurrence.

**Accountability/Authority.**

Next, the second most prominent issue category was accountability/authority and five issues ranked within the Top 26 from this category (see Table D6 for complete list of accountability/authority issues). The accountability/authority issue category was described by Parent et al. (2011) as "assigned roles and responsibilities, who has the final say, who has the power to make decisions" (p.351). The highest accountability/authority issue ranked within the Top 26 was *role clarity – if roles are not clear, issues arise*, which received a score of 3.46. Participant 4 highlighted this issue by stating, "I guess the biggest issues are again with role clarity. As to who is responsible for what…". In addition, Participant 15 stated, "…a potential issue could be to make sure you identify clearly the roles that everybody has going into an event…. So we can certainly have an issue if our roles aren't clearly defined." Nigh and Cochran (1987) indicated that a major part of issues management is "to bring a more coordinated, proactive and sustained approach to the management of an organization's relationships with its stakeholders (p. 4). All of the individuals that play a role in the operations of major sport events are stakeholders and it is important that their roles are clear in order to assist in the successful execution of events. It is evident through these quotations and the scores provided by participants that this issue has impacted events they have managed.

The second most prominent accountability/authority issue was *different stakeholders not responding to communications and/or handing in necessary documents*

*in a timely manner*, which received a score of 3.15. This issue was mentioned by

Participant 2 who stated, "Because even giving them a form, like the coordinators giving

the coaches a form, we may never see it again. Like this seems to be the pattern that I'm

noticing…" and Participant 10 who said, "…I mean the biggest disconnect that we often

get is just you know participants who frankly don't avail themselves of the information

that is available and that is sent to them…" The third accountability/authority issue that

ranked within the Top 26 Prominent Issues was *making decisions based on wants and not*

*on needs*. This issue also received a score of 3.15 and was only mentioned by one

participant in Round One: Interviews.

The fourth prominent accountability/authority issue, which received a score of

3.08 was, *low staff numbers – being the only one in charge and having to handle*

*everything because there are no other staff members*. During Round One: Interviews this

issue was only mentioned by Participant 7 who stated,

> The only other thing I would probably say is staffing. So because I work in
>
> amateur sport there is not a lot of money, there is not always a lot of staff—paid
>
> staff to help. So there has been events where I'd be event manager, every single
>
> venue, where you really could have used an extra manager or coordinator and
>
> your work—like I would do events like I'd be there at 5am and I wouldn't leave
>
> until like 1am because that is how long the event was going on, and no one was
>
> there to kind of send you off, because you were the one that had all the
>
> information.

Finally, the fifth accountability/authority issue within the Top 26 was *decisions being*

*made without consultation*, which received a score of 3.08. This issue was directly quoted

from Participant 11 who was the only participant who indicated this as an issue in Round One: Interviews.

The issue category of accountability/authority had the second highest number of issues ranked within the Top 26 Prominent Issues, with a total of five. Although only one issue ranked within the Top 10, *role clarity – if roles are not clear, issues arise*, the total number of accountability/authority issues within the Top 26 indicate the high impact these types of issues have had on major sport events that participants have been involved in. The prominence of these issues should be noted by managers of future major sport events, in order to prepare for the high impact these issues could have.

**Knowledge management.**

Issues within the knowledge management issue category were categorized based on Parent et al.'s (2011) description of knowledge management: "learning, information sharing/keeping people informed, information bottleneck, monitoring, knowledge transfer, communication inefficiencies, freedom of information, reporting, centralization of information, corporate memory" (p.351). Communication and information were key words utilized in the description of these issues. A total of four knowledge management issues ranked within the Top 26 Prominent Issues in this research (see Table D8 for complete list of knowledge management issues).

The highest-ranking knowledge management issue was *not enough communication takes place,* which received a score of 3.54. Despite having the highest impact of all knowledge management issues, this issue was only mentioned by one participant in Round One: Interviews. As previously demonstrated this has occurred with several other issues that ranked within the Top 26. It demonstrates that when participants

saw the full list of issues and they were asked to provide scores, in many cases they

provided high scores to issues they had not even mentioned themselves during interviews.

The issue of *not enough communication takes place* is a very general statement which

could be why it was not directly mentioned by more participants in their Round One:

Interviews, but once all participants were given the chance to rank the impact of the issue

its prominence was revealed.

The second most prominent knowledge management issue to be ranked within the

Top 26 was *assuming everyone knows the necessary information,* which received a score

of 3.31. The issue was also only mentioned by one participant during Round One:

Interviews. Participant 11 stated, "We assume and that is the other part—is the mistake,

we assume everyone knows. When they've been a part of these [sport] events, we assume

everyone knows protocol for [the sport] events…" This issue was ranked as having had a

high impact on events that participants have previously managed. This could be due to

the fact that there are many stakeholders involved in major sport events and sometimes

these stakeholders, such as volunteers, staff or sponsors, may not have previously been

involved in this type of event or any event at all. Making an assumption that everyone

knows what needs to get done in order for the event to be successful is an issue that has

impacted participants.

The third knowledge management issue to be ranked within the Top 26 was that

*information does not flow from one function/department/area/position to another as well*

*as it should*. This issue received a score of 3.23. Participant 5 revealed this by stating,

"…more challenging events are the ones where the chairs wanted to hold all the

information and as we started dealing with more volunteers, they weren't getting the

information that they need that had already been shared…". Additionally, Participant 9

stated,

> "…it's almost like the game of telephone as a kid, you know the message from
>
> me to the organizing committee or even me directly to the [venues], didn't
>
> necessarily translate in the exact context or you know I guess maybe as effectively
>
> to all the volunteers."

This issue reflects Parent et al.'s (2011) description of "information bottleneck", it is

obvious through participant rankings of this issue that information was not flowing as

well as it should at previous major sport events that participants have been involved in.

The final knowledge management issue to be ranked within the Top 26 was

*misinterpretation of information*, which also received a score of 3.23. This was

highlighted by Participant 8 who stated,

> Things communicated can be interpreted in many ways. Like for example, this
>
> recently [at the event], the question was asked "are the flags in place?" And
>
> protocol is very big for [the organization]. So you know the answer was "yes the
>
> flags are in place" but what was not clear in that communication is what are you
>
> referring to as the place? Were they in the tunnel or in place on the field? So to
>
> me that is a communication breakdown.

This example from Participant 8 is a great example of how information can be

misinterpreted. This example also demonstrates a connection to two of the previously

discussed prominent knowledge management issues, *not enough communication takes*

*place* and *assuming everyone knows the necessary information.* Managers of future major

sport events should ensure they are communicating as much as possible, without

assuming those receiving the information already know the information, in order to avoid

misinterpretation.

Communication and information sharing are important aspects to any

organization/workplace and major sport events are no exception. The total number of

issues that were categorized as knowledge management issues makes it evident that

communication has a large role in major sport events (see Table D8). It becomes apparent

that due to its large role, an abundance of issues emerge when attempting to communicate

and share information during the planning and operations of major sport events. Despite

this, only one knowledge management issue placed within the Top 10 in this research, *not*

*enough communication takes place.* The remaining prominent issues in this category

received scores that placed them low on the list of Top 26. Regardless of the score

received, the four knowledge management issues ranked within the Top 26 of this

research can easily be addressed utilizing strategies found on page 96. Though these

issues have had a high impact there are many ways to help mitigate them.

**Funding.**

Major sport events would not be possible without the financial support necessary

to implement them. As with other issue categories, many issues emerged that have

impacted the funding of events. The description of funding as an issue category provided

by Parent et al. (2011) was "budget, economic situation" (p. 350). For the purpose of this

thesis anything relating to the finances of an event were categorized as funding issues. A

total of three funding issues were ranked within the Top 26 Prominent Issues. (see Table

D3 for complete list of funding issues).

The most prominent funding issue within the Top 26 was that *there is never*

*enough funding*. This issue received a score of 3.69 and was indicated by Participant 13

who stated, "Budget, is always an issue." and Participant 14 who stated, "Well, money is

always an issue." Five of 13 participants ranked the impact of this issue at five but three

participants ranked the impact of this issue at two. Though this issue is considered

prominent in this research it is important to note that since participants came from a

variety of events their funding situations could be vastly different. This could explain

why three participants ranked the issue as having had a low impact.

The two additional funding issues ranked within the Top 26 were both only

mentioned by one participant each during Round One: Interviews. These issues were:

*trying to balance the financial requirements of hosting with the tighter budgets being*

*faced by hosts,* which received a score of 3.62 and *loss of revenue streams,* which

received a score of 3.31. The loss of revenue streams being indicated as an issue,

demonstrates how Parent et al.'s (2011) definition of funding issues was expanded.

Overall, with three out of a possible four funding issues ranking within the Top 26

it is evident that funding issues have had a high impact on major sport events previously

managed by participants. Two of the three prominent funding issues within the Top 26

rank within the Top 5 in this research, *there is never enough funding* and *trying to*

*balance the financial requirements of hosting with the tighter budgets being faced by*

*hosts*. The third funding issue ranks low on the list of the Top 26. It is surprising that

more funding issues did not emerge from participant interview data but the issues

considered prominent to this research cover a range of funding issues. Managers of future

major sport events can utilize strategies found on page 91 to help mitigate these issues.

**Planning.**

Two of the Top 26 Prominent Issues were planning issues (see Table D11 for complete list of planning issues). The issue category of planning was described by Parent et al. (2011) as "strategic planning process, traditional government processes and policies, meeting objectives, managing different/differing goals" (p. 352). One of the prominent planning issues was *employees/volunteers involved in executing the plan are not the same as those who developed it, creating conflict when it comes to changes in the execution,* which received a score of 3.08. During Round One: Interviews this issue was only mentioned by one participant, Participant 1, who stated,

> …usually a lot of the core staff that come on board are usually in that last year and they don't have the context of all the information that people had five years prior to and so as more people come on board it's a lot more difficult forming communication channels and network and keeping people on the same page. So it— as more people get put into the system, it just gets more complicated from a communications factor, exponentially more, and so the people who are actually executing on the business plan they're just going based on what they know but they don't necessarily have the global aspect of understanding all of—how the decisions may impact the bigger scheme of things.

Despite being only mentioned by one participant during Round One: Interviews this issue emerged as prominent in this thesis. Even though it ranked nearly at the bottom of the list, tied with seven other issues as the second least prominent in the Top 26, it appears to have impacted events that participants have been involved in. The scores provided by

participants for this issue could have also been impacted by the different roles

participants have held at previous major sport events.

The second prominent planning issue ranked within the Top 26 was *being on*

*different timelines as others involved in the event.* This issue also received a score of

3.08. When discussing various stakeholders Participant 7 highlighted that "…it doesn't

always happen because they have their own timelines, everyone is on a different timeline

than you, so you kind of have to—you're kind of in a holding pattern.", which can delay

the timeline and/or planning. Stakeholder theory supports the idea that managers need to

"take into account all of those groups and individuals that can affect, or are affected by,

the accomplishment of the business enterprise" (Freeman, 1984, p. 25 in Laplume,

Sonpar & Litz, 2008, p. 1157).  In addition, it becomes evident that those involved in the

planning process need to improve the coordination of their tasks to better reflect

coordination theory and find a way for actors to work together harmoniously (Malone &

Crowston, 1990).

Planning is integral to the successful execution of major sport events and it is

surprising to the researcher that more issues did not emerge as prominent from this

category. Perhaps it could be argued that many of the issues from other categories, such

as *not accomplishing tasks outlined in the strategic plan in the time they should be*

*accomplished* and *timing of staff hiring* could also be considered as planning issues,

which could have contributed to the low number of specifically identified planning issues

ranked within the Top 26. The two issues outlined have impacted events that participants

have been involved in and should be taken into account by managers of future major

sport events.

**Legal.**

Issues categorized as legal issues were based on Parent et al.'s (2011) description that included "venue agreements, sponsorship/logo/wordmark/brand use, rights holder agreements, by-laws, jurisdictions, constitution, building codes" (p.351). Only one legal issue ranked within the Top 26 Prominent Issues (see Table D9 for complete list of legal issues). This issue was *lack of sponsorship,* which received a score of 3.46. This score ranks the issue in the middle of the list of the Top 26 Prominent Issues in this research. As previously discussed, this issue was categorized as a legal issue based on Parent et al.'s (2011) description of this issue category which included the term sponsorship, and not instead as a funding issue. The placement of this issue into this category was solely based on the issue category outlined by Parent et al. (2011).

The issue of *lack of sponsorship* was only overtly mentioned by two participants during Round One: Interviews but it emerged as an issue within the Top 26 after analysis of the Round Two: Issues Questionnaire. Sponsorship in general was not greatly discussed by participants but it is mentioned again as a strategy to help mitigate funding issues, which is discussed on page 91. Sponsorship is a large part of today's sport world and major sport events are no exception. Managers of future major sport events should be aware that *lack of sponsorship* is an issue that may impact their event. Strategies found, starting on, page 97 can assist with mitigating this issue.

**Geography.**

The issue category of geography was described by Parent et al. (2011) as "size/spread of country, different locations of offices" (p. 350). Only one geography issue ranked within the Top 26 Prominent Issues (see Table D2 for complete list of geography

issues) and was tied with two other issues on the list, receiving a score of 3.15. This issue

was *hosting events across a large area leads to the financial burden for participants to*

*travel to the event* and it was only mentioned by one participant in Round One:

Interviews. Participant 4 stated,

> For us a big thing for [our participants] is geography, we just live in such a huge
>
> [area] that having events—and we have a couple of events up in the far north this
>
> year and for all the teams to travel there, it again comes out of the [institution's]
>
> budget, so them being able to afford to attend these events…

Despite ranking low on the list of the Top 26 Prominent Issues and only being mentioned

by one participant during Round One: Interviews this issue emerged as prominent to this

thesis. It should be noted that due to the various roles that the expert participants held at

major sport events, they might not have been responsible for managing the participants of

their event. Therefore they may not have mentioned this as an issue during their

interviews. Participants were also asked to provide strategies for this issue and this is

discussed on page 90. Overall, as only three issues total emerged as geography issues and

only one of those issues ranked within the Top 26, geography issues in general do not

appear to have had a great impact on major sport events that participants have been

involved in.

### Activation/Leveraging.

Parent et al. (2011) described the issue category of activation/leveraging as

"legacy, benefits, opportunities, Return on Investments (ROI), reputation, business-to-

business, marketing, urban planning, economic development, stakeholder outreach" (p.

351). Interestingly, none of the activation/leveraging issues mentioned by participants

and categorized in this research discuss the legacy of events, as was included in Parent et al.'s (2011) description and highlighted in the literature review of this thesis. Only one activation/leveraging issue ranked within the Top 26 Prominent Issues of this research (see Table D7 for complete list of activation leveraging issues). The only prominent activation/leveraging issue was *hosting fatigue* and it was only mentioned by one participant during Round One: Interviews. This has been demonstrated as a trend of this research, as previously mentioned participants provided high scores to issues they may not have mentioned at all during their Round One: Interviews. This issue received a score of 3.08, which ties it with seven other issues for the second lowest score on the list of the Top 26 Prominent Issues. Even though this issue is considered prominent in this thesis, it is important to note that hosting fatigue can be interpreted in different ways, which may have influenced participant rankings. As mentioned previously, some participants came from the host city/community of events while others came from the organization responsible for the event. The differences in their roles could have impacted their rank of this particular issue. If an event was hosted in the same city each year or the event had not experienced significant change over the years, participants may have indicated *hosting fatigue* as having a high impact. Whereas if events are always held in different cities or participants have worked on various events over the years, as opposed to focusing on one, they may not have indicated *hosting fatigue* as having a high impact. More research is needed to clearly identify the impact of this issue.

### Relationship(s).

The issue category of relationship(s) was described by Parent et al. (2011) as "trust, fairness, openness about issues, embeddedness, right people around the table,

individual/personal, intra/inter-departmental, intra/inter- governmental, involvement of

community and/or other stakeholders, integration, temporary vs. enduring" (p. 352). Only

one relationship(s) issue ranked within the Top 26 Prominent Issues (see Table D13 for

complete list of relationship(s) issues). The prominent issue from this category was

*conflicting personalities amongst staff and/or volunteers,* which received a score of 3.08.

This score places this issue nearly at the bottom of the list of the Top 26 Prominent Issues

and it is one of eight issues to receive this score. Participant 8 revealed, "You're dealing

with many personalities. Different personalities, different skill sets, different experience

and then you're building a team with them, individually they would work well but as a

team not everyone jives. Yeah, not everyone…works well together." Participant 11 also

indicated this to be an issue by mentioning, "…of course there are some personalities

that don't always match between individuals…" This issue may not be specific to major

sport events, as you could find it at any organization but it is important to identify it in

this research so that future sport event managers can be prepared to manage the issue as it

arises. As previously stated, major sport events involve a large number of stakeholders

including staff and volunteers, and with this high number comes the opportunity for

conflicting personalities. Strategies to assist with solving this issue can be found on page

101. With only one relationship(s) issue ranking within the Top 26 Prominent issues it

becomes evident that overall relationship(s) issues have not highly impacted previous

major sport events that participants have been involved in.

**Structure.**

The issue category of structure was based on Parent et al.'s (2011) description of

structure as "hierarchical/vertical versus horizontal structure, committees, governance,

formal/informal, differing structures, bureaucratic/red tape processes, size/capacity"

(p.353). Only one structure issue ranked within the Top 26 Prominent Issues of this thesis

(see Table D14 for complete list of structure issues). The prominent issue from this

category was *managing the motivations, expectations and/or objectives of all the different*

*stakeholders*. This issue is the final issue out of eight to receive a score of 3.08, which

ranks this issue near the bottom of the list of the Top 26 Prominent Issues. Participant 3

expressed this issue by stating,

> … I mean there's—there is another structural element in this as well, with
>
> provincial and federal governments, right. There's certain conditions they attach
>
> to money when they give it to you. So the biggest challenges are really working
>
> through the expectations, so you know if you're a host society, the expectations of
>
> the [organization]… so the biggest challenge we have, or we would have from a
>
> host society is really just, understanding and managing those expectations from
>
> these three groups.

Participant 5 who reflected on the issue differently stated:

> I think expectations in my most recent years is really understanding—and this was
>
> more in our office but then you'd share that out with the host committees and
>
> stuff as well, but really having a clear understanding from the executive level
>
> down to the staff that were actually running the events on what the expectations
>
> were and where you're going to spend time and those expectations tended to
>
> change a lot throughout the last couple events I was working on…

In addition, Participant 6 reflected on a different stakeholder when stating:

I think aligning with the title sponsors objectives are probably, as important—I

mean they are the sole biggest funder that you have, the most important to any

[sport] tournament so you know what you—while we may have our own strategic

plan for the [event], you know, some of that time it doesn't align with what they

want to do…

As indicated by Freeman (1984) an organization's general success is directly linked to the

needs, goals and motivations of its stakeholders. This demonstrates the need for managers

of future major sport events to mitigate this issue. Strategies to assist with this can be

found, starting on, page 101. With only one structure issue being ranked within the Top

26 Prominent issues it can be determined that structure issues overall have not had a high

impact on major sport events that participants have previously been involved in.

**Operational.**

Parent et al. (2011) described the issue category of operational as "live/celebration

sites, transportation, security, venues, overlay, construction, broadcast, tourism,

complexity/size/month long, risk/no test events for municipal services, performance

measurement, Cultural Olympiads, accommodations" (p. 352). The operational issue that

ranked within the Top 26 was *finding a suitable location and/or venues for an event,*

which received a score of 3.00 (see Table D10 for complete list of operational issues).

This issue ranked the lowest on the list of the Top 26 Prominent Issues and as was

common with many other issues in this research, it was only mentioned by one

participant during Round One: Interviews.

The low ranking on the list of the Top 26 and the fact that the issue was only

mentioned by one participant during Round One: Interviews could be due to the fact that

not all participants were involved in this aspect of events they had managed. Whether

events are single-sport or multi-sport could have also impacted participant responses, as

the task of finding one sport-specific venue may be easier than finding several venues for

different sports. This could have produced the varying results from participants as four

participants ranked the impact of this issue at five and four ranked it at one,

demonstrating the full range of the provided scale. More research is needed to determine

the impact of this issue.

**Top 17 Prominent Strategies**

The following section discusses the Top 17 Prominent Strategies (see Table 2)

that emerged from the participant rankings of the strategies listed in the Round Three:

Strategies Questionnaire. The Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire was framed the

same way as the Round One interview guide, by an adaptation of Parent et al.'s (2011)

strategy types, which included (1) decision-making; (2) communication; (3) strategic

planning; (4) formalized agreements; (5) human resource management; (6) structural

framework; (7) engagement and (8) other.  A total of 128 strategies were identified in

Round One and were then included in Part I of the Round Three: Strategies

Questionnaire, where participants were provided with a scale from 5-1 and asked "How

often have you utilized this strategy when attempting to solve issues that arise during the

planning and execution of events?" (see Appendix C).  In regards to analysis of the

Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire, the score that each strategy received was

determined by finding the mean.

The prominent strategies that emerged from Round Three were those that had a

score of 4.50 and above, out of a maximum of five. The score that considers a strategy to

be prominent differs from that of the prominent issues because only three strategies

received a mean ranking below 3.00. As previously indicated, the score needed for issues

to be considered prominent was 3.00 and above out of a maximum five. Therefore,

utilizing the same score for prominent strategies would have resulted in a total of 125

prominent strategies and the prominence of these strategies would have been put into

question. By raising the score that was required for a strategy to be considered prominent

to 4.50 and above, the list of prominent strategies was reduced to 17. The strategies are

organized from one to 17 (see Table 2) but only include a total of four scores. Therefore

prominent strategies only received one of the following scores: 4.80, 4.70, 4.60 or 4.50.

Upon analysis many strategies received the same mean, resulting in the Top 17

Prominent Strategies only receiving one of four scores, ranging from 4.50 – 4.80. This

list of the Top 17 presents the strategies identified by participants that are considered best

practices in this research.

The Top 17 Prominent Strategies will now be presented and discussed. They are

grouped into the strategy category in which they align and presented in order of the

category with the most prominent strategies, to the category with the least. The following

subheadings are the adapted Parent et al. (2011) strategy categories, and only categories

with strategies within the Top 17 are discussed. The tables that correspond with each

strategy category are located in Appendix E (i.e. for E1, E2 etc., see Appendix E). The

strategy category of other had the highest number of prominent strategies with five,

followed by formalized agreements with four, communication with three, decision

making and strategic planning with two each and finally human resource management

with one. The strategy categories of engagement and structural framework did not have

any strategies rank within the Top 17.

| | Strategy Category | Strategy | Score |
|---|---|---|---|
| Table 2 | | | |
| *Top 17 Prominent Strategies* | | | |
| 1 | Decision Making | Gather as much information as possible and provide it to whoever is responsible for a decision in order to streamline the process; answer questions ahead of time. | 4.80 |
| 2 | Formalized Agreements | Ensure you are protecting yourself (legally). | 4.80 |
| 3 | Human Resource Management | Lead by example. | 4.80 |
| 4 | Other | Be realistic about budgets. | 4.80 |
| 5 | Other | Have a clear understanding of your budget. Be smart and creative to stretch your budget. | 4.80 |
| 6 | Communication | Provide information packages to participants. Include as much information as possible to improve their experience. I.e. include information on not just the event but where it is being held, hotel/restaurant suggestions etc. | 4.70 |
| 7 | Strategic Planning | Plan as early as possible. | 4.70 |
| 8 | Formalized Agreements | Ensure you are learning from past agreements in order to eliminate recurring issues. | 4.70 |
| 9 | Communication | Use the right form of communication for the situation. Urgent communication requires face to face or phone calls versus text messages or emails. | 4.60 |
| 10 | Strategic Planning | Identify the size and scope of your event. Be aware of the event's capacity. | 4.60 |
| 11 | Formalized Agreements | Be clear about what you can and cannot deliver. | 4.60 |
| 12 | Other | Be proactive. The more you are ahead of the game the more you can avoid potential issues. | 4.60 |
| 13 | Decision Making | Gather opinions, input and advice from those around you before making a decision. Don't be afraid to ask questions. | 4.50 |
| 14 | Communication | Maintain continuous communication with employees/volunteers/stakeholders throughout the planning process to ensure documents are being read and tasks completed. | 4.50 |
| 15 | Formalized Agreements | Discuss with the other party face to face or on the phone exactly what each of your interpretations are of statements within the agreement. | 4.50 |
| 16 | Other | Be prepared to forecast and re-adjust your budgets. | 4.50 |
| 17 | Other | Be organized. | 4.50 |

**Other.**

The strategy category of other was not based on the work of Parent et al. (2011). It was added to categorize strategies that may not fit into the categories based on the work of Parent et al. (2011). This strategy category had the highest number of strategies rank on the list of the Top 17 Prominent Strategies, with a total of five (see Table E8 for complete list of other strategies). Two strategies within this category received a score of 4.80. This was the highest score received by any strategy overall and therefore these issues rank tied with three other strategies, that will be discussed in the following sections, as the most prominent strategies identified in this research. The first prominent strategy was *be realistic about budgets*. This strategy was only mentioned by Participant 7 during Round One: Interviews, who stated,

> I think the strategy that I use is that I am very, very realistic about my budget—like ideally I would like it to be 100,000 but realistically its probably going to be 50, so I'm realistic from the beginning. I'm not going to put in my budget, you know ridiculous numbers, inflated numbers, and hope it will get approved when I know it probably won't. So it's being realistic from the get go…

The second strategy in the category of other that received a score of 4.80 was *have a clear understanding of your budget - be smart and creative to stretch your budget.* This strategy was also only mentioned by one participant, Participant 8, who stated,

> Like budget wise, I think just before you start you need to have a clear understanding of your budget and go through it…you have to be very savvy and smart and get the right deals and keep everything on budget and be creative because there is not a lot of big dollars in international sport events [in Canada]…

The third strategy in the category of other, ranked within the Top 17, was *be proactive - the more you are ahead of the game the more you can avoid potential issues.* This strategy received a score of 4.60, which ties this strategy with three other strategies for the third highest score on the list of the Top 17. Participant 8 identified this as a strategy by stating,

> So I think one of our—one of the strategies is that we as a team have to keep front in mind that we are proactive and we stay ahead of the game. So that we can start asking the questions before we get to a position that it might be too late.

The strategy of *be proactive* was also mentioned by other participants, in relation to different aspects of sport event management. That is why the strategy was placed into the category of other because it could be related to many other strategy categories such as decision-making or strategic planning. By placing the strategy in this category participants were able to rank the issue based on any previous situations they may have utilized it in.

Another strategy within the Top 17 in the category of other also relates to budgets and received a score of 4.50. This score ties this strategy with four other strategies on the list of the Top 17. The strategy was *be prepared to forecast and re-adjust your budgets* and it was mentioned by Participant 8 who stated,

> Now the other thing on budgeting is you have to be able, in the event world, is to forecast and re-adjust your budgets. So, because revenue coming in—there is different resources. You can have the federal and provincial funding— but sponsorship and ticket sales are very big—But if you don't sell the sponsorships, then that affects your expenditures and if your ticket sales aren't going on track as

what you had anticipated, then you have to forecast and re-forecast and shift

allocations and you have to be on top of that because you can't end up at the end

going, "okay well we didn't meet any of our objectives"…

A total of three strategies related to budgets placed within the Top 17 Prominent

Strategies. The strategies of *be realistic about budgets* and *have a clear understanding of*

*your budget* were the strategies used most by participants, followed by *be prepared to*

*forecast and re-adjust your budgets*. This reflects the issue data related to funding,

previously discussed. Participants acknowledged funding as an issue and then provided

strategies to deal with these issues by suggesting awareness surrounding the budgets of

events. These strategies are discussed further on page 91, in relation to issue-strategy

links for funding issues. These strategies should also be considered in relation to resource

theory as budgets involve the funding an event has, which can be considered an

intangible asset (Barney, Wright, Ketchen Jr., 2001). In addition, these strategies are

consistent with the work of Emery (2010) as "appropriate management of finance" (p.

163) was a critical success factor identified by senior managers of major sport events.

The final strategy in the Top 17 categorized within the other category was, *be*

*organized*, which received a score of 4.50. During Round One: Interviews this strategy

was only mentioned directly by Participant 11 who stated,

I think its also just being very organized. I think that is a huge part of it. It's those

simple things, and I'm—maybe I'm veering off too far here but if you're

organized, everyone else will be organized around you. They'll want to be

organized around you too.

This strategy is basic but straightforward. Though it was not mentioned directly by more participants, its high ranking could be due to the fact that participants utilize it but they previously did not consider it a specific strategy. Being organized is not specific to managing major sport events, but the Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire reminded participants of the strategy and they indicated their use of it during events.

As previously indicated, the strategy category of other had the most issues rank within the Top 17, with a total of five. This demonstrates the importance of this category, which allowed for participant answers not to be forced into other categories. The majority of the strategies were related to the budgets of events. More research is needed to fully understand the use of these specific strategies and their relation to major sport event issues. The additional two strategies in this category are basic but are considered best practices and should be utilized by managers of future major sport events.

**Formalized agreements.**

The formalized agreements strategy category was described by Parent et al. (2011) as "establish formal agreements between parties, multi-party agreements, contracts" (p. 356). Four formalized agreements strategies ranked within the Top 17 Prominent Strategies (see Table E4 for complete list of formalized agreement strategies). The strategies identified by participants in this study go into more depth than those identified in Parent et al. (2011), as they address specific strategies related to formalized agreements as opposed to just the establishment of the agreements.

The most prominent strategy in this category, which received a score of 4.80, was *ensure you are protecting yourself (legally)*. As previously mentioned, this score ties this

strategy with other strategies as the highest on the list of the Top 17 Prominent Strategies.

This strategy was discussed by Participant 15 who stated,

> …you have to make sure that from a risk standpoint that we're covered and that
>
> they're covered if something were to happen because now everybody sues
>
> everybody for—the coffee is too hot at McDonalds and you're suing McDonalds,
>
> so people are protecting themselves.

As Participant 15 indicates, liability and lawsuits are very common today and major sport

event managers need to ensure they are not only protecting themselves but the event as a

whole. Additional formalized agreements strategies included *ensure you are learning*

*from past agreements in order to eliminate recurring issues,* which received a score of

4.70 and *be clear about what you can and cannot deliver,* which received a score of 4.60.

Both strategies were only mentioned by one participant each during Round One:

Interviews.

The final prominent formalized agreements strategy that placed within the Top 17

was *discuss with the other party face to face or on the phone exactly what each of your*

*interpretations are of statements within the agreement,* which received a score of 4.50.

This score places this strategy at the bottom of the list of the Top 17 Prominent

Strategies. This strategy was discussed by Participant 8 who stated,

> …make sure that you sit down with whoever you are going into that formalized
>
> agreement and that you openly talk about—face to face or on the phone, of
>
> "what's your interpretation of this? Maybe this clause, this point, what is your
>
> interpretation? This is my interpretation", are you on the same page? When you

don't, in hindsight, you can see that you can set yourself up for failure and

miscommunication and a lot of other trouble…

Again, continuing the trend that was started in the subsections above, this strategy was

only mentioned by one participant during Round One: Interviews. Interestingly, this

meant that when participants saw the full list of strategies and they were asked to provide

scores, they provided high scores to strategies they may not have mentioned themselves.

This strategy's ranking in the Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire demonstrates its use

as a best practice by participants of this research.

The strategy category of formalized agreements had the second most strategies

ranked within the Top 17, with a total of four. All four strategies received a different

score, covering the range of scores on the list of the Top 17 Prominent Strategies. Major

sport events require many external stakeholders in order to be successfully executed and

therefore many formalized agreements are utilized. Managers of future major sport events

should consider the strategies previously outlined in this subsection when dealing with

formalized agreements as they are considered best practices in this research.

**Communication.**

In the work of Parent et al. (2011) this strategy category was titled communication

processes and described as "facilitating communication, information sharing and transfer

through structural and individual (intermediaries) processes, use of formal/informal

processes, vertical/ horizontal communication, use of intranet/extranet, SNOW/ICE

SharePoint systems" (p. 356). Three communication strategies received scores that placed

them on the Top 17 Prominent Strategies list (see Table E2 for complete list of

communication strategies). Due to the large role communication plays in major sport

events it is surprising that more strategies did not emerge as prominent to this research.

The most prominent communication strategy utilized by participants was *provide*

*information packages to participants. Include as much information as possible to*

*improve their experience. I.e. include information on not just the event but where it is*

*being held, hotel/restaurant suggestions etc*. This strategy received a score of 4.70, the

second highest score on the list of the Top 17 Prominent Strategies. Participants 11 and

12 both indicated this as a strategy they have utilized at previous major sport events.

These participants come from different types of events, so the information that they

provided to participants of their events differed slightly. It is surprising to the researcher

that this strategy ranked within the Top 17 because as previously indicated, participants

held many different roles at events and therefore they may not all have involved

communicating with the participants of their events. This strategy is limited in the issues

it can help mitigate due to how specific it is but knowledge management issues could

benefit from its use depending on the event.

The second prominent strategy in the communication category was *use the right*

*form of communication for the situation - urgent communication requires face to face or*

*phone calls versus text messages or emails*, which received a score of 4.60. Participant 12

discussed this strategy by stating,

I love text message and I love all that stuff but when you're in the heat of the

battle and you're putting on an event and you need answers right now or you need

to get a hold of somebody right now, its not—you know its not text message. Its

not, you know whatever else. I mean its gotta be cell phone, its gotta be— or its

gotta be phone call. Its gotta be face to face. Its gotta be you know a personal interaction, that's not you know just texting back and forth. You gotta guarantee that you have an answer and that's why a lot of times the radio—we'll go to events and radio is probably number one over cell phone because there is numerous people on the radio that can answer your question.

This strategy reflects the entire process of major sport events, both the planning and execution. Depending on the time and setting, the right form of communication is needed in order to successfully communicate.

The final communication strategy that ranked within the Top 17 Prominent Strategies was *maintain continuous communication with employees/volunteers /stakeholders throughout the planning process to ensure documents are being read and tasks completed,* which received a score of 4.50. Participant 11 stated the following in relation to this strategy,

So I think you can't just send documents and we tend to do that. We have a lot of documents, we have a lot of resources and we send it to a participant or host committee and you go, "here you go, here are all the resources, please read". You know, it's important for you to follow up with them and kind of going "here are the resources, please review and happy to go over them next week when you've had the chance to review and any questions you may have" and I think its getting everyone on the same page, so its not just talking to individuals, its getting the whole group together so that everyone understands the interpretation…

In addition Participant 12 stated,

Yea, I mean looking back…you basically just have to constantly have open

discussions with whoever you're in a contract with… I always—I touch base with

people every couple weeks and stuff like that, just to say… "hey how are you?"

You know, "how's the kids?" or whatever and then just keep that dialogue open.

Just because I hate for something to go stale and then I mean you never know if

somebody can move jobs right? I mean I've sent emails to people before and then

they go "oh he doesn't work here any more". I'm like "What? Excuse me? I have

a contract with him"… So I mean yea that's why I just like to keep an open

discussion with people and that's probably the best way that you know you can

stay on top of things.

The three communication strategies that ranked within the Top 17 Prominent

Strategies in this research are considered best practices in this research. Each strategy is

unique and can therefore assist in mitigating different issues. All three strategies received

different scores, covering a majority of the range of scores on the list of the Top 17

Prominent Strategies. Though no communication strategy received the highest score on

the list, 4.80, communication still plays a large role in major sport events and the three

strategies outlined in this section can help ensure that communication is effective.

**Decision-making.**

The decision-making strategy category was based on the strategy category titled

decision-making frames by Parent et al. (2011) which was described as "use of past

experience, experts, gut feel/intuition, luck" (p.356). A total of two decision-making

strategies ranked within the Top 17 Prominent Strategies (see Table E1 for complete list

of decision making strategies). One of the decision-making strategies was tied for most

prominent in this research, receiving a score of 4.80. This strategy was *gather as much*

*information as possible and provide it to whoever is responsible for a decision in order to*

*streamline the process; answer questions ahead of time*. Participant 8 indicated this was a

strategy by stating,

> …we answer almost every question that we anticipate that [the organization]
>
> would ask and that's just based on experience and having done—this is my third
>
> [organization] event, so I can pretty much guess the questions that they're going
>
> to ask. So we provide the answers before—we provide almost the information to
>
> answer any questions that they would ask and hope that when we send something
>
> in it's a checkmark instead of a back and forth, back and forth, back and forth.

Participant 8 comes from the host city/community of the event and is discussing an

interaction with the organization responsible for the event who, for this particular event,

has the decision making power. By providing as much information as possible this

strategy assists in streamlining the decision making process. Participant 8 also utilizes

"past experience" as Parent et al. (2011) indicated in their definition of decision-making

frames.

The second prominent strategy in the decision making category was *gather*

*opinions, input and advice from those around you before making a decision - don't be*

*afraid to ask questions*, which reflects Parent et al.'s (2011) description of use of experts.

This strategy received a score of 4.50 and was expressed by Participant 4 who stated,

> … usually you're working with a committee in terms of dealing with any of these
>
> kind of—any kind of events... getting their opinion as to why you should go in
>
> this direction or why they think that you should go in a particular direction. So its

using those, using other people's opinions and thoughts to get different

perspectives before making the decision you're going to make, it's getting other

people's opinions and other people's perception of the value of certain decisions

or consequences—certain decisions, before going ahead.

Additionally, Participant 9 indicated using this strategy by mentioning, "I would always

look to different advisors, mentors, you know people within—you know I had a board of

directors that I reported to, so you know I would bend the ear of some of those people."

Furthermore, Participant 15 highlighted,

 …its important to get input from different people…the people that are most

effective at that make sure that they take that collaborative information and don't

just pay it lip service and not pay attention to it and factor it into their decision but

actually listen to it, evaluate it, process it and then use that to come up with the

final decision.

This strategy was mentioned by six participants during Round One: Interviews and by

receiving a score of 4.50 it establishes itself as a best practice in this research.

Both decision-making strategies ranked within the Top 17 Prominent Strategies in

this research are best practices that should be utilized by managers of future major sport

events. The scores they received from participants put them at the high and low end of the

list, at 4.80 and 4.50. The strategies can relate to each other as the gathering of input and

advice can inform the information provided to those responsible for the decision. Though

only two specific decision-making strategies were considered prominent in this research

other decision-making strategies should be considered by mangers of future major sport

events due to the large number of decisions that need to be made to successfully execute

future major sport events (see Table E1).

**Strategic planning.**

The strategic planning strategy category was described by Parent et al. (2011) as

"strategic planning process integrating resources, deliverables, schedules/time

management, scope, due diligence, clear goals, use of issue matrices and resolution

protocols" (p. 357). There were two strategic planning strategies that ranked within the

Top 17 Prominent Strategies in this research (see Table E3 for complete list of strategic

planning strategies). The most prominent strategy in this category was *plan as early as*

*possible*, which received a score of 4.70, the second highest score on the list of the Top

17 Prominent Strategies. Participant 12 stressed the use of the strategy by stating,

> Always plan early. Always—always asking questions early and asking every little
>
> detail because a lot of the times if a city or a police department or somebody—
>
> they might assume you know something or you might assume that they know
>
> what we're talking about. I mean you have to be very detail oriented, saying you
>
> know specific instructions or specific you know details for every facet of the
>
> event. I mean planning early is obviously number one…I mean you plan for a lot
>
> of things but you have to be prepared for 10% of something not happening the
>
> way that you want it. There is always something that is not going to go right. I
>
> mean whether its large or if its small, there is something that you can't predict that
>
> is going to happen but if you plan early enough you can catch a lot of those
>
> things.

This strategy was only directly mentioned by one participant during Round One: Interviews but when all participants were given the chance to rank their use of the strategy it received the highest score in this category.

This strategy and the circumstances surrounding its Top 17 ranking is similar to other previously discussed strategies. The strategy of *plan as early as possible* is a very basic statement. Through participant scores it becomes obvious that the expert panel has utilized this strategy but almost everyone did not mention it as a specific strategy during their Round One: Interviews. Some participants are responsible for a set number of events a year on the organization side, whereas other participants on the host side may only have one event to plan. Depending on when a location is awarded the right to host, participants' planning time may be limited. It becomes obvious that participants utilize this strategy to *plan as early as possible* but how early they can plan varies.

The second strategic planning strategy ranked within the Top 17 was *identify the size and scope of your event - be aware of the event's capacity.* This strategy received a score of 4.60, the third highest score on the list of the Top 17 Prominent Strategies. Participant 10 was the only participant that mentioned this strategy during Round One: Interviews, stating,

> … we know that we're not built to host [this specific sport] championship. We
>
> know that we're not built to host [this specific sport] championship. Those—
>
> hosting you know one of those championships I think would be a major, major
>
> strain on us organizationally and also even in terms of our ability to support that
>
> with sponsorship support within our community. I just don't think realistically we
>
> could make it happen…So you know finding the correct fit…

When mentioning this strategy, Participant 10 was very specific in relating it to the event

their organization was responsible for. When given the chance to rank their use of the

strategy, seven out of the 10 participants who completed the Round Three: Strategies

Questionnaire ranked the strategy as a five, the highest rank on the provided scale. This

indicates that despite being only mentioned in Round One: Interviews by one participant,

numerous other participants have utilized this strategy at past major sport events.

    The two strategic planning strategies ranked within the Top 17 Prominent

Strategies of this research are considered best practices to assist with mitigating issues

that major sport event managers may encounter. Though only two strategic planning

strategies were considered prominent to this research, many of the other strategies in

other categories relate to the planning of events. Therefore, when managers of future

major sport events are looking for strategies related to planning they can look at other

categories within this research.

    **Human resources.**

    Parent et al. (2011) described the human resources strategy category as

"recruitment and training processes, redeployment post-games, involving volunteers vs.

paid staff, use of secondments, creation of host city teams" (p. 357). One issue ranked

within the Top 17 Prominent Strategies, with a score of 4.80 (see Table E5 for complete

list of human resources strategies), which ties this strategy as one of the top strategies

identified in this research. The strategy was *lead by example*, which was directly quoted

from the Round One interview with Participant 7. This strategy is similar to other

previously discussed strategies as it was only mentioned by one participant during Round

One: Interviews and it is a very basic and straightforward statement that is not specific to

major sport events. Though it was only mentioned by one participant during Round One:

Interviews once the remaining participants were given the opportunity to rank the

strategy they indicated that they often utilize it. It is considered a best practice in this

research and managers of future major sport events are encouraged to utilize it to help

lessen the occurrence of various issues.

**Issue-Strategy Links**

Part II of the Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire asked participants to provide

strategies specifically for the issues listed, that they would identify as a best practice to

attempt to solve the issue (see Appendix C). The issues on the list came from the Round

Two: Issues Questionnaire, specifically those that had the highest impact in each issue

category. If two issues had the same mean in a category and that was the highest mean,

then both issues were included.

The following subsections discuss the results of Part II of the Round Three:

Strategies Questionnaire based on participant responses. Strategies from participant

responses were considered to be prominent if they were mentioned by numerous

participants in this portion of the questionnaire. The best practices that emerged from Part

II of the Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire can be seen in Table 3. The following

subheadings are based on an adaptation of Parent et al.'s (2011) issue types which

included: (1) timing; (2) geography; (3) funding; (4) other resources; (5) political

situation; (6) accountability/authority; (7) activation/leveraging;(8) knowledge

management; (9) legal; (10) operational; (11) planning; (12) power; (13) relationships;

(14) structure; (15) turnover and (16) other. Every issue category is included in this

section, as at least one issue from each category was included in Part II of the Round

Three: Strategies Questionnaire. They are listed in the same order as they appeared in the

Round Two: Issues Questionnaire provided to participants.

Table 3

*Best Practices Based on Issue-Strategy Links*

| Issue(s) | Best Practice(s) |
|---|---|
| *Timing of formal agreements. If not done early enough in the process the event has no leverage with the host committee and/or local stakeholders such as hotels.* | Develop and utilize templates from event to event to streamline the process. |
| *There is never enough funding.* | Utilize sponsorships.<br><br>Have a clear understanding of your budget. Be smart and creative to stretch your budget.<br><br>Spend money in the right places. You can't cut corners on certain elements. |
| *Volunteer management.*<br><br>*Role clarity – if roles are not clear, issues arise.* | Ensure roles are clearly defined. Provide written information such as a detailed job description. |
| *Not enough communication takes place.* | Hold meetings not just for employees but involve external stakeholders and volunteers where appropriate. Ensure everyone at these meetings is updating the group on their progress.<br><br>Facilitate knowledge transfer, whether that is between the organization and the host or between past hosts and current or future hosts, through document transfer/seminars/workshops etc. |
| *Finding a suitable location and/or venues for an event.* | Conduct a market analysis to determine if the location/venue/community is suitable for the event. |
| *Lack of community support for an event.* | Ensure the event is being promoted in the community in various ways and early on in the planning process |
| *Event delays due to weather.* | Have plans/policies/protocol in place that outline specifics in regards to event delays and/or cancellations due to weather. |

**Timing.**

The timing issue participants were asked to provide a strategy for was *timing of formal agreements. If not done early enough in the process the event has no leverage with the host committee and/or local stakeholders such as hotels.* Strategies identified by participants to help solve this issue included developing and providing templates of agreements and ensuring the process is completed as early as possible. Participant 1 stated "Have templates developed well in advance with deadlines and deliverables." In addition, Participant 3 indicated that their organization, "…provides a template for such agreements and the agreements must be signed at the bid phase. This way when a host is granted the rights to host the [event], agreements are already in place." Participants 6 and 12 indicated that the agreements process needs to start taking place anywhere from one to three years in advance. Participant 2 suggested "complete as early as possible in the quieter season". This may not apply to all events, as a "quieter season" may not exist.

The strategies identified here are similar to the strategy, *develop and utilize templates from event to event to streamline the process*, which originally emerged from participant interview responses and was categorized as a formalized agreement strategy. It was then included in the Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire, where it received a score of 4.30. Though the score it received in Part I of the Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire was not high enough to be considered prominent in this research, it's mention by participants in Part II indicates its position as a best practice in this research. In addition, this demonstrates a link between timing issues and formalized agreement strategies.

**Geography.**

Participants were asked to provide a strategy to help solve the issue: *hosting events across a large area leads to the financial burden for participants to travel to the event.* As previously indicated this issue did not rank high in comparison to the other prominent issues identified in Round Two. This lack of prominence was reflected again when four out of the nine participants who provided responses for Part II of the Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire did not provide a strategy for the issue, indicating it was not applicable to their events. The responses provided by the remaining participants were dissimilar, therefore no best practice for this issue emerged from the research. As previously mentioned when discussing this issue in the Top 26 Prominent Issues section, the wide variety of roles held by participants could have contributed to the lack of consensus on this issue, as participants may not have been responsible for this aspect of the events that they were involved in.

**Funding.**

Participants provided strategies for the funding issue of *there is never enough funding.* The prominent strategy identified from participant responses was the use of sponsorship. Participants 2, 3 and 12 all indicated their use of sponsorship to assist with funding, with Participant 12 stating, "Sponsorship is a key element of hosting…" Interestingly, lack of sponsorship is an issue that was identified by participants in this research. Strategies for this issue will be discussed below in the legal issue category, on page 97.

Additional strategies provided by participants 1, 4 and 7 focused on budgets. Participant 7 focused specifically on smart spending, indicating, "Be smart of how you

spend your money…you need to be efficient of how you use it". This strategy relates to

two strategies previously ranked by participants 1) *Have a clear understanding of your*

*budget. Be smart and creative to stretch your budget* and 2) *Spend money in the right*

*places. You can't cut corners on certain elements.*

      The strategy of: *have a clear understanding of your budget. Be smart and creative*

*to stretch your budget* was considered prominent in Part I of the Round Three: Strategies

Questionnaire receiving a score of 4.80, indicating it is a best practice as identified in this

research. Though the strategy of *spend money in the right places. You can't cut corners*

*on certain elements* only received a score of 4.30 in Part I of the Round Three: Strategies

questionnaire, it's mention in Part II establishes it as a best practice in this research. This

issue-strategy link demonstrates a connection between funding issues and other strategies.

In addition, these strategies reflect resource theory as Rumelt (1984) indicated that a

firm's competitive position is defined by a bundle of unique resources and the task of

management is to adjust and renew these resources as time, competition and change

erode their value (in Conner, 1991). By utilizing these strategies managers of future

major sport events will be adjusting their resources as necessary.

      An additional strategy was mentioned which could assist in solving this funding

issue and included "Understanding the marketplace well in advance to ensure it has the

business, population and amenities, as well as identifying any existing competitive events

that might present challenges…" (Participant 6). The strategy of *conduct a market*

*analysis to determine if the location/venue/community is suitable for the event* was

previously indicated by participants, was then categorized as a strategic planning strategy

and received a score of 3.30 in Part I of the Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire.

Though not considered a best practice to solve this particular funding issue it should be considered by event managers in the future. This issue-strategy link demonstrates a connection between funding issues and strategic planning strategies. The strategy is also mentioned on page 98 as a way to help solve the issue of *finding a suitable location and/or venues for an event.*

### Other resources.

As previously indicated, the issue category of other resources primarily featured issues involving volunteers. The most prominent issue was *volunteer management* and Part II of the Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire asked participants to provide strategies to help solve this issue. The prominent strategy to emerge from participant responses was providing job descriptions to volunteers, which was mentioned by Participants 1, 4 and 11. This strategy was highlighted by Participant 11 who suggested providing "Thorough job descriptions of roles and responsibilities." This strategy was included in Part I of the Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire but did not receive a score of 4.50 or above. The previous lack of prominence could be due to the fact that job descriptions are common to all organizations and therefore may not have been seen as a best practice to participants as they are nearly always utilized. Despite this, it's mention in Part II of the Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire establishes it as a best practice in this research. In addition, this issue and the strategy recommended to solve it demonstrate a link between other resources issues and human resource management strategies.

Other previously mentioned strategies were also provided by participants, such as training and a volunteer handbook. These additional strategies were also previously categorized under human resource management. Neither of these strategies received

scores of 4.50 and above and they were not mentioned by enough participants in Part II of

the Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire to be considered prominent in this research.

**Political situation.**

There were two political situation issues that participants were asked to provide

strategies for (1) *government leaders changing positions throughout the course of*

*planning and executing an event* and (2) *government not viewing the event as a high*

*priority.* Both issues were included in this section of the Round Three: Strategies

Questionnaire because they had the same score of 2.62 and that was the highest mean

received in the political situation issue category. Both issues received responses of not

applicable from four participants indicating that the issue has not impacted events that

these participants have managed. Participants 2, 10 and 11 did not indicate any strategies

for either of these issues.

Suggested strategies for the first issue provided to participants from this category,

*government leaders changing positions*, revolved around building and maintaining

relationships. Participant 3 indicated, "It is really just about building a relationship

quickly and moving forward". In addition, Participant 6 provided a strategy of

"Maintaining a relationship with key elected officials and key staff members." This

strategy was only mentioned by two participants which suggests it may not be a best

practice for major sport event managers but it should be considered as a potential strategy

to assist with this issue in the future.

The second issue, *government not viewing the event as a high priority*, did not

produce a definitive strategy from participants. Though a best practice did not emerge

participants frequently tied this issue to money, funding and economic impact. Suggested

strategies tied to these topics included, explaining the economic impacts to governments

that might be hesitant (Participant 12) and leveraging support from a board member or

someone within the organization to lobby on behalf of the economic impacts (Participant

4). This mention of funding topics demonstrates the connection between government

involvement and funding for events. Participants have managed events that have taken

place in different cities and communities, with different local governments, and this could

have contributed to the lack of provided strategies, as their interactions may have

differed.

### Accountability/Authority.

The issue participants were asked to provide specific strategies for in the

accountability/authority issue category was *role clarity – if roles are not clear, issues

arise*. The strategy suggested by the majority of participants involved the use of job

descriptions and organizational charts to ensure roles are clear. Six participants provided

variations to this strategy. Examples included "Revise manuals and organizational charts

with clearly defined roles and responsibilities for each area" (Participant 6) and "Creation

of an organizational structure and job description documents for each role" (Participant

10). The strategy of providing job descriptions was previously mentioned in this research

as a strategy ranked by participants in Part I of the Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire

and also a suggested best practice provided by participants in Part II, to solve the issue of

*volunteer management*. As previously mentioned, this strategy was not considered

prominent to this research in Part I of the Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire, as it did

not receive a score of 4.50 or above. Despite this, its mention by participants in Part II of

the Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire as a suggested strategy to assist with two

different issues establishes it as a best practice for major sport event managers. This issue-strategy link also demonstrates how accountability/authority issues can be solved by utilizing human resource management strategies.

### Activation/Leveraging.

The activation/leveraging issue participants provided strategies for was *hosting fatigue*. A strategy mentioned by Participants 6 and 12 suggested managers look for ways to improve the event and/or develop a fresh outlook on the event. The strategy of *find ways to make your event unique and provide value to those involved - always look for improvement* was included in the Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire as a strategy ranked by participants but it did not receive a score of 4.50 or above. Managers of future major sport events should consider this strategy, but as stated it was not considered prominent when ranked by participants in Part I of the Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire. Additionally, it was not mentioned by enough participants in Part II to be considered a best practice in this research. Participant 7 provided a clear strategy that may assist major sport event managers in the future, by stating, "Be clear with the host committee why the organization is going back to the same city. Emphasize the strong volunteer base, the strong ticket sales, good price on venues and hotels, easy to access for participants". Though not considered a best practice in this research it is a valuable strategy for sport event managers to consider in the future.

### Knowledge management.

Participants provided strategies for the most prominent issue in the knowledge management issue category, *not enough communication takes place.* The basis of strategies provided in participant responses included meetings and reports/reporting. Four

participants mentioned similar strategies such as "Planned monthly meetings with set agendas" (Participant 1) and "Establish specific meeting times and reporting to be shared with those involved" (Participant 4). Other suggestions included file sharing capabilities (Participant 1) and face-to-face meetings and conference calls (Participant 11).

The strategy to *hold meetings* was included in Part I of the Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire and therefore was ranked by participants. The strategy was previously not considered prominent to this research as it received a score of 3.80. *Facilitating knowledge transfer* was another strategy ranked by participants and it was also previously not considered prominent to this research. Despite prior scores, both strategies and their variations provided by participants should be considered best practices for major sport event managers. It is evident through participant responses that these strategies can assist in solving this issue and therefore should be considered as best practices. These strategies and their associated issues demonstrate a link between knowledge management issues and communication strategies. In addition, these strategies reflect coordination theory as Crowston (1997) indicated that organizations that perform the same task often perform essentially the same activities and while these general activities are often the same, the processes differ in how they are coordinated. The strategies of *hold meetings* and *facilitate knowledge transfer* require coordination by many stakeholders in order to be effective. The various activities required by the strategies have been previously utilized by event managers and therefore may differ in how they are coordinated. The use of the strategies would be beneficial to managers of future major sport events.

**Legal.**

The issue participants provided strategies for in the legal issue category was *lack of sponsorship*. The majority of participants provided detailed strategies for this issue but none were exactly the same, suggesting there may not be an exact best practice for handling this issue. Participant 4 stated, "Look to organizations who can eliminate costs rather than provide cash sponsorship. Decreased costs are the same as increased revenue on the bottom line of the budget. Approach those organizations who can offer something of value in return." In addition, Participant 11 indicated, "Approach those you never thought to approach. Don't always look for the larger numbers. A sponsorship of $5000 is the same as 10 sponsors coming on board with $500." Though no clear best practice emerged to assist with the issue of lack of sponsorship, the detailed strategies provided by participants in these responses highlight strategies that can be helpful to major sport event managers in the future.

**Operational.**

Participants were asked to provide strategies for the operational issue of *finding a suitable location and/or venues for an event.* The potential best practice that emerged from this category was market and event analysis and/or venue assessment. Participant 4 suggested that locations and/or venues should be identified through discussion with stakeholders and Participant 1 indicated its need to be completed during the bid stage. Participant 7 sums up this strategy best by stating,

> Be aware of your event and what city and venue is the best fit.  Need to consider
> your sport, level of competition, potential ticket sales, easy for spectators to
> attend, easy for participants to get to city (coming from within the country or

internationally) and city support.  It needs to be the right combination for an event

to be successful.

All of these factors need to be considered when the issue of *finding a suitable location*

*and/or venues* is encountered. The strategy, *conduct a market analysis to determine if the*

*location/venue/community is suitable for the event*, did not receive a score of 4.50 or

above from participants in Part I of the Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire. This

could be due to the fact that not all participants in their roles as major sport event

managers are tasked with finding suitable locations. As mentioned previously this could

depend on which side of the event the participant was a part of, the organization or host

committee/city. Despite not being considered prominent to this research in Part I of the

Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire, the mention of this strategy by participants in

Part II, to solve both this issue and the issue of *there is never enough funding*, indicates

its ability to be a best practice for major sport event managers in the future. It also

demonstrates the link between operational issues and strategic planning strategies.

**Planning.**

Participants were asked to provide strategies for two planning issues after both

received the highest score in this category, at 3.08. The first issue was

*employees/volunteers involved in executing the plan are not the same as those who*

*developed it, creating conflict when it comes to changes in the execution.* As with other

issues, no single strategy emerged as a clear best practice to assist in solving this issue.

Participant 1 indicated the need for a good change management process, stating, "Ensure

proper governance model is in place with appropriate delegation of authority for decision

making." Additionally, Participant 3 stated the "Key here is to engage the group that will

be executing the planning" and "bridge the gap between those who developed the plan

and those responsible for executing it".  Major sport managers could utilize these

suggested strategies when they attempt to solve this issue in the future, but overall they

are not considered best practices in this research.

The second issue participants were asked to provide strategies for in the planning

issue category was *being on different timelines as others involved in the event.* Again, no

single strategy emerged as a best practice to help solve this issue but participant

responses produced similarities. Participants 3 and 7 indicated that timelines should be

created in the planning phase of an event. Participant 3 continued that "as people come

into the fold, they are provided the timelines" to help eliminate this issue. Participant 7

indicated that "timelines should be created along with tasks and staff should be assigned

to each of these responsibilities" to ensure everyone is following the same timeline. The

suggested strategies should be considered by major sport event managers but are not

considered specific best practices in this research.

**Power.**

The power issue participants were asked to provide strategies for was *the power*

*broadcasters have to influence and make decisions.* The issue was not considered

prominent as it only received a score of 2.62 in the Round Two: Issues Questionnaire but

it was included in Part II of the Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire because it was the

only issue in this category. Six participants responded with not applicable, indicating that

they had no strategy for this particular issue. Participants who did provide responses

indicated the impact broadcasters can have on the competition schedule. The event that

Participant 3 is responsible for managing requires broadcasters to request any changes to

the competition schedule, which is a strategy that would be beneficial for other events. Participant 7 discussed the broadcasters influence over the competition schedule by stating,

> My strategy for dealing with TV is reminding them of my job, which is to keep the event athlete focused. My job is to provide the athletes the best possible environment to compete in and this could include the competition schedule and when they compete. This is usually the strategy that TV understands, as they also want the athletes to perform their best for better TV ratings.

Due to the lack of prominence this issue had to this research and the lack of strategies provided there is no single best practice for attempting to solve this issue but major sport event managers should consider the previously mentioned strategies in the future.

### Relationship(s).

Participants provided potential best practices to help solve the issue of *conflicting personalities amongst staff and/or volunteers* in the relationship(s) issue category. The responses provided by participants indicate the lack of a best practice to help solve this issue. Numerous strategies were suggested including, having good policies and principles around a respectful workplace (Participant 1), having strong leadership and human resource department (Participant 3) and bringing the issues forward and having staff/volunteers provide their ideas for a resolution (Participant 4). It appears that this issue has been solved in many different ways by participants, suggesting there is no specific best practice to help solve it but as with previous issues, the strategies presented here can be considered by event managers in the future.

**Structure.**

The issue that participants were asked to provide strategies for from the structure issue category was *managing the motivations, expectations and/or objectives of all the different stakeholders.* Five participants did not indicate a strategy for this issue by providing a response of not applicable. A clear best practice did not emerge from the remaining participant responses. Overall, participants recommended open, proper and specific communication (Participants 4 and 6) to help manage this issue. Participant 7 provided a strong strategy when stating, "The key is to understand their top priorities and work them into your event plans/execution. You need to show that you can accomplish their objectives because this is why they are partners with you.". The lack of strategies provided by participants indicates there is no clear best practice to mitigate this issue.

**Turnover.**

The turnover issue participants were asked to provide strategies for was *loss of quality staff - issues with how to replace them.* Participants provided a variety of strategies to help solve this issue. Suggested strategies included look to promote from within (Participant 4), revise roles (Participant 6) and constantly train others so that everyone knows most aspects of the event and gaps can be filled quickly (Participant 12). All participants had a different approach to solving this issue, suggesting there is no single best practice to help solve it. The best way to solve this issue could be impacted by different organizational factors such as whether completion bonuses are offered, ability to hire from within, and/or the expertise required of the position needing to be filled, all factors indicated in participant responses.

**Other.**

There were two issues in the other category that participants were asked to provide strategies for. The first was *lack of community support for an event*, followed by *event delays due to weather*. Neither of these issues were considered prominent to this research upon analysis of the Round Two: Issues Questionnaire but they received the highest score in this category, at 2.92 and were therefore utilized for Part II of the Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire.

Strategies provided for *lack of community support for an event* focused on promoting the event within the community. This strategy was presented in various ways including suggestions such as "Lots of marketing and an outreach program" (Participant 7) and utilizing "TV and radio commercials, billboards, school programs, mascot programs, and presence at all community events" (Participant 3). Both Participants 1 and 6 indicated that this issue can be addressed early on in the planning process. Participant 1 suggested the use of "A good community relations plan that is anchored in local partnerships" and Participant 6 suggested, "Working in advance, outlining 3 to 5 objectives, establish a committee within city/community that feels a part of the [event] planning." Overall a best practice for this issue is to *ensure the event is being promoted in the community in various ways and early on in the planning process*.

The second issue, *event delays due to weather*, is completely out of the control of major sport event managers but the strategies suggested by participants indicate the issue can be dealt with in a planned manner. The strategies that emerged to solve this issue focus on having plans in place in case of inclement weather. Five participants indicated their use of plans, policies and/or protocol that outlined what to do in case of inclement

weather that may delay the event.  Participant 1 clearly outlined this plan by suggesting

the use of,

> Good risk management strategies (have alternate venues/plans worked out in
>
> advance), good processes in place for schedule changes so that staff/volunteers
>
> can adapt quickly to change, plan for scheduled delays so that schedule can be
>
> flexible/adjustable, plan for weather events just in case events have to go anyways
>
> (extra material/volunteers, budget, etc.).

All strategies indicated that planning needs to include who is responsible for making the

decision on whether to delay the event or cancel it. In addition, Participant 6 indicated

that all stakeholders should be aware of the plan. In order to attempt to eliminate this

issue, a best practice that can be utilized by major sport event managers is to *have plans*

*in place that outline specifics in regards to event delays and/or cancellations due to*

*weather*.

**Chapter Five: Conclusions**

The purpose of this research was to examine the operational planning, implementation and execution issues of major sport events, as well as the mitigation and management strategies used to address these issues, with the aim of determining best practices in sport event operational planning. The study was completed by utilizing a modified Delphi technique consisting of three rounds and involving the use of in-depth interviews (Liamputtong, 2009) and questionnaires to collect data. A total of 15 participants were involved in Round One: Interviews, 13 completed the Round Two: Issues Questionnaire and finally 10 completed the Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire, for an overall retention rate of 66.6%.

This research sought to expand on the work of Parent et al. (2011) by providing more examples of participant responses. In addition, this research did not focus on government stakeholders as in Parent et al. (2011) but specifically focused on the issues encountered by major sport event managers during the planning, implementation and execution of major sport events. Overall, the results presented in this thesis extend understandings from the starting point in the Parent et al. (2011) work. This research contributed to existing sport event management literature by focusing on the issues encountered and the strategies utilized by major sport event managers. Previously, no cross-disciplinary research was found on this topic between OM and sport management. Therefore, in this thesis OM was associated with sport management, with a particular focus on sport event management in order to fill this gap in the literature.

It was concluded that participants have encountered multiple diverse issues that contribute to the complexity of their jobs as major sport event managers. First, this

research offered a total of 97 issues that emerged from interview data. Several of the 97

issues that participants were asked to rank in the Round Two: Issues Questionnaire were

only mentioned by one participant during Round One: Interviews but through the use of

the modified Delphi technique many of these issues emerged as prominent in this

research. The abundance of issues and the lack of consensus related to the issues support

the conclusion that major sport event managers have encountered multiple diverse issues

and that this makes sport event management complex.

Second, the Top 26 Prominent Issues were outlined and determined to have had a

high impact on previous major sport events that participants have been involved in.

Managers of future major sport events would benefit from being aware of these issues.

This awareness could aid in the preparations to mitigate and manage their occurrence. In

particular, the data indicated that issues from the following categories have had the

highest impact on previous major sport events that managers have been involved in:

timing, funding and knowledge management.

The issue category of timing had the highest number of issues on the list of the

Top 26, a total of six issues, with four of these issues ranked within the Top 5. The

number of timing issues and their placement on the list demonstrates the high impact

these issues have had on events that participants have been involved in. The issue

category of funding had three issues rank within the Top 26, with two of these issues

ranking in the Top 5 of this research. The high ranking of funding issues demonstrates the

impact they have had on previously held major sport events. These issues cover a range

of funding issues and recognizing their impact could be beneficial to future major sport

event managers. A total of four knowledge management issues ranked on the list of the

Top 26 Prominent Issues. It is evident that due to the large role knowledge management

plays in successfully executing major sport events, an abundance of issues emerge when

attempting to communicate and share information during the planning and operations of

these events.

In addition, it was revealed that there was not always one specific way to solve an

issue. This was also determined in the work of Parent et al. (2011) who concluded, "not

all issues are addressed by a specific strategy" (p. 363). Although it was determined that

specific strategies cannot always solve all issues, participants provided numerous

strategies, many with similarities, which can aid in the planning and execution of future

major sport events.

Third, this research offered a Top 17 list of Prominent Strategies that are

considered best practices to assist in mitigating the issues that may impact the planning

and execution of future major sport events. In particular, it was determined that

participants have utilized strategies from the following categories most frequently: other,

formalized agreements and communication.

The strategy category of other had the most issues rank within the Top 17, with a

total of five. This demonstrates the importance of this category, which allowed for

participant answers not to be forced into other categories. Three of these strategies were

related to the budgets of events and more research on these specific strategies is

recommended, as the addition of a category related to financial strategies may benefit

future research. A total of four formalized agreement strategies ranked within the Top 17.

Interestingly, these strategies covered the range of scores from 4.80 to 4.50,

demonstrating the importance of these strategies throughout the Top 17. Major sport

event managers use many formalized agreements and utilizing these listed strategies can

be beneficial to managers at future major sport events. Additionally, three communication

strategies ranked within the Top 17. The strategies in this category also covered a range

of scores from 4.70 to 4.50. Communication is a major factor related to the success of

major sport events. Its prominence is reflected in the number of strategies within the Top

17 and the scores they received. Furthermore, 10 additional best practices were identified

based on issue-strategy links. All of these best practices can be used together or

separately in order to help solve issues encountered at major sport events.

Importantly, the results of this research have the potential for transferability.

Managers of future major sport events can benefit from this research by understanding

the types of issues major sport event managers encounter and the strategies they use to

solve these issues. Further, educators in the field of sport management can use the results

to express the complexity of arising issues in sport event management and can offer the

best practices in strategies for managing/mitigating issues to train future sport event

managers. This research can also be beneficial to advance event management

understandings of undergraduate students seeking a degree in sport or event management.

**Limitations and Future Research**

The researcher acknowledges that there were various limitations to this thesis.

One limitation was that expert sport event manager participants' experiences came from a

diverse range of major sport events and participants held various roles at these events.

This was beneficial to the research as it allowed for a variety of responses from

participants but unfortunately due to the different experiences, participants may have

interpreted certain issues and/or strategies differently. Future research may consider

narrowing down the participant criteria in order to have a better consensus in regards to issues and strategies as they apply to each specific role in sport event management.

Future research could utilize the additional frameworks that were considered for this study but were not utilized due to access and timing issues. These included (i) a single case study of a major sport event and (ii) a multi case study of a selection of major sport events. A study of a single event may produce different issues and strategies than this research, that are specific to the event, but the potential for transferability would still exist. In addition, having multiple participants that have managed the same event, as the second considered framework suggested, would allow for event-specific strategies to emerge which could then be compared across events.

As indicated in the review of literature on event management and tourism, studies can produce varying results. As this research area is in the primary stages, additional research is necessary to support or disprove the results and to extend the understandings on the topic. An additional limitation of this research was the number of issues and the ability to mine deeply into the issue and the particular strategies for each issue. Future research could focus on each of the Top 26 issues specifically to gain greater understandings concerning the strategies for mitigating and managing each issue. In addition, as mentioned in the OM section in the review of literature, the call for more cross-disciplinary research was made and can be applied to future sport event management issue and strategy management research.

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**Appendix A**

**Interview Guide: Round One**

**(1)** A) During the planning and execution of events what types of issues did you

encounter concerning **decision-making?** (Who had the authority to make certain

decisions?)

B) What strategies were used to overcome these issues?

(What about: use of past experience, experts, gut feel/intuition, luck)?

C)  Using hindsight, were there any other strategies that could have been utilized

to overcome or eliminate these issues? SO FOR INSTANCE I'M LOOKING

FOR what advice you would give someone else regarding solving **decision-**

**making** issues.

**(2)** A) During the planning and execution of events what types of issues have you

encountered concerning **communication** --- in particular communication

processes? (Issues here could include issues with information sharing.)

B)  What strategies were used to overcome these issues?

(What about:  information sharing and transfer, use of formal/informal

processes, vertical/horizontal communication, use of intranet/extranet)?

C)  Using hindsight, were there any other strategies that could have been utilized

to overcome or eliminate these issues? SO FOR INSTANCE I'M LOOKING

FOR what advice you would give someone else regarding solving

**communication** issues.

**(3)** During the planning and execution of events what types of issues did you

encounter in relation to **strategic planning**?

B) What strategies were used to overcome these issues?

(What about: integrating resources, deliverables, schedules/time management,

scope, due diligence, clear goals, use of issue matrices and resolution protocols)?

C) Using hindsight, were there any other strategies that could have been utilized

to overcome or eliminate these issues? SO FOR INSTANCE I'M LOOKING

FOR what advice you would give someone else regarding solving **strategic**

**planning** issues.

**(4)** A) During the planning and execution of events what types of issues did you

encounter in relation to **formalized agreements?** (Relationships between the

event and other organizations)

B) What strategies were used to overcome these issues?

(What about: establish formal agreements between parties, multi-party

agreements, contracts)?

C) Using hindsight, were there any other strategies that could have been utilized

to overcome or eliminate these issues? SO FOR INSTANCE I'M LOOKING

FOR what advice you would give someone else regarding solving **formalized**

**agreement** issues.

**(5)** A) During the planning and execution of events what types of issues did you

encounter in relation to **human resource management** procedures and

principles? (Issues with turnover? Accountability/authority? Training?)

B) What strategies were used to overcome these issues?

(What about: recruitment and training processes, redeployment post-event, involving volunteers vs. paid staff, use of secondments, creation of host city teams)?

C) Using hindsight, were there any other strategies that could have been utilized to overcome or eliminate these issues? SO FOR INSTANCE I'M LOOKING FOR what advice you would give someone else regarding solving **human resource management** issues.

**(6)** A) During the planning and execution of events what types of issues did you encounter in relation to **structural framework**? (Strategic planning is planning the event itself whereas structural framework issues could include things that arise in relation to hierarchy, or different work groups and their coordination, committee issues, governance issues, accountability)

B) What strategies were used to overcome these issues?

(What about: creating a structure for coordination, a secretariat, frameworks)?

D) Using hindsight, were there any other strategies that could have been utilized to overcome or eliminate these issues? SO FOR INSTANCE I'M LOOKING FOR what advice you would give someone else regarding solving **structural framework** issues.

**(7)** A) During the planning and execution of events what types of issues did you encounter in relation to **engagement?** (Similar to formalized agreements but more about the relationships with stakeholders involved in the event, whether that be participants or spectators, the community)

B) What strategies were used to overcome these issues?

(What about: involvement of and building relationships with community, unions, businesses, sport federations, and other stakeholders, collaborative approach)

**C)** Using hindsight, were there any other strategies that could have been utilized to overcome or eliminate these issues? SO FOR INSTANCE I'M LOOKING FOR what advice you would give someone else regarding solving **engagement** issues.

(8) Are there any other prevalent event management issues you have encountered that do not fit under the previously discussed categories? Or any that you recall that you haven't yet mentioned? (Geography, funding, other resources, and the political situation, whereas the other issue types included: accountability/authority, activation/leveraging, knowledge management, legal, operational, planning, power, relationships, social issues, structure, and turnover.)

**(9)** How many years experience do you have working at sport events?

# Appendix B

## Round Two: Issues Questionnaire

Based on research question 2: *What are the operational issues that arise in the planning and execution of a major sport event, how are they mitigated and what are the strategies used to deal with these issues?* Please respond to the following:

**How much of an impact has this issue had on major sport events you have been involved in?**

Please indicate (in the box on the left) the impact of all of the issues listed (in each section on the right) on a scale from 5-1.
5 – High impact.
4 – Substantial impact.
3 – Moderate impact.
2 – Low impact.
1 – No impact.

Please indicate your responses electronically in the document, directly on the attachment.

(1) Timing Issues

| Rating | Issue |
|---|---|
| | Timing of formal agreements. If not done early enough in the process the event has no leverage with the host committee and/or local stakeholders such as hotels. |
| | Not accomplishing tasks outlined in the strategic plan in the time they should be accomplished. |
| | Timing of staff hiring. Delayed hiring leads to delays in work in certain areas. Hiring too early leads to paying them for a longer period of time. |
| | Everyone wants formalized agreements done as quickly as possible. |
| | The time it takes for decisions to get made. |
| | Not communicating in a timely manner. |
| | Time of year the event takes place conflicts with personal commitments and/or holidays for staff and volunteers. |
| | Balancing a full time job while hosting an event and/or having host committees that are volunteers and therefore are employed full-time elsewhere. Difficulties juggling one's time. |

(2) Geography Issues

| Rating | Issue |
|---|---|
| | Not working in the same city that the event will take place and/or that the host committee is situated. |
| | Hosting events across a large area leads to the financial burden for participants to travel to the event. |
| | Size and scope of event venue(s) makes communication difficult. |

(3) Funding Issues

| Rating | Issue |
|---|---|
| | There is never enough funding. |
| | Cash flow issues. |
| | Trying to balance the financial requirements of hosting with the tighter budgets being faced by hosts. |
| | Loss of revenue streams. |

(4) Other Resources Issues

| Rating | Issue |
|---|---|
|  | Volunteers wanting to be compensated for their time i.e. volunteers expecting to be paid. |
|  | Issues with hiring the right people for the job. |
|  | Not having enough volunteers for the event. |
|  | Engaging volunteers and/or the community too early leaves them frustrated and with nothing to do for a potentially long period of time. |
|  | Burning out volunteers. |
|  | Acquiring new volunteers. |
|  | Issues with training staff and volunteers. |
|  | Not engaging or empowering staff and/or volunteers. |
|  | Managing volunteers versus managing paid staff. |
|  | Managing different levels of work ethic and commitment. |
|  | Volunteer management. |
|  | Volunteer reliability. |
|  | Not being able to fill positions due to lack of available and/or properly trained individuals. |
|  | Dealing with the varying levels of resources that hosts have. |
|  | Employees never feel that they are being compensated enough. |

(5) Political Situation Issues

| Rating | Issue |
|---|---|
|  | Not having the support of civic leaders. |
|  | Government leaders changing positions throughout the course of planning and executing an event. |
|  | Government not viewing the event as a high priority. |
|  | Event spans a large area therefore you have to interact with various jurisdictions. |

(6) Accountability/Authority Issues

| Rating | Issue |
|---|---|
|  | Different stakeholders not responding to communications and/or handing in necessary documents in a timely manner. |
|  | Role clarity. If roles are not clear issues arise. |
|  | Decisions being made by a host committee are outside the scope of the capacity of the event. |
|  | Making all decisions and answering all questions instead of empowering others to do so. |
|  | Low staff numbers. Being the only one in charge and having to handle everything because there are no other staff members. |
|  | The more stakeholders you have the more compounded simple decisions are to make. |
|  | Lack of autonomy to make certain decisions and execute strategic plan with your own input. |
|  | Decisions being made without consultation. |
|  | Confusion surrounding who is able to make what decisions – the organization or the host committee. |
|  | Certain stakeholders have more power to make decisions than others. They force decisions on the group. |
|  | Making decisions based on wants and not on needs of the event. |

(7) Activation/Leveraging Issues

| Rating | Issue |
|---|---|
|  | Not having enough or making sure you have awareness in a market before hosting an event there. |
|  | Lack of spectator attendance. |
|  | Hosting fatigue. |

| Rating | Issue |
|--------|-------|
| | Host committee does not execute an event to the expected level. |

### (8) Knowledge Management Issues

| Rating | Issue |
|--------|-------|
| | Not communicating enough information to the public makes them think you are hiding something. Trying to control information too much internally. |
| | Information does not flow from one function/department/area/position to another as well as it should. |
| | Conflicting messages from superiors on how to do something or what to focus on. |
| | Misinterpretation of information. |
| | Not enough communication takes place. |
| | Assuming everyone knows the necessary information. |
| | Communication issues with international stakeholders. Potential language barriers. |
| | Those involved in the event do not use the proper communication channels when something needs to be decided and/or completed quickly. |
| | The sheer number of individuals that a message needs to be communicated to. |
| | Not keeping track of issues as they arise. Lack of corporate memory. |

### (9) Legal Issues

| Rating | Issue |
|--------|-------|
| | External stakeholders not fulfilling the promises of the agreement and/or not even reading it. |
| | Trying to find a balance between each party's wants and needs and developing a fair agreement. |
| | Those responsible for signing agreements are not those who have to execute them. |
| | Different parties not interpreting the words in an agreement the same way. |
| | How litigious agreements are nowadays. Ensuring you are protected from an insurance standpoint. |
| | Lack of sponsorship. |

### (10) Operational Issues

| Rating | Issue |
|--------|-------|
| | Finding a suitable location and/or venues for an event. |
| | Keeping participants/spectators interested in returning to the same venue/location/city each time the event was held. Finding ways to be unique. |

### (11) Planning Issues

| Rating | Issue |
|--------|-------|
| | Employees/volunteers involved in executing the plan are not the same as those who developed it, creating conflict when it comes to changes in the execution. |
| | Writing the plan at the beginning and then never referring to it again or updating it. |
| | Not staying on task. Straying from the strategic plan and/or making unnecessary changes. |
| | Being on different timelines as others involved in the event. |
| | Knowing what to change and what to keep the same for the next event. |
| | Not having a written breakdown of responsibilities between the organization and the host committee. |

### (12) Power Issues

| Rating | Issue |
|--------|-------|
| | The power broadcasters have to influence and make decisions. |

(13) Relationship Issues

| Rating | Issue |
|--------|-------|
| | Certain functions within an event believing that they are more important than others. |
| | Dealing with issues that already exist between external stakeholders. |
| | Conflicting personalities amongst staff and/or volunteers. |

(14) Structure Issues

| Rating | Issue |
|--------|-------|
| | Managing the motivations, expectations and/or objectives of all the different stakeholders. |
| | Dealing with the many levels of the organizational structure. |
| | Organizational structure is fractured/not suited to the event. There is a lack of structure in place. |

(15) Turnover Issues

| Rating | Issue |
|--------|-------|
| | Losing key staff near the end of an event because they are concerned about their job security and therefore seek out another position elsewhere. |
| | Host committee members quitting late in the planning stages because of lack of interest or time. |
| | Turnover because those hired cannot handle the demands of working for an event. |
| | Volunteers not returning year after year. |
| | Loss of quality staff. Issues with how to replace them. |

(16) Other Issues

| Rating | Issue |
|--------|-------|
| | Competition with other events for volunteers, participants and/or spectators. |
| | Limited size and scope of the event i.e. the event can only be sustainable at a certain size and scope. |
| | Getting people to stay aligned with the mission, vision and values of the event. |
| | Not studying a market fully enough before deciding to host an event there. |
| | Lack of presales. |
| | Lack of community support for an event. |
| | Not conducting enough follow-up with communities and host committees post event. |
| | Event delays due to weather. |
| | Low participation numbers. |
| | Environmental issues. |
| | Demand for technology to become a larger part of events. |
| | Maintaining fiscal responsibility when attempting to implement new technology into an event. |

## Appendix C

## Round Three: Strategies Questionnaire

This questionnaire is based on the answers provided by the participants from the previous rounds and involves two parts. It seeks to determine the best practices in event management.

Based on the following research questions (2 & 3):

*(2) What are the operational issues that arise in the planning and execution of a major sport event, how are they mitigated and what are the strategies used to deal with these issues?*

*(3) What are the best practices for sport event operational planning and how can these practices aid future events?*

Please respond to the following:

## Part I:

## How often have you utilized this strategy when attempting to solve issues that arise during the planning and execution of events?

Please indicate your rating (in the box on the left) for each strategy (located in each section on the right) on a scale from 5-1.
5 – High frequency.
4 – Substantial frequency.
3 – Moderate frequency.
2 – Low frequency.
1 – No frequency.

Please indicate your responses electronically in the document, directly on the attachment.

**(1) Decision Making**

| Rating | Strategy |
|---|---|
| | Have a structured and formal decision-making process in place. Understand what each level or position needs to see/know in order to make a decision. |
| | Gather opinions, input and advice from those around you before making a decision. Don't be afraid to ask questions. |
| | Ensure decisions align with the size and scope of the event. |
| | Utilize past experience to inform current decisions. |
| | Identify who needs to be involved in what decisions. Determine who the final decision maker is for specific decisions. |
| | Gather as much information as possible and provide it to whoever is responsible for a decision in order to streamline the process; answer questions ahead of time. |
| | Analyze more than one option for each decision before making a decision. |
| | Set timelines for decisions. |
| | Follow the lead of the host committee on certain decisions that they may have more insight on, due to their knowledge of the community and their experience there. |
| | Ensure decisions do not provide an advantage to any one participant/group of participants or functional area. |

**(2) Communication**

| Rating | Strategy |
|---|---|
| | Have a good internal & external communication plan. |
| | Ensure that you are communicating with the public and the media regularly, even if there is no important news to report. |
| | Ensure your communication plan includes traditional media and untraditional media such as social media. |
| | Ensure processes and policies are explicit and outline exactly what you plan to do or what you need done. Provide clear communication. |
| | Hold meetings not just for employees but involve external stakeholders and volunteers where appropriate. Ensure everyone at these meetings is updating the group on their progress. |
| | Facilitate knowledge transfer, whether that is between the organization and the host or between past hosts and current or future hosts, through document transfer/seminars/workshops etc. |
| | Tailor communication methods to the needs of those you're communicating with. I.e. don't use Skype if they are not comfortable with it and/or make a phone call instead of sending an email. |
| | Hire a third party agency to handle communication to media outlets and control social media. |
| | Use the right form of communication for the situation. Urgent communication requires face to face or phone calls versus text messages or emails. |
| | Maintain continuous communication with employees/volunteers/stakeholders throughout the planning process to ensure documents are being read and tasks completed. |
| | Maintain relationships with external stakeholders throughout the planning process. Simply send a short email or call them up to check-in and inform them of what is going on with the event. |
| | Maintain communication with other departments to keep yourself informed and to anticipate things that may affect you. Identify a key contact in each area. |
| | Share everything with your staff so that they can have a better understanding of the event. |
| | Be prepared to receive information last minute and be able to execute. Use experience to prepare new staff to deal with the quick turnaround necessary. |
| | Share planning documents and material with other events and organizations, if possible. |
| | Develop a chain of communication, so that only specific individuals are able to contact you, and then they distribute information to others and so on. |
| | Be short and to the point via email and on the phone. Don't ramble on. |
| | Retain all electronic communications and documents, for future reference. |
| | Provide information packages to participants. Include as much information as possible to improve their experience. I.e. include information on not just the event but where it is being held, hotel/restaurant suggestions etc. |
| | Utilize radios as your main communication during event execution depending on size of event and venue layout. |
| | Develop and utilize an extensive communication manual. |
| | Establish a communications headquarters, which all information flows through during the event. |
| | Communicate as early as possible. Even earlier than you may think it needs to happen, so that staff/host committees/external stakeholders are aware of what is to come. |
| | Utilize social media to communicate to a large number of people instantaneously. |
| | If you are unable to respond or make a decision inform individuals that you will get back to them within a certain timeframe. |

**(3) Strategic Planning**

| Rating | Strategy |
| --- | --- |
| | Bring in the leadership team early on to ensure that they are a part of the strategic planning process. |
| | Ensure that you have a very good integrated strategic plan early on. |
| | Ensure that your strategic plan is made through an integrated approach and evolves over time. Constantly update it over the lifecycle of the event. |
| | Strategically align and plan specifics such as when to begin recruiting volunteers, when to begin ticket sales, etc., to ensure momentum is maintained. Follow a timeline. |
| | Ensure buy-in from those involved in the plan. |
| | Utilize and provide checklists to host committees that ensure that they report on tasks and follow timelines. |
| | Allow input from the host committee and/or volunteers on the strategic plan. |
| | Conduct a market analysis to determine if the location/venue/community is suitable for the event. |
| | Ensure the plan is flexible while also ensuring employees don't go off on unnecessary tangents. |
| | Be extremely detailed during the planning process. |
| | Ensure you are aware of how the plan affects all functional areas. |
| | Identify the size and scope of your event. Be aware of the event's capacity. |
| | Request a final report from host committees to inform future events. |
| | Plan as early as possible. |
| | Hold annual meetings to discuss changes that can be or need to be made to the event and/or the plan. |

**(4) Formalized Agreements**

| Rating | Strategy |
| --- | --- |
| | Create a good stakeholder map that states the reasons why and who you want to engage and also defines the relationship(s). |
| | Attempt to position yourself in the other party's place. What are they looking for? What type of relationship do they want? Etc. |
| | Utilize a stakeholder management system or customer relationship management system to keep track of relationships with stakeholders and strategies to optimize relationships. |
| | Draft agreements at the appropriate time. Don't be afraid to develop drafts early. |
| | Develop and utilize templates from event to event to streamline the process. |
| | Maintain control over agreements. If possible have all drafts come from your organization instead of from the host committee or other external stakeholders. |
| | Ensure you monitor both parties responsibilities throughout the use of the agreement. |
| | Include a clause that states the agreement can be reviewed at a particular time, to address any issues either side may have. |
| | Maintain an open dialogue and discussion in order to continue improving agreements for both parties. |
| | Ensure you are learning from past agreements in order to eliminate recurring issues. |
| | Ensure you are protecting yourself (legally). |
| | Ensure everyone affected by the agreement has access to it and has read it. Maintain communication between the senior management that sign the agreements and the operational level that execute them. |
| | Discuss with the other party face to face or on the phone exactly what each of your interpretations are of statements within the agreement. |
| | Be clear about what you can and cannot deliver. |
| | Utilize a risk management department to review all agreements. |

**(5) Human Resource Management**

| Rating | Strategy |
|---|---|
| | Understand the perspectives of employees/volunteers and what motivates them. |
| | Have a good values system in place and ensure that those you hire believe in those values. |
| | Institute a performance management and/or compensation system. Ensure the right incentives are in place to retain employees/volunteers. |
| | Create a comprehensive human resources plan to include things such as the performance management system, specific functions for volunteers and employees, expectations, harassment policies and healthy workplace policies. |
| | Be very clear with expectations of staff and volunteers. |
| | Ensure proper training of employees/volunteers in highly technical positions and/or for those who may not be familiar with new technology. |
| | Ensure roles are clearly defined. Provide written information such as a detailed job description. |
| | Ensure volunteers match the type of event being hosted and the position they are chosen for. Identify your ideal target market and recruit from there. |
| | Don't be afraid to let someone go if necessary. |
| | Address issues such as conflicting personalities immediately. Be up front and sit down with employees/volunteers/parties and deal with the issue(s). |
| | Shuffle volunteers from function to function to meet needs. Evaluate which areas are most imperative to ensure tasks are accomplished. |
| | Target service clubs to volunteer in various areas. Provide a donation in return for their time. |
| | Lead by example. |
| | Accommodate volunteers' needs. Be prepared to work around their schedules. |
| | Hire staff that are aligned with your beliefs and work ethic as much as possible. |
| | Create a position and hire a volunteer manager/coordinator to assist in recruitment and management of volunteers (if position is not already within the event structure). Preferably someone local with existing relationships in the community. |
| | Provide comprehensive training for volunteers. Make sure they are comfortable in their role(s). |
| | Provide volunteers with a handbook. |
| | Don't be afraid to hold people accountable. |
| | Provide as much guidance as you can to staff and volunteers. |
| | Hold a volunteer appreciation party at the conclusion of the event. |
| | Attend volunteer meetings every day of the event if possible to ensure volunteers know who you are and so that they are comfortable approaching you throughout the event. |
| | Hire consultants to work in certain functional areas. |
| | Develop and utilize relationships with external stakeholders to provide technical training for volunteers in certain functional areas such as first aid. |
| | Develop and introduce a formalized customer-service training plan for all staff and/or volunteers. |

**(6) Structural Framework**

| Rating | Strategy |
|---|---|
| | Have staff situated within the city/town/region that the event is taking place. |
| | Introduce a centralized model where employees are integrated into different levels of the structure. Ensure volunteers know where staff is working alongside them, as opposed to the organization just being at the top. |
| | Ensure host committees understand the relationship between themselves and the organization. Emphasize that everyone is on the same team. |
| | Ensure a staffing plan is included in the strategic plan in order to monitor hiring processes, specifically timing of hiring. |
| | Be strategic with who is on your board of directors. Include important people from various |

| | |
|---|---|
| | external stakeholder groups. |
| | Have a specific reporting structure in place. |
| | Give autonomy where appropriate. Ensure you are delegating. Empower individuals. |
| | Provide host committees with the opportunity to offer input on how the structure should look. |
| | Develop relationships with individuals higher in the structure than yourself and/or individuals or departments you may not interact with on a regular basis in case you need something suddenly, the relationship already exists. |
| | Align the structure with existing skills and or positions held by the host committee. |

**(7) Engagement**

| Rating | Strategy |
|---|---|
| | Ensure you are engaging specific groups at the appropriate times. Have specific timelines for recruitment etc. |
| | Relationship building, whether that be with the host committee, host community, employees, volunteers or external stakeholders. |
| | Send out monthly newsletters to volunteers. |
| | Empower your volunteers. Make them feel part of the team and help them understand how important their role is and how it positively impacts the success of the event. |
| | Be empathetic to the personal needs of those working for you. |
| | Expand the event outside its basic requirements. Provide additional activities outside of the competition being held. |
| | Survey volunteers/spectators/participants to assist in retaining them and improving the event overall. |

**(8) Other**

| Rating | Strategy |
|---|---|
| | Communicate the impact of the games to a host community and/or their government. Make sure they understand the legacy aspect. |
| | Have a very structured change management process. |
| | Ensure the government is fully informed and prepared to assist in hosting the event. |
| | Get government support. Involve the government in the process. |
| | Ask for feedback from everybody. |
| | Conduct a formal review of the event to inform future events and determine if the location would be appropriate to host again in the future. Provide a rating. |
| | Be adaptable. |
| | Utilize interns to help you balance your workload. Let them help with the little things. |
| | Be proactive. The more you are ahead of the game the more you can avoid potential issues. |
| | Be realistic about budgets. |
| | Have a clear understanding of your budget. Be smart and creative to stretch your budget. |
| | Spend money in the right places. You can't cut corners on certain elements. |
| | Be prepared to forecast and re-adjust your budgets. |
| | Find ways to make your event unique and provide value to those involved. Always look for improvement. |
| | Adapt to the market you're executing the event in. |
| | Make yourself aware of what competitors are doing. |
| | Know your event, your product, and make sure you are remaining relevant. |
| | Be organized. |
| | Learn from working with external stakeholders repeatedly. Maintain existing relationships. |
| | Take notes on the preferences of and interactions with external stakeholders to utilize in future years. |
| | Utilize existing Microsoft and other electronic templates and resources to help maintain structure and organization. |

**Please continue to Part II of the questionnaire.**

**Part II:**

**The following are the issues that were identified in Round Two as having had the highest impact in each issue section (I.e. Timing, Geography, Funding, etc.). Please state a strategy for each issue, that you would identify as the best practice to attempt to solve the issue.**

Please be as brief or as detailed as you see fit. Any information is helpful. If you did not identify this issue as having had a moderate to high impact in the previous round feel free to leave it blank OR provide a suggested strategy based on other issues and experience. This questionnaire section is similar to the interview questions surrounding "what strategies were used to overcome these issues"? Your answers for this part of the Round Three questionnaire can be the same as your answers from the Round One interview.

**(1) Timing**
Issue: Timing of formal agreements. If not done early enough in the process the event has no leverage with the host committee and/or local stakeholders such as hotels.

Strategy (Best Practice): **INSERT YOUR RESPONSES HERE FOR EACH**

**(2) Geography**
Issue: Hosting events across a large area leads to the financial burden for participants to travel to the event.

Strategy (Best Practice):

**(3) Funding**
Issue: There is never enough funding.

Strategy (Best Practice):

**(4) Other Resources**
Issue: Volunteer management.

Strategy (Best Practice):

**(5) Political Situation**
Issue: Government leaders changing positions throughout the course of planning and executing an event.

Strategy (Best Practice):

Issue: Government not viewing the event as a high priority.

Strategy (Best Practice):

**(6) Accountability/Authority**
Issue: Role clarity. If roles are not clear issues arise.

Strategy (Best Practice):

**(7) Activation/Leveraging**
Issue: Hosting fatigue.

Strategy (Best Practice):

**(8) Knowledge Management**
Issue: Not enough communication takes place.

Strategy (Best Practice):

**(9) Legal**
Issue: Lack of sponsorship.

Strategy (Best Practice):

**(10) Operational**
Issue: Finding a suitable location and/or venues for an event.

Strategy (Best Practice):

**(11) Planning**
Issue: Employees/volunteers involved in executing the plan are not the same as those who developed it, creating conflict when it comes to changes in the execution.

Strategy (Best Practice):

Issue: Being on different timelines as others involved in the event.

Strategy (Best Practice):

**(12) Power**
Issue: The power broadcasters have to influence and make decisions.

Strategy (Best Practice):

**(13) Relationship**
Issue: Conflicting personalities amongst staff and/or volunteers.

Strategy (Best Practice):

**(14) Structure**
Issue: Managing the motivations, expectations and/or objectives of all the different stakeholders.

Strategy (Best Practice):

**(15) Turnover**
Issue: Loss of quality staff. Issues with how to replace them.

Strategy (Best Practice):

**(16) Other**
Issue: Lack of community support for an event.

Strategy (Best Practice):

Issue: Event delays due to weather.

Strategy (Best Practice):

**Appendix D**

**Issues Questionnaire Data**

| Table D1 | |
|---|---|
| *Timing Issues* | |
| Issue | Mean |
| Timing of formal agreements. If not done early enough in the process the event has no leverage with the host committee and/or local stakeholders such as hotels. | 4.38 |
| Not accomplishing tasks outlined in the strategic plan in the time they should be accomplished. | 3.62 |
| Timing of staff hiring. Delayed hiring leads to delays in work in certain areas. Hiring too early leads to paying them for a longer period of time. | 3.54 |
| Everyone wants formalized agreements done as quickly as possible. | 2.92 |
| The time it takes for decisions to get made. | 3.77 |
| Not communicating in a timely manner. | 3.92 |
| Time of year the event takes place conflicts with personal commitments and/or holidays for staff and volunteers. | 2.54 |
| Balancing a full time job while hosting an event and/or having host committees that are volunteers and therefore are employed full-time elsewhere. Difficulties juggling one's time. | 3.08 |

| Table D2 | |
|---|---|
| *Geography Issues* | |
| Issue | Mean |
| Not working in the same city that the event will take place and/or that the host committee is situated. | 2.67 |
| Hosting events across a large area leads to the financial burden for participants to travel to the event. | 3.15 |
| Size and scope of event venue(s) makes communication difficult. | 2.46 |

| Table D3 | |
|---|---|
| *Funding Issues* | |
| Issue | Mean |
| There is never enough funding. | 3.69 |
| Cash flow issues. | 2.62 |
| Trying to balance the financial requirements of hosting with the tighter budgets being faced by hosts. | 3.62 |
| Loss of revenue streams. | 3.31 |

Table D4

*Other Resources Issues*

| Issue | Mean |
|---|---|
| Volunteers wanting to be compensated for their time i.e. volunteers expecting to be paid. | 2.15 |
| Issues with hiring the right people for the job. | 2.77 |
| Not having enough volunteers for the event. | 2.46 |
| Engaging volunteers and/or the community too early leaves them frustrated and with nothing to do for a potentially long period of time. | 2.15 |
| Burning out volunteers. | 2.77 |
| Acquiring new volunteers. | 2.85 |
| Issues with training staff and volunteers. | 2.62 |
| Not engaging or empowering staff and/or volunteers. | 2.62 |
| Managing volunteers versus managing paid staff. | 2.31 |
| Managing different levels of work ethic and commitment. | 2.23 |
| Volunteer management. | 2.92 |
| Volunteer reliability. | 2.85 |
| Not being able to fill positions due to lack of available and/or properly trained individuals. | 2.38 |
| Dealing with the varying levels of resources that hosts have. | 2.69 |
| Employees never feel that they are being compensated enough. | 2.46 |

Table D5

*Political Situation Issues*

| Issue | Mean |
|---|---|
| Not having the support of civic leaders. | 2.46 |
| Government leaders changing positions throughout the course of planning and executing an event. | 2.62 |
| Government not viewing the event as a high priority. | 2.62 |
| Event spans a large area therefore you have to interact with various jurisdictions. | 2.46 |

Table D6

*Accountability/Authority Issues*

| Issue | Mean |
|---|---|
| Different stakeholders not responding to communications and/or handing in necessary documents in a timely manner. | 3.15 |
| Role clarity. If roles are not clear, issues arise. | 3.46 |
| Decisions being made by a host committee are outside the scope of the capacity of the event. | 2.62 |
| Making all decisions and answering all questions instead of empowering others to do so. | 2.92 |
| Low staff numbers. Being the only one in charge and having to handle everything because there are no other staff members. | 3.08 |

| | |
|---|---|
| The more stakeholders you have the more compounded simple decisions are to make. | 2.77 |
| Lack of autonomy to make certain decisions and execute strategic plan with your own input. | 2.77 |
| Decisions being made without consultation. | 3.08 |
| Confusion surrounding who is able to make what decisions – the organization or the host committee. | 2.92 |
| Certain stakeholders have more power to make decisions than others. They force decisions on the group. | 2.77 |
| Making decisions based on wants and not on needs of the event. | 3.15 |

Table D7

*Activation/Leveraging Issues*

| Issue | Mean |
|---|---|
| Not having enough or making sure you have awareness in a market before hosting an event there. | 2.54 |
| Lack of spectator attendance. | 2.85 |
| Hosting fatigue. | 3.08 |
| Host committee does not execute an event to the expected level. | 2.69 |

Table D8

*Knowledge Management Issues*

| Issue | Mean |
|---|---|
| Not communicating enough information to the public makes them think you are hiding something. Trying to control information too much internally. | 2.00 |
| Information does not flow from one function/department/area/position to another as well as it should. | 3.23 |
| Conflicting messages from superiors on how to do something or what to focus on. | 2.85 |
| Misinterpretation of information. | 3.23 |
| Not enough communication takes place. | 3.54 |
| Assuming everyone knows the necessary information. | 3.31 |
| Communication issues with international stakeholders. Potential language barriers. | 2.00 |
| Those involved in the event do not use the proper communication channels when something needs to be decided and/or completed quickly. | 2.77 |
| The sheer number of individuals that a message needs to be communicated to. | 2.92 |
| Not keeping track of issues as they arise. Lack of corporate memory. | 2.62 |

Table D9

*Legal Issues*

| Issue | Mean |
|---|---|
| External stakeholders not fulfilling the promises of the agreement and/or not even reading it. | 2.31 |
| Trying to find a balance between each party's wants and needs and developing a fair agreement. | 2.69 |
| Those responsible for signing agreements are not those who have to execute them. | 2.46 |
| Different parties not interpreting the words in an agreement the same way. | 2.62 |
| How litigious agreements are nowadays. Ensuring you are protected from an insurance standpoint. | 2.62 |
| Lack of sponsorship. | 3.46 |

Table D10

*Operational Issues*

| Issue | Mean |
|---|---|
| Finding a suitable location and/or venues for an event. | 3.00 |
| Keeping participants/spectators interested in returning to the same venue/location/city each time the event was held. Finding ways to be unique. | 2.92 |

Table D11

*Planning Issues*

| Issue | Mean |
|---|---|
| Employees/volunteers involved in executing the plan are not the same as those who developed it, creating conflict when it comes to changes in the execution. | 3.08 |
| Writing the plan at the beginning and then never referring to it again or updating it. | 2.85 |
| Not staying on task. Straying from the strategic plan and/or making unnecessary changes. | 2.62 |
| Being on different timelines as others involved in the event. | 3.08 |
| Knowing what to change and what to keep the same for the next event. | 2.77 |
| Not having a written breakdown of responsibilities between the organization and the host committee. | 2.54 |

Table D12

*Power Issues*

| Issue | Mean |
|---|---|
| The power broadcasters have to influence and make decisions. | 2.62 |

Table D13

*Relationship(s) Issues*

| Issue | Mean |
|---|---|
| Certain functions within an event believing that they are more important than others. | 2.54 |
| Dealing with issues that already exist between external stakeholders. | 2.54 |
| Conflicting personalities amongst staff and/or volunteers. | 3.08 |

Table D14

*Structure Issues*

| Issue | Mean |
|---|---|
| Managing the motivations, expectations and/or objectives of all the different stakeholders. | 3.08 |
| Dealing with the many levels of the organizational structure. | 2.85 |
| Organizational structure is fractured/not suited to the event. There is a lack of structure in place. | 2.08 |

Table D15

*Turnover Issues*

| Issue | Mean |
|---|---|
| Losing key staff near the end of an event because they are concerned about their job security and therefore seek out another position elsewhere. | 2.08 |
| Host committee members quitting late in the planning stages because of lack of interest or time. | 2.15 |
| Turnover because those hired cannot handle the demands of working for an event. | 2.31 |
| Volunteers not returning year after year. | 1.92 |
| Loss of quality staff. Issues with how to replace them. | 2.46 |

Table D16

*Other Issues*

| Issue | Mean |
|---|---|
| Competition with other events for volunteers, participants and/or spectators. | 2.69 |
| Limited size and scope of the event i.e. the event can only be sustainable at a certain size and scope. | 2.85 |
| Getting people to stay aligned with the mission, vision and values of the event. | 2.69 |
| Not studying a market fully enough before deciding to host an event there. | 2.31 |
| Lack of presales. | 2.54 |
| Lack of community support for an event. | 2.92 |
| Not conducting enough follow-up with communities and host committees post event. | 2.23 |
| Event delays due to weather. | 2.92 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Low participation numbers. | 2.31 |
| Environmental issues. | 2.46 |
| Demand for technology to become a larger part of events. | 2.69 |
| Maintaining fiscal responsibility when attempting to implement new technology into an event. | 2.85 |

**Appendix E**

**Strategies Questionnaire Data**

Table E1

*Decision-Making Strategies*

| Strategy | Mean |
|---|---|
| Have a structured and formal decision-making process in place. Understand what each level or position needs to see/know in order to make a decision. | 4.20 |
| Gather opinions, input and advice from those around you before making a decision. Don't be afraid to ask questions. | 4.50 |
| Ensure decisions align with the size and scope of the event. | 4.30 |
| Utilize past experience to inform current decisions. | 4.40 |
| Identify who needs to be involved in what decisions. Determine who the final decision maker is for specific decisions. | 4.30 |
| Gather as much information as possible and provide it to whoever is responsible for a decision in order to streamline the process; answer questions ahead of time. | 4.80 |
| Analyze more than one option for each decision before making a decision. | 4.00 |
| Set timelines for decisions. | 3.90 |
| Follow the lead of the host committee on certain decisions that they may have more insight on, due to their knowledge of the community and their experience there. | 3.70 |
| Ensure decisions do not provide an advantage to any one participant/group of participants or functional area. | 3.70 |

Table E2

*Communication Strategies*

| Strategy | Mean |
|---|---|
| Have a good internal & external communication plan. | 3.80 |
| Ensure that you are communicating with the public and the media regularly, even if there is no important news to report. | 3.60 |
| Ensure your communication plan includes traditional media and untraditional media such as social media. | 4.00 |
| Ensure processes and policies are explicit and outline exactly what you plan to do or what you need done. Provide clear communication. | 3.80 |
| Hold meetings not just for employees but involve external stakeholders and volunteers where appropriate. Ensure everyone at these meetings is updating the group on their progress. | 3.80 |
| Facilitate knowledge transfer, whether that is between the organization and the host or between past hosts and current or future hosts, through document transfer/seminars/workshops etc. | 3.70 |
| Tailor communication methods to the needs of those you're communicating with. I.e. don't use Skype if they are not comfortable with it and/or make a phone call instead of sending an email. | 3.60 |
| Hire a third party agency to handle communication to media outlets and control social media. | 1.50 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Use the right form of communication for the situation. Urgent communication requires face to face or phone calls versus text messages or emails. | 4.60 |
| Maintain continuous communication with employees/volunteers/stakeholders throughout the planning process to ensure documents are being read and tasks completed. | 4.50 |
| Maintain relationships with external stakeholders throughout the planning process. Simply send a short email or call them up to check-in and inform them of what is going on with the event. | 4.10 |
| Maintain communication with other departments to keep yourself informed and to anticipate things that may affect you. Identify a key contact in each area. | 4.00 |
| Share everything with your staff so that they can have a better understanding of the event. | 4.00 |
| Be prepared to receive information last minute and be able to execute. Use experience to prepare new staff to deal with the quick turnaround necessary. | 4.00 |
| Share planning documents and material with other events and organizations, if possible. | 3.60 |
| Develop a chain of communication, so that only specific individuals are able to contact you, and then they distribute information to others and so on. | 3.70 |
| Be short and to the point via email and on the phone. Don't ramble on. | 3.60 |
| Retain all electronic communications and documents, for future reference. | 4.40 |
| Provide information packages to participants. Include as much information as possible to improve their experience. I.e. include information on not just the event but where it is being held, hotel/restaurant suggestions etc. | 4.70 |
| Utilize radios as your main communication during event execution depending on size of event and venue layout. | 3.90 |
| Develop and utilize an extensive communication manual. | 3.60 |
| Establish a communications headquarters, which all information flows through during the event. | 4.44 |
| Communicate as early as possible. Even earlier than you may think it needs to happen, so that staff/host committees/external stakeholders are aware of what is to come. | 3.90 |
| Utilize social media to communicate to a large number of people instantaneously. | 4.00 |
| If you are unable to respond or make a decision inform individuals that you will get back to them within a certain timeframe. | 4.10 |

| Table E3 | |
|---|---|
| *Strategic Planning Strategies* | |
| Strategy | Mean |
| Bring in the leadership team early on to ensure that they are a part of the strategic planning process. | 3.90 |
| Ensure that you have a very good integrated strategic plan early on. | 4.20 |
| Ensure that your strategic plan is made through an integrated approach and evolves over time. Constantly update it over the lifecycle of the event. | 4.00 |
| Strategically align and plan specifics such as when to begin recruiting volunteers, when to begin ticket sales, etc., to ensure momentum is maintained. Follow a timeline. | 4.10 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Ensure buy-in from those involved in the plan. | 4.10 |
| Utilize and provide checklists to host committees that ensure that they report on tasks and follow timelines. | 4.30 |
| Allow input from the host committee and/or volunteers on the strategic plan. | 3.20 |
| Conduct a market analysis to determine if the location/venue/community is suitable for the event. | 3.30 |
| Ensure the plan is flexible while also ensuring employees don't go off on unnecessary tangents. | 3.80 |
| Be extremely detailed during the planning process. | 4.30 |
| Ensure you are aware of how the plan affects all functional areas. | 4.20 |
| Identify the size and scope of your event. Be aware of the event's capacity. | 4.60 |
| Request a final report from host committees to inform future events. | 4.40 |
| Plan as early as possible. | 4.70 |
| Hold annual meetings to discuss changes that can be or need to be made to the event and/or the plan. | 3.90 |

Table E4

*Formalized agreements Strategies*

| Strategy | Mean |
|---|---|
| Create a good stakeholder map that states the reasons why and who you want to engage and also defines the relationship(s). | 3.20 |
| Attempt to position yourself in the other party's place. What are they looking for? What type of relationship do they want? Etc. | 3.20 |
| Utilize a stakeholder management system or customer relationship management system to keep track of relationships with stakeholders and strategies to optimize relationships. | 3.10 |
| Draft agreements at the appropriate time. Don't be afraid to develop drafts early. | 3.70 |
| Develop and utilize templates from event to event to streamline the process. | 4.30 |
| Maintain control over agreements. If possible have all drafts come from your organization instead of from the host committee or other external stakeholders. | 4.20 |
| Ensure you monitor both parties responsibilities throughout the use of the agreement. | 4.10 |
| Include a clause that states the agreement can be reviewed at a particular time, to address any issues either side may have. | 3.60 |
| Maintain an open dialogue and discussion in order to continue improving agreements for both parties. | 4.00 |
| Ensure you are learning from past agreements in order to eliminate recurring issues. | 4.70 |
| Ensure you are protecting yourself (legally). | 4.80 |
| Ensure everyone affected by the agreement has access to it and has read it. Maintain communication between the senior management that sign the agreements and the operational level that execute them. | 4.30 |
| Discuss with the other party face to face or on the phone exactly what each of your interpretations are of statements within the agreement. | 4.50 |
| Be clear about what you can and cannot deliver. | 4.60 |

| Utilize a risk management department to review all agreements. | 3.90 |
|---|---|

| Table E5 | |
|---|---|
| *Human Resource Management Strategies* | |
| Strategy | Mean |
| Understand the perspectives of employees/volunteers and what motivates them. | 3.40 |
| Have a good values system in place and ensure that those you hire believe in those values. | 4.10 |
| Institute a performance management and/or compensation system. Ensure the right incentives are in place to retain employees/volunteers. | 3.20 |
| Create a comprehensive human resources plan to include things such as the performance management system, specific functions for volunteers and employees, expectations, harassment policies and healthy workplace policies. | 3.70 |
| Be very clear with expectations of staff and volunteers. | 4.00 |
| Ensure proper training of employees/volunteers in highly technical positions and/or for those who may not be familiar with new technology. | 4.00 |
| Ensure roles are clearly defined. Provide written information such as a detailed job description. | 3.90 |
| Ensure volunteers match the type of event being hosted and the position they are chosen for. Identify your ideal target market and recruit from there. | 3.70 |
| Don't be afraid to let someone go if necessary. | 3.70 |
| Address issues such as conflicting personalities immediately. Be up front and sit down with employees/volunteers/parties and deal with the issue(s). | 3.80 |
| Shuffle volunteers from function to function to meet needs. Evaluate which areas are most imperative to ensure tasks are accomplished. | 3.40 |
| Target service clubs to volunteer in various areas. Provide a donation in return for their time. | 3.80 |
| Lead by example. | 4.80 |
| Accommodate volunteers' needs. Be prepared to work around their schedules. | 4.10 |
| Hire staff that are aligned with your beliefs and work ethic as much as possible. | 4.00 |
| Create a position and hire a volunteer manager/coordinator to assist in recruitment and management of volunteers (if position is not already within the event structure). Preferably someone local with existing relationships in the community. | 4.00 |
| Provide comprehensive training for volunteers. Make sure they are comfortable in their role(s). | 3.80 |
| Provide volunteers with a handbook. | 4.00 |
| Don't be afraid to hold people accountable. | 4.10 |
| Provide as much guidance as you can to staff and volunteers. | 4.00 |
| Hold a volunteer appreciation party at the conclusion of the event. | 4.20 |
| Attend volunteer meetings every day of the event if possible to ensure volunteers know who you are and so that they are comfortable approaching you throughout the event. | 4.00 |
| Hire consultants to work in certain functional areas. | 2.40 |
| Develop and utilize relationships with external stakeholders to provide | 3.10 |

| technical training for volunteers in certain functional areas such as first aid. | |
|---|---|
| Develop and introduce a formalized customer-service training plan for all staff and/or volunteers. | 2.90 |

Table E6

*Structural Framework Strategies*

| Strategy | Mean |
|---|---|
| Have staff situated within the city/town/region that the event is taking place. | 3.90 |
| Introduce a centralized model where employees are integrated into different levels of the structure. Ensure volunteers know where staff is working alongside them, as opposed to the organization just being at the top. | 4.00 |
| Ensure host committees understand the relationship between themselves and the organization. Emphasize that everyone is on the same team. | 4.10 |
| Ensure a staffing plan is included in the strategic plan in order to monitor hiring processes, specifically timing of hiring. | 3.60 |
| Be strategic with who is on your board of directors. Include important people from various external stakeholder groups. | 4.00 |
| Have a specific reporting structure in place. | 4.10 |
| Give autonomy where appropriate. Ensure you are delegating. Empower individuals. | 4.30 |
| Provide host committees with the opportunity to offer input on how the structure should look. | 3.50 |
| Develop relationships with individuals higher in the structure than yourself and/or individuals or departments you may not interact with on a regular basis in case you need something suddenly, the relationship already exists. | 3.80 |
| Align the structure with existing skills and or positions held by the host committee. | 3.20 |

Table E7

*Engagement Strategies*

| Strategy | Mean |
|---|---|
| Ensure you are engaging specific groups at the appropriate times. Have specific timelines for recruitment etc. | 4.00 |
| Relationship building, whether that be with the host committee, host community, employees, volunteers or external stakeholders. | 4.30 |
| Send out monthly newsletters to volunteers. | 3.00 |
| Empower your volunteers. Make them feel part of the team and help them understand how important their role is and how it positively impacts the success of the event. | 3.90 |
| Be empathetic to the personal needs of those working for you. | 4.00 |
| Expand the event outside its basic requirements. Provide additional activities outside of the competition being held. | 3.80 |
| Survey volunteers/spectators/participants to assist in retaining them and improving the event overall. | 4.30 |

Table E8

*Other Strategies*

| Strategy | Mean |
|---|---|
| Communicate the impact of the games to a host community and/or their government. Make sure they understand the legacy aspect. | 4.20 |
| Have a very structured change management process. | 3.20 |
| Ensure the government is fully informed and prepared to assist in hosting the event. | 3.50 |
| Get government support. Involve the government in the process. | 3.60 |
| Ask for feedback from everybody. | 3.70 |
| Conduct a formal review of the event to inform future events and determine if the location would be appropriate to host again in the future. Provide a rating. | 3.60 |
| Be adaptable. | 4.30 |
| Utilize interns to help you balance your workload. Let them help with the little things. | 4.00 |
| Be proactive. The more you are ahead of the game the more you can avoid potential issues. | 4.60 |
| Be realistic about budgets. | 4.80 |
| Have a clear understanding of your budget. Be smart and creative to stretch your budget. | 4.80 |
| Spend money in the right places. You can't cut corners on certain elements. | 4.30 |
| Be prepared to forecast and re-adjust your budgets. | 4.50 |
| Find ways to make your event unique and provide value to those involved. Always look for improvement. | 4.10 |
| Adapt to the market you're executing the event in. | 4.00 |
| Make yourself aware of what competitors are doing. | 3.70 |
| Know your event, your product, and make sure you are remaining relevant. | 4.30 |
| Be organized. | 4.50 |
| Learn from working with external stakeholders repeatedly. Maintain existing relationships. | 4.30 |
| Take notes on the preferences of and interactions with external stakeholders to utilize in future years. | 4.00 |
| Utilize existing Microsoft and other electronic templates and resources to help maintain structure and organization. | 4.00 |