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Tough Mudder

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**CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY, ST. PAUL: ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA
DEPARTMENT OF KINESIOLOGY AND HEALTH SCIENCES**

Tough Mudder

**A GRADUATE PROJECT
SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Master of Arts Degree in Sport Management**

**by
Matt Dovenberg
St. Paul, Minnesota
June 2016**

Dedications

I would like to dedicate this to a few groups of people. First, special thanks to my family for their constant support and encouragement, no matter the endeavor. Second, I would like to dedicate this to all military troops, former and current, for their sacrifice, dedication, and protection of our country and countless others. And finally, to my fellow Tough Mudders, for their support and donations to the Wounded Warrior Project, a demonstration of teamwork, helping others before yourself, and attacking life.

Abstract

This Capstone paper examined the Tough Mudder, a 10-12 mile obstacle course that has been gaining popularity over the past five years. The paper evaluated different aspects of the Tough Mudder organization to help determine what has made this event so effective. Specifically, the paper provided an in-depth review of the organization's event, marketing strategies, employee and volunteer management, risk management, risk analysis, and history of the company.

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Chapter One: Organization Introduction

Much of the sporting world is dependent on results. Winning and losing oftentimes makes a person perceived differently by the media and sports world. From coaches to players to athletic administrators, winning usually helps keep coaches and players employed in their respective fields. Much pressure is placed upon those to win in their areas. If someone is not deemed as successful as they should be, the company or organization will attempt to find someone else who will be successful. This increased pressure can threaten the integrity of the sport as athletes may try anything to give them a competitive edge over others. The Tough Mudder removed this pressure by emphasizing that the Tough Mudder is an event, not a race.

Started by Will Dean and Guy Livingstone in 2010, the Tough Mudder organization has been increasing in popularity over the past half-decade (Wikipedia, 2016). Will Dean, a Harvard Business School graduate, started the company and held the first Tough Mudder race in Pennsylvania (Wikipedia, 2016). Mr. Livingstone, a graduate of Edinburgh University, has been a world-traveler and also specializes in business law (Tough Mudder, 2016c).

Some controversy exists as to whether the Tough Mudder is a stolen idea. While in school, Mr. Dean studied another event called Tough Guy that was developed by Billy Wilson, a former British soldier (Wikipedia, 2016). The ‘Tough Guy’ event was a 15-kilometer mud run in the middle of winter (Kingkade, 2012). Mr. Dean focused on expanding Tough Guy into a global event for his schoolwork and was informed to turn in a report to Wilson (Kingkade, 2012). Mr. Dean received many documents from Wilson, including the company financials to the costs of setting up a course (Kingkade, 2012). Dean ended up being a semifinalist in his business plan competition in Harvard, and his professors advised him to not pursue this event further. Mr. Wilson and Mr. Dean settled the Tough Mudder lawsuit last year, as they are not commenting

on any details publicly. In two short years (Kingkade, 2012), Tough Mudder exploded into a \$70 million company (Wikipedia, 2016).

Originally designed by British Special Forces, the Tough Mudder is a 10-12 mile obstacle course that emphasizes teamwork (Tough Mudder, 2016d). The Tough Mudder currently advertises the obstacle course as a challenge, not a competition. This is done to ensure that everyone feels welcome to join Mudder Nation no matter what his or her age, background, or physical fitness level. Mudder Nation is simply what past participants of the Tough Mudder call themselves (Tough Mudder, 2016e). Many people are also encouraged to participate because the proceeds from the Tough Mudder go to the Wounded Warrior Project, a charity foundation for wounded war veterans (Tough Mudder, 2016f).

The Tough Mudder is a traveling event that stops all over the globe, including multiple events in the United States. In 2015, the Tough Mudder expected to host around 72 events (Kaydo, 2013). The Tough Mudder emphasizes a PACT for their company and employees. The PACT, which serves as a mission statement, stands for Pride, Accountability, Continuous Improvement, and Teamwork (Tough Mudder, 2016d). Each segment is listed below with Tough Mudder's definition of what each level means:

Pride – Accept only the best. Demonstrate integrity at all times. Constantly delight our customers.

Accountability – Focus on outcomes, not inputs. Treat the company's money like our own. Deliver on our promises.

Continuous Improvement – View problems as opportunities. Drive innovation and embrace change. Accept feedback and learn from mistakes.

Teamwork – Build lasting relations. Never say, “That’s not my job” (Tough Mudder, 2016d, p. 1). Don’t let each other fail.

This is executed to ensure that the company’s goals and identity aligns with those who participate (i.e. teamwork is important, improve each day, etc.) Tough Mudder participants are also involved in the mission statement, which helps all participants realize Tough Mudder’s goals and expectations. Tough Mudder participants are involved in the mission statement by reciting the Mudder Pledge before each race. The Mudder Pledge states the following:

As a Tough Mudder I pledge that:

1. I understand that Tough Mudder is not a race but a challenge.
2. I put teamwork and camaraderie before my course time.
3. I do not whine, kids whine.
4. I help my fellow Mudders complete the course.
5. I overcome all fears (Tough Mudder, 2016e, p. 1).

This is a great way to create loyal feelings between the participants and Tough Mudder. The Tough Mudder welcomes the participants and incorporates each individual into their company philosophy of helping each other through anything. By having the participants recite this pledge, Mudder Nation identifies themselves with the core philosophies of the Tough Mudder Company. This involvement also prepares participants to actually complete the Tough Mudder challenge. Reciting the pledge helps participants mentally prepare for what they are about to face. This also creates a bond between other participants and creates the mentality of helping others before oneself (Tough Mudder, 2016e).

Chapter Two: Event Introduction

Course locations for the Tough Mudder event vary across the globe. Farmland is typically the preferred choice in the United States to create the course, however, the Urban Tough Mudder is the exception. This race is held in New York and features obstacles such as jumping over rooftops and shimmying through laser fields (Alesevich, 2015). However, most courses snake 10 to 12 miles back and forth across acres of farmland. For example, the Twin Cities Tough Mudder locations in 2014 and 2015 were actually located in Stillwater, Minnesota, and Hudson, Wisconsin, respectively (Tough Mudder, 2016g). This shows that even while marketed as “Twin Cities” events, the actual Tough Mudder locations were held in more rural areas.

According to Jodi Kovacs (personal communication, February 17, 2016), Tough Mudder has a dedicated team that scouts new territory all over the country to help determine where to host the event. The main limiting factor is whether the event would have enough space. Kovacs stated that the event must have enough room for parking, the course itself, and pre/post event activities (personal communication, February 17, 2016). The proposed site location also needs to be somewhat centrally located. The Tough Mudder scouting department searches for beautiful areas to try to bring the Tough Mudder to newer areas (J. Kovacs, personal communication, February 17, 2016). This is a great way to market the event to new audiences and provide a new experience for veteran Mudders. Kovacs said the Tough Mudder does re-visit old course sites, particularly if the event goes well (personal communication, February 17, 2016). An example of this includes Hudson, Wisconsin hosting the Tough Mudder event in 2012 and 2014 (Tough Mudder, 2016g).

The Tough Mudder team is always trying to bring new obstacles to the course. A new obstacle in 2015 called the ‘King of Swingers’ had participants climb a 15-foot ladder, walk onto

a platform and leap for a swinging bar (Tough Mudder, 2016b). The goal was to swing out, release at the proper time and ring a bell. Participants then fell into a deep pool of water (Tough Mudder, 2016b). ‘Rain Man’ is a new 2016 obstacle that requires participants to pull themselves along in water-filled cage (Tough Mudder, 2016b). Starting in darkness, this obstacle also has water pouring down from above (Tough Mudder, 2016b).

At each Tough Mudder event, the course site has the obstacles in place in addition to a number of other activities. Pre-event activities include a pull-up contest, tire flipping and box jumping challenges, and a human hamster wheel (Tough Mudder, 2016g). Numerous tents are also set up for participants and spectators alike. Tables and chairs are underneath these tents so that participants can sit down, relax, eat some food, and have some beer. As a result, many sponsors attend with a stand to serve their products. Sponsors such as Cellucor, Oberto, Shock Top, and Wheaties often have a designated area for their products (Tough Mudder, 2016e).

Before participants and spectators reach this area however, they pass the check-in/registration area, which is a big section with long tables organized by last name. Participants and spectators enter through this ‘gate’ and receive their wristbands, which are color-coded based on whether one is a participant or spectator. If a participant is above 21 years of age, they also receive a second wristband denoting that information (Tough Mudder, 2015b). Organization and crowd flow is important at this point because thousands of people enter through this spot. Approximately 4,000 participants and 1,000 spectators were in attendance at the 2015 Tough Mudder in the Minneapolis, Minnesota event (Tough Mudder, 2016g). The people at these stations must be organized and prepared. A lot of the people located throughout all stations on event day are volunteers along with numerous Tough Mudder Operations staff being present as well (Tough Mudder, 2015b). With high numbers of volunteers, this demonstrates Tough

Mudder's ability to have a positive influence all those involved. If volunteering at the Tough Mudder were not fun or beneficial for those involved, the number of volunteers would be low. Since the Tough Mudder does have a high number of volunteers, this indicates that those involved have a positive experience.

Lockers are also available for participant use for an additional price between \$5 and \$10 (Tough Mudder, 2015b). Lockers at the \$5 level are used for smaller items, such as wallets and phones, while the \$10 lockers have enough space for a duffel bag and towel (Tough Mudder, 2015b). Users receive another wristband that matches their locker number. Additionally, the Tough Mudder Ops Team provides ice-cold showers for participants after the muddy event so that participants can rinse off before they head home (Tough Mudder, 2015b).

Next to the showers are dumpsters for donations, such as shirts, shorts, and shoes. These clothing items are donated to shelters, non-profits, and other charities throughout the country (Tough Mudder, 2015b). This represents another form of charity in addition to having all of the proceeds go to the Wounded Warrior Project (Tough Mudder, 2016f). This goodwill generosity also helps create a good image of the Tough Mudder Company.

Parking is also available next to the course itself. Every car must pay \$20 to park when arriving unless they pre-register online for \$10 parking (Tough Mudder, 2015b). This is done so that the Tough Mudder Company has better idea of how many vehicles to expect at the event and helps them plan the space needed to park all vehicles. The Tough Mudder Company suggests that people carpool and use vehicles that have all-wheel drive, such as trucks, because parking for participants and spectators is located in a bumpy and uneven field (Tough Mudder, 2015b).

On event day, the Tough Mudder organization's highest budget expense is from employees' salaries (J. Kovacs, personal communication, February 17, 2016). Other notable items of expense include the land for course, t-shirts, materials to make obstacles, and advertising (see Appendix A for specific budget breakdown). For just event day, the Tough Mudder spends approximately \$200,000 (Joseph, 2015). While this may seem high, Tough Mudder also charges about \$100 per ticket, along with parking fees, concessions, and pre/post-event activities (Tough Mudder, 2016e).

With a rough estimate of 4,000 participants and 1,000 spectators at each event, the Tough Mudder makes about \$500,000 just from tickets sold (Tough Mudder, 2016g). Assuming participants and spectators carpool, the Tough Mudder could expect roughly \$18,750 in parking payments (estimated 1,250 cars at \$15/car). Additionally, the Tough Mudder receives payments from their sponsors, concessions, and fund raising donations (Tough Mudder, 2016e). This could be estimated at \$200,000 (Joseph, 2015). In summary, the Tough Mudder profits more than \$500,000 at each event (see Appendix A for more information).

Overall, the Tough Mudder is expertly managed and organized. As the Tough Mudder challenge continues to explode, the future remains bright for this company. The Tough Mudder Company is well prepared to continue its rise, and has taken appropriate steps to create new obstacles, expand their brand via marketing, and increase their reach to potential Tough Mudders.

Chapter Three: Marketing Plan

The Tough Mudder Company has increased the number of events, launching 53 events in 2013, 62 events in 2014, and is expecting to produce around over 70 events in 2015 (Kaydo, 2013). The use of social media has helped explode the Tough Mudder brand into a multi-million dollar company. The Tough Mudder marketing department has drastically increased interest and awareness of the event in a very short amount of time and is one of the many strengths of the company (Kaydo, 2013). This chapter will review the elements of Tough Mudder's strategic marketing plan.

Purpose

The Tough Mudder's goal is to push people beyond their comfort zone. While doing so, people will realize that they are capable of doing much more than they thought. This new revelation will increase one's self-esteem and help people overcome the daily life challenges they face. This aligns with one of the slogans of Tough Mudder, one that participants chant before each race, "I overcome all fears" (Tough Mudder, 2016e, p. 1). This is the core of the Tough Mudder's marketing plan and proves to be effective for most participants. The purpose of the marketing plan is to promote the product, which is the Tough Mudder event itself. The marketing department accomplishes this task by raising awareness and interest via advertising on social media, such as Facebook and Instagram (Kaydo, 2013).

Product

The Tough Mudder provides an experience that emphasizes teamwork and encouragement rather than a fast course time (Tough Mudder, 2016e). Composed of 10 to 12 miles of winding and bumpy terrain, the Tough Mudder also has approximately 24 obstacles

spread throughout the race (Tough Mudder, 2016e). Most obstacles require participants to lift just their body weight, but a few obstacles include carrying objects or even people. One example is the ‘Carry Your Wood’ obstacle, where participants partner up and carry logs for several hundred yards (Tough Mudder, 2016b, p. 1). Another obstacle requires participants to partner up and carry each other for fifty yards via piggy-back style (Tough Mudder, 2016b, p. 1). The entire event challenges participants both physically and mentally to complete the course.

Project Market – SWOT Analysis

Strengths. One of the greatest strengths of the Tough Mudder Company has been its ability to increase participation. In 2010, Tough Mudder generated \$3 million in revenue, with the expectation to skyrocket to \$16 million in 2011 (Ozanian, 2010). As of 2016, the Tough Mudder is valued at \$70 million and the marketing strategy plays a huge role in the increased performance of the company (Wikipedia, 2016).

The first event had a marketing budget of a mere \$8,200, and all of it was used to advertise on Facebook (Ozanian, 2010). This strategy has allowed the company to reach a wide audience at a very low cost, as word of mouth is one of the best ways to get noticed and receive new customers (Ozanian, 2010). Word of mouth advertising still plays a central role in the Tough Mudder’s marketing plan (Kaydo, 2013).

Another strength of the Tough Mudder Company is the Operations Team. Being able to incorporate new obstacles into events on an annual basis makes marketing the event much easier (Tough Mudder, 2015b). Each obstacle must be challenging but also safe at the same time. The Operation Team also builds and maintains the obstacles on the course site for at least a few days before event day (Tough Mudder, 2015b).

Weaknesses. A weakness of this same marketing strategy includes the fact that Tough Mudder is not reaching the audiences who do not utilize Facebook or other social media platforms. This limits the revenue that Tough Mudder could generate by using other traditional advertising methods, such as billboards or newspapers. However, with changing demographics across the country, and social media becoming more popular than ever, the target market for Tough Mudder lies in the 18-29 year-old range, which is also one of the most frequent users of social media platforms. With social media continuing to grow, the Tough Mudder Company could even expand to target 30-39 year-olds as well.

Opportunities. The Tough Mudder Company has already expanded into the global market, with events taking place around the globe, including Australia (Tough Mudder, 2016g). Being marketed as “the most badass event on the planet,” the Tough Mudder has a potential to expand to athletic training gear (Tough Mudder, 2016e, p. 1). The Tough Mudder Company offers t-shirts, shorts, and sweatshirts online, but could grow to performance enhancing athletic wear. Tough Mudder’s image is strong in the business world (Kingkade, 2012) and other sport clothing companies may be interested in exploring a partnership with Tough Mudder.

Threats. The Tough Mudder needs to maintain its safety regulations and procedures. After having a person die on the course in 2013 (Fox News, 2013), the Tough Mudder Company must do everything they can to ensure this tragic scenario does not happen again. The possibility of a lawsuit for negligence and liability will always remain despite having a death waiver signed. The Tough Mudder Company should make sure that their legal team includes every detail in waivers and other forms that may hold them accountable. If one word gets overlooked, the Tough Mudder could be in a legal battle that jeopardizes the future of all obstacle races and events.

Another threat is the possibility of the Spartan Death Race or another obstacle race becoming more popular and taking away some potential Tough Mudder participants. Since the Spartan Death Race is shorter, this race may appeal to more people. Tough Mudder provides a training program for participants (Tough Mudder, 2016e), but some potential participants may be too intimidated and pick a shorter obstacle course, such as the Spartan Death Race. This is something the Tough Mudder Company will have to be ready to combat.

Position

The Tough Mudder's slogan is "Probably the most badass event on the planet" (Tough Mudder, 2016e). While longer than a Spartan Death Race and shorter than an Ironman, the Tough Mudder provides a challenge to distinguish itself from other obstacle races.

The Tough Mudder has tried to separate itself from its competitors by incorporating new obstacles each year (Tough Mudder, 2016e). With 24 obstacles, the Tough Mudder keeps some of the classics, such as Everest (a half-pipe to run up), the Mud Mile (hills of mud and water to sludge through), and Arctic Enema (ice-cold water to swim through). However, the Tough Mudder creates and tests new obstacles each year, whereas the Ironman consists of the same course layout each year (Tough Mudder, 2016e).

Another unique aspect of the Tough Mudder includes that it is advertised as an event, not a race (Tough Mudder, 2016e). This shows that the Tough Mudder is all about teamwork and helping each other through obstacles one might encounter. The Tough Mudder includes everyone and does not reward competition (Tough Mudder, 2016e). This may make a group of less fit people be more comfortable to register for the Tough Mudder, whereas they may think they are unfit for the Spartan Death Race.

Pick Players

The Tough Mudder needs to increase the targeting of the 18 to 29 year-old range via social media. According to the Pew Research Center, 90 percent of 18 to 29 year-olds are on social media as of September 2013, and additionally, 76 percent of all women use social media (Pew, 2015). This is a very large number to which the Tough Mudder can market. While one of the disadvantages to the Tough Mudder's sole use of social media includes the fact that the company may not be reaching those who do not use social media, the company should be unfazed (Pew, 2015).

With such high statistics proving that many people are indeed using social media, the event may reach others via word of mouth. Many 18-29 year-olds talk about their experience with the Tough Mudder event and are the main focal point of discussion within families. As a result, parents who are not on social media could hear about the Tough Mudder from one of their kids who use social media, and then become interested in possibly participating.

Package

The Tough Mudder is presented usually as a single ticket item, but other packaged deals and promotions exist to encourage people to sign up as a team (Tough Mudder, 2016e). For example, the Tough Mudder provides a discount to individuals who register together as a team compared to participants running solo (Tough Mudder, 2016e). Promotion codes are emailed to past customers, which provide discounted rates on Tough Mudder registration and Tough Mudder gear (Ozanian, 2010). As a charitable organization, offering discounts and ticket packages demonstrates Tough Mudder's thoughtfulness to the community, given that more

people will attend the event and more people help support the Wounded Warriors Project (Tough Mudder, 2016f).

Price

For participants, the price for a single ticket to the Tough Mudder starts at \$99. After three months, the price rises to \$120. After another three months, the price jumps to \$120. And one month before the event starts, the price goes up to \$150. The Tough Mudder also includes an automatic \$15 insurance charge that is required for all participants (Tough Mudder, 2016e). Spectators can purchase their Tough Mudder tickets anytime for \$20.

Promotions

Advertising. The Tough Mudder Company utilizes the Internet as the main source for providing information on the event (Tough Mudder, 2016e). Many pictures and videos accompany the website, demonstrating the teamwork needed to help each other over obstacles. Many images and testimonials also dot the website, oftentimes showing smiling faces (Tough Mudder, 2016e). The Tough Mudder spends most of its advertising online, which has proven to be an effective marketing strategy because their sales continue to increase (Kaydo, 2013).

Publicity. The Tough Mudder Company relies heavily on social media to market its message, most notably on Facebook and Instagram (Kaydo, 2013). After each Tough Mudder event, the organization will post pictures on Facebook and allow participants to tag themselves in the photos (Kaydo, 2013). These pictures then show up on all participants' Facebook profiles, which all of their friends can see. This allows the Tough Mudder Company to reach a very wide audience at a minimal cost.

Promotional activities. The Tough Mudder Company uses many promotions to encourage consumers to purchase a ticket or merchandise gear. The Tough Mudder emails promotional codes to past, current, and possibly future participants, which helps save money on registration or Tough Mudder Gear (Ozanian, 2010). Many raffles and contests are also associated with the Tough Mudder event. Participants can win a pair of running shoes, t-shirts, and much more (Tough Mudder, 2016g). While the giveaways are fairly constant, the Tough Mudder Company could provide deals to specific sections of their target market to increase the number of participants in their events.

The Tough Mudder Company should include a promotion for college kids who range from 18 to 22 years-olds. Something simple, such as “Sign up for the Tough Mudder with your college ID for \$80!” This will be successful, as individuals are always looking to try something new, especially during college years. Such a luxurious deal will also provide motivation to exercise during one’s college years.

Community and public relations. Public relations can be defined as any activity or program that help the sport organization develop positive relationships with its target audiences. The Tough Mudder does this by promoting the Wounded Warriors Project, a charity for wounded veterans (Tough Mudder, 2016f). Almost all of the proceeds of the Tough Mudder event goes to the Wounded Warriors Project, and participants can host fundraising events and make donations to this charity anytime (Tough Mudder, 2016f). While this helps promote the good-faith image of the organization, the Tough Mudder could do more to establish lasting relationships with the public and surrounding community.

The Tough Mudder Company should create a mini Tough Mudder obstacle course for children. This could even be a recurring weekend event, as kids would learn the importance of

staying fit, eating healthy, teamwork, and including others. This program, called Mini Mudders, would greatly enhance Tough Mudder's image in the eye of the public. The Tough Mudder Company would also be creating a strong, loyal relationship with entire families.

Media relations. The Tough Mudder continues to receive positive media exposure for their event through their active social media accounts (Kaydo, 2013). The Tough Mudder Company also provides emails with links to training videos to help participants prepare for their upcoming Tough Mudder event (Ozanian, 2010). While the Tough Mudder is active online, the company could do much more to maintain their customer network and grow positive relationships with both participants and media personnel.

The Tough Mudder Company should create an app available to download on smart phones called 'Mudder Nation' to help connect people with fellow Mudders. People can then create an intramural team together, train together, and even gather socially together. This would be an outstanding way to increase a feeling of acceptance into such an elite group. The comradery would increase as well, which aligns with the 'T' from the Tough Mudder Pact: Teamwork (Tough Mudder, 2016d). The Tough Mudder should launch this app six months prior to the next Tough Mudder event. This will allow fellow Mudders proper time to meet new people, train together, and participate in the Tough Mudder as a strong team.

Another advantage of this promotion is that anyone in the world can download the app because it is not limited to one specific geographical area. The evaluation period of the phone app should take place at three months, six months, and one year after the debut. This allows ample time for people to download the app, give suggestions, and observe the success (or lack thereof) of the new marketing strategy.

Personal selling. The Tough Mudder Company does not perform direct face-to-face selling with individuals, groups, or organizations to sell tickets. All sales and ticket registrations are done via the Tough Mudder website (Tough Mudder, 2016e). With current attendance numbers skyrocketing, the Tough Mudder appears to be marketing effectively enough without incorporating this type of selling (Kaydo, 2013).

Sponsorship. Sponsorship is a mutually beneficial relationship between sport organizations, events, and corporate businesses (Faust, 2016). Sponsors are then able to associate themselves with that event or organization as the “official sponsor” and benefit from the increased exposure (Faust, 2016). The top sponsors for the Tough Mudder are Merrell, U.S. Army, Cellucor, Shock Top, Toyo Tires, Old Spice, and Microsoft Band (Tough Mudder, 2016e). These companies pay Tough Mudder a fee to be associated with the Tough Mudder event in order to improve their image, promote their products, display goodwill, and obtain access and exposure to the target audiences of the events. Tough Mudder is currently seeking partners for 2016 events, which consists of over 60 events and 2 million participants (Tough Mudder, 2016e). This is a great opportunity for companies to reach a lot of people for a relatively low cost, which is the appealing aspect of sponsorships.

Place

The Tough Mudder’s location changes on an annual basis, but the typical location for this event is on a few acres of farmland (J. Kovacs, personal communication, February 17, 2016). The Tough Mudder occurs all across the United States, including the Twin Cities, Lake Tahoe, Long Island, Pittsburgh, Seattle, Las Vegas, and Dallas (Tough Mudder, 2016g). Regardless of location, participants are responsible for their own transportation to and from the event site (Tough Mudder, 2015b). After each event, the Tough Mudder Company creates a highlight video

of the event from that particular location (Tough Mudder, 2016e), which is a great form of customer follow up. Many past and current customers have Facebook pictures of the Tough Mudder, while the Tough Mudder also places advertisements for those who appear interested (Tough Mudder, 2016e). This marketing tactic simultaneously satisfies the desire to reach the selected target market of 19-28 year-olds (Pew, 2015).

The ticket distribution center is located online, specifically at the Tough Mudder website (Tough Mudder, 2016e). In a world where digitally transferred money is standard, Tough Mudder provides email receipts and tickets via email (Tough Mudder, 2016g). This also provides the Tough Mudder organization with an open communication line directly to the consumer that can be further exploited for merchandise sales, Tough Mudder giveaways, and training recommendations that help create additional revenue for the Tough Mudder organization (Ozanian, 2010).

Promise: Evaluation of Strategy and Tactics

The current marketing plan for the Tough Mudder utilizes the widespread use of social media. Known as being “probably the most badass event on the planet,” more and more people are joining the cause (Tough Mudder, 2016e, p. 1). One of the main reasons for this phenomenal growth is because of social media influences. Distribution of photos through social media has been extensive. For example, many people share their Tough Mudder experience on Facebook and all their friends want to join their team for next year (Kaydo, 2013). As of 2013, more than 218,000 images featuring ‘#ToughMudder’ have been uploaded on Instagram (Kaydo, 2013). Many of these photos show the dedicated teamwork and sacrifice that each person makes to help others. This aligns directly with the Tough Mudder’s pledge, “I put teamwork and camaraderie before my course time” (Tough Mudder, 2016d).

The Tough Mudder Company already tracks the amount of postings on social media platforms that involve the Tough Mudder organization. The company should not only track the number of postings on social media platforms, but also compare the differences to past years. This is one tool to determine the effectiveness of the social media marketing campaign. Another metric is to ask participants how they heard about the Tough Mudder. Comparing the answers to previous years should indicate the success (or lack thereof) of the social marketing campaign. This will also help the marketing department determine if their target audience was reached.

Using all of these promotions, marketing strategies, and pricing matrices, the Tough Mudder event should increase the number of participants and lead to more donations for the Wounded Warriors Project. With more people participating, the Tough Mudder will become more pronounced on social media websites, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. This will additionally create more word of mouth advertising because people want to tell others what they have done. Such a technique will positively affect the company and their participants, becoming a win-win for everyone.

Chapter Four: Employee/Volunteer Planning

As the workplace changes, so do the workers. This occurs in companies all across the world, including Tough Mudder. While the Tough Mudder event is popular, one must give credit to their employees for making this spectacle happen each year. This chapter examines the differences between employees and volunteers, different types of motivations, and what determining factors may make people a good fit for the company.

People throughout the world are constantly changing jobs, professions, or areas of study. While each person has a separate motive to do these things, age does play a factor in whether someone changes their career path, such as seeking a promotion or retiring from a long term of satisfying service (Lunenburg, 2011). Managers must be able to motivate each employee effectively. One rule of thumb is that everyone is motivated differently, and a manager needs to tailor his/her motivational tactics to each individual.

Motivation

In order to encourage motivation, individuals and groups can set goals. Research has indicated that individuals who are provided with specific and difficult but attainable goals, perform better than those given easy, nonspecific, or no goals at all (Lunenburg, 2011). As managers, one must remember to provide these specific goals, as it allows the individual to monitor his/her progress throughout the timetable. On the other hand, if a manager just asked members to improve, to work harder, or to do your best, the members would not have a focused target or a clear-cut method to measure success (Lunenburg, 2011). Lunenburg (2011) also indicated that the organization's members should participate in the goal-setting process, as it enhances goal commitment among those members (Lunenburg, 2011). From a manager's

perspective, this would be a very beneficial situation to have. Managers must create the most efficient and productive workforce possible, and one of the best ways to do this is to focus on employee development and employee engagement.

Companies have numerous reasons to develop their employees. Among them is to merely retain their workers while increasing their knowledge and efficiency at their job duties (Robinson, 2004). Studies have found that a positive relationship between employee engagement and organizational performance outcomes will lead to a higher employee retention rate, increased productivity, higher profitability, and stronger customer loyalty and safety (Robinson, 2004). To receive these results, managers can create a highly engaged workforce by aligning efforts with strategy, empowering employees with decision-making ability, promoting and encouraging teamwork, helping people grow both professionally and personally, and providing support and recognition where appropriate (Robinson, 2004). One of the key components of employee engagement is having a sense of being valued and involved (Robinson, 2004), and managers should take note of this aspect. Being valued and involved can help retain employees at that organization. Showing the value to an employee can be as simple as a genuine question, such as, “How are you today? How’s the family doing?” Doing something as simple as that can go a long way for the employee.

Another way to engage employees is to provide them with challenging work (Robinson, 2004). Managers need to do a good job reviewing employee work, evaluating their performance, and noting whether a person is more relationship-oriented or task oriented. Relationship-oriented employees would be great in the sales industry, where constant interaction with past, present, and future customers occurs. A relationship-oriented employee possesses the skill to motivate, encourage, provide feedback, and is a resource for other employees and customers (Noe,

Gerhart, & Wright, 2008). A relationship-oriented employee cares about the well-being of a person before the outcome of a goal (Noe et al., 2008). Task-oriented employees, on the other hand, focus on accomplishing tasks to reach a goal. More concerned with finding a solution to a problem, these types of employees are more concerned that deadlines are met, structures are built, and production is achieved (Noe et al., 2008). Task-oriented employees would benefit being in the field and setting up the course; much more back-of-house work. In turn, this will increase the employee's feelings of being valued and will help Tough Mudder retain employees because the employees are happy with their roles. Differentiating which employees are task-oriented versus relationship-oriented is crucial for management because providing an employee in the correct setting can result in very positive and productive results.

Finally, a manager can also increase employee engagement by giving employees the option to make decisions (Robinson, 2004). Giving the employees the authority to make decisions creates a feeling of being valued and being involved in the process (Noe et al., 2008). Managers must be able to communicate to employees that they will be responsible for a particular decision, or merely asking appropriate questions about both employees' work and personal life.

One idea that managers can also use is group goal setting. Managers and leaders must know how their members work in the organization. If a person works solely on an individual basis, then there is no need for him/her to set goals as a group. However, most organizations do have group projects, and having group goals is as important as having individual goals. Research has shown that when a team member perceives that other team members share his/her personal goals, the individual will be more satisfied and productive (Lunenburg, 2011). Having a motivated individual can be contagious. Other workers could see how hard-working and

motivated one person is, and realize they want to work like they do. As a result, everyone picks up the pace, and gets as much work done as possible.

Practical Applications

For the Tough Mudder, managers can use this information to greatly increase productivity. Managers could assign particular teams to be responsible for setting up one of the obstacles for a race event, or placing sponsorship signage throughout the course. This would include the employee directly and he/she would definitely feel involved. Having the employee responsible for the course set-up would make the employee feel valued, because without their work, the Tough Mudder would not be possible. This task example would reflect a job for a more task-oriented employee.

Managers can also help the cause by having different motivational techniques for each employee based on their age since a 20 year-old may have different motivations compared to a 50 year-old. For example, a manager could provide the 20 year-old with a vacation trip to Hawaii, and the 50 year-old may receive a bonus on a paycheck. The reasoning is that the 50 year-old may have a family and be unable to leave for a sporadic vacation, but the 20 year-old, who is not married, has more freedom to take spontaneous trips. Employee motivation will vary across each business and should be delicately monitored and evaluated by upper management in order to provide employees with the most rewarding deal possible.

Even small and short interactions between managers and employees goes a long way to help people feel valued. Tough Mudder managers can do this by getting to know all workers on a first name basis, know their families, and even have work outings, such as a dinner party or a social gathering. With the older generation of workers at the Tough Mudder Company, managers

can consistently communicate their gratitude for their loyalty to not only the entire organization, but also for the work they do for Wounded Warriors. After all, Tough Mudder competitions raise charity funds to help wounded soldiers recover both mentally and physically after they return home (Tough Mudder, 2016f). As a result, the leaders of the Tough Mudder organization may put the older workers in charge of working relations with sponsors and fundraisers because their established loyalty allows them to develop and build relationships with those who consistently compete or donate for the good cause.

Chapter Five: Risk Management Plan

The Tough Mudder is a 10 to 12 mile obstacle course. The facility consists of generally a few acres of land. According to Kovacs, the company requires enough area to accommodate the course, parking areas, spectator zones, base area, Tough Mudder employee zones, medical tents, and more (personal communication, February 17, 2016). Much of this information provided in this chapter was gleaned from an interview with Jodi Kovacs (personal communication, February 17, 2016), a Tough Mudder employee (see Appendix B for full interview Q&A).

Kovacs stated that to help determine where to host the event, Tough Mudder has a dedicated team who scouts new territory all over the country (personal communication, February 17, 2016). Kovacs believed the scouting department searches for unique and beautiful locations that also bring the Tough Mudder to newer areas (personal communication, February 17, 2016). This is a great way to market the event to new audiences and provide a new experience for veteran Mudders. The Tough Mudder team is always trying to bring new obstacles to the course, which present one of the biggest challenges from a risk management perspective (J. Kovacs, personal communication, February 17, 2016).

Risk Management Protocol

Kovas stated that the Tough Mudder Headquarters uses course flow analytics to help determine everything from traffic management to emergency response teams (personal communication, February 17, 2016). Kovacs also explained the Tough Mudder currently hires industry experts and engineers who are responsible for reviewing obstacles and rigorously testing them before they ever make it on a course (personal communication, February 17, 2016). This

rigid structure helps transfer liability to the engineers and companies who test and re-test the obstacles for safety defaults.

At every event, Tough Mudder has a fully operational and staffed field emergency medical tent. Kovacs stated these medical tents are run by an expert team of medical practitioners who are constantly in communication with local emergency departments (personal communication, February 17, 2016). Many organizations take the same approach, in that they hope for the best and prepare for the worst. Tough Mudder also employs medical and rescue personnel at each obstacle. Depending on the type of obstacle, the level of difficulty, and the level of risk, staffed personnel can range from rescue divers, lifeguards, EMTs, and first responders (J. Kovacs, personal communication, February 17, 2016). Additionally, staffs of medics on specialized vehicles constantly careen throughout the course to provide immediate assistance (J. Kovacs, personal communication, February 17, 2016).

Kovacs also claimed the Tough Mudder Company currently has more than 100 employees with event experience, and more than 20 full-time employees who have more than 75 years of expertise in safety and mass participation event delivery, including elite events such as the Olympic Games, US Open, Wimbledon, Ironman, and NY Roadrunners (personal communication, February 17, 2016). This is a great example demonstrating that the Tough Mudder Company truly values safety and experience. The Tough Mudder Company continues to invest hundreds of thousands of dollars annually in reviewing procedures, improving designs and protocols, and properly training Tough Mudder employees (J. Kovacs, personal communication, February 17, 2016).

While the course has fearful obstacles, most injuries do not happen on obstacles themselves, but rather from common medical issues such as dehydration, heat exhaustion, and

hypothermia (J. Kovacs, personal communication, February 17, 2016). The Tough Mudder Company should focus on reducing this risk since this happens most often. Tough Mudder also requires all participants to sign a waiver before they start (Tough Mudder, 2016e), and this waiver has been credited as being one of the most comprehensive waivers in the industry, covering all aspects of risk, negligence, and liability. The waiver also includes a death section, and states that there is a risk of death that the participant acknowledges (see Appendix C for further description). Also, throughout the course, signage appears that is both encouraging and occasionally humorous, with one even reiterating that the participants signed a death waiver (see Appendix D).

Overall, the Tough Mudder Company desires to provide a challenging event to all participants around the globe, while simultaneously taking necessary steps to prevent overly dangerous elements and scenarios. Kovacs also stated that the Tough Mudder team would never compromise safety to make the course more challenging (personal communication, February 17, 2016).

Evaluation

While the Tough Mudder has taken great steps to minimize risk of injury in such a challenging event, incidents have occurred. The most notable incident unfortunately resulted in the death of a 28 year-old participant (Fox News, 2013). According to Fox News (2013), the participant jumped into a pool of water and did not surface. After eight minutes, the participant was declared brain dead (Fox News, 2013). The family is debating if they will sue Tough Mudder, however, that may not be a smart step to take. The participant may fit the primary assumption of risk elements, including that the participant must voluntarily consent to be

exposed to the risk, and the participant must know, understand, and appreciate the inherent risks of the activity (Cotten & Wolohan, 2013).

As noted previously, Tough Mudder uses signage throughout the course. Some signage includes encouragement to proceed around the obstacle if one does not feel comfortable with it. Additionally, the MCs before each event encourage participants to go around obstacles if one has any doubt or uneasiness with the task (Tough Mudder, 2015b).

Risk Management Tool

While the Tough Mudder Company has a decent risk management procedure, the process can be improved. One area that the Tough Mudder Company should research is how long people can focus and maintain attention to detail. The reasoning behind this is not necessarily because Tough Mudder has a bad risk management set-up, but rather that they had people in place when a situation occurred, but they possibly did not act soon enough. Researching how long a person can focus intently on the task at hand is important in order to avoid another tragedy. After examining results, the company could impose a rotation system between the rescue divers, lifeguards, first responders, and other safety professionals. This would allow the supervisors on duty to remain effective and efficient.

The second step would include adding additional signage around the obstacles themselves. People may not remember what the MC said about the option to walk around obstacles. Placing more reminders around the obstacle may make participants feel less peer pressure to go through/under/over the obstacles if they are truly unable to. While these injuries may not happen often, the severity of these injuries can be high, featuring broken bones,

dislocated shoulders, and torn ligaments. Adding signage can help minimize this risk by reminding participants that they can go around the obstacle if they feel uncomfortable.

Finally, the third step is to place more water stations throughout the course. Currently, most courses have four stations over the 10 to 12 miles. Increasing that number to 6 water stations would help reduce the number of the most common injuries, including dehydration, heat exhaustion, and hypothermia. This would decrease one of the most frequent injuries at the Tough Mudder.

Implementing these three steps would improve the risk management methods that Tough Mudder currently employs. Reducing the length a supervisor may have at an obstacle would allow that supervisor to maintain his/her focus on the situation. Adding signage to these obstacles would also sway those who are on the fence about whether they should attempt the obstacle. This would reduce the number of severe injuries. Raising the number of water stations will help reduce the number of heat related issues and reduce the most common occurring injuries.

Conclusion

The Tough Mudder is truly a spectacular event, and the Tough Mudder crew already has a very good risk management procedure in place. The waiver used in order to participate in the Tough Mudder already eliminates a lot of the potential negative consequences the company could see due to a lawsuit. Adding in the recommended “next steps,” however, would only strengthen an already stellar risk management program.

Chapter Six: Ethical Analysis

Sports are a big part of life. While many children do not actively imagine running the Tough Mudder, they use other sports to live out the storybook dreams. The Tough Mudder fields all kinds of athletes (Tough Mudder, 2016e), and participants do not face some of the ethical dilemmas that are often accompanied with high level sports, such as college football. To provide further insight into ethics and sports, this chapter examines the ethical dilemmas found in collegiate football.

With such an increasing demand for college football, many colleges and universities are making a lot of money on their football programs. For example, in 2008 the University of Alabama football program made over \$123 million (ESPN, 2015). Fans want to watch the best athletes play. However, due to current National Collegiate Athletic Association rules, the best teams are still not reaching their full potential. Currently, coaches at the Division I level, which is the highest level of collegiate football, are not allowed to perform any on-the-field work with football during the summer months of the year (Shanker, 2014). The NCAA should allow all collegiate football teams to have the option to do football drills for one hour each week throughout the summer off-season.

Sport Policy

One year ago, the NCAA did tweak this off-season rule, and according to the NCAA's website, the rule specifically states the following:

Allow football student-athletes to participate in preparations for the season during an eight-week period each summer. Those weeks can include eight hours per week of required weight training and conditioning. Additionally, up to two of the eight hours can

consist of film review. Student-athletes who participate in the summer activities must be enrolled in summer school or meet specific academic benchmarks. The model is similar to those adopted by men's and women's basketball in the last two years. Both the Football Bowl and Football Championship subdivisions supported this change. (Mizell, 2014, p. 1)

While this may not seem particularly significant, many coaches agree that this is a substantial change. In the previous rule, coaches were not allowed any contact with their players during the summer, with the one exception to this rule relating to strength and conditioning coaches (Mizell, 2014).

Adding one hour of football drills into the eight hour rule would greatly improve the performance of individuals, and as a result, the entire team. The increased performance on the field would greatly benefit the fans experience, as they get to see a better product on the field. However, outsiders must also examine the potential consequences, both negative and positive, on the players and coaches that are most affected by this proposed amendment.

Ethical Theories

Using the ethical theory of teleology, one would be more focused on the results rather than the process (Emelda, 2015). Including the one-hour football drills that can be coached would result in a better team. Fans deeply desire to see good teams play good teams. While there is a chance that injury may happen, the improvements outweigh the chance of serious injury. From this teleological viewpoint, the addition of football drills is a good course of action and should be implemented immediately.

Relating to the Tough Mudder event, the theory of teleology would only care about the results of the event. This line of thinking does not align with the Tough Mudder PACT, specifically with the ‘Teamwork’ aspect (Tough Mudder, 2016d). Also, mentioned in the Tough Mudder pledge is the line, “I will put teamwork and camaraderie before my course time” (Tough Mudder, 2016e). This line directly states that the result is not as important as the process as to how one finished and would be along the lines of a deontology viewpoint.

The ethical theory of deontology focuses more on the ‘how’ than the result (Emelda, 2015). Questions to examine using this viewpoint would include if the team got better the right way and does adding the football drills truly make a significant difference? Does requiring this extra effort make collegiate athletics one step closer to professionalism rather than amateurism? This is a slippery slope. Many colleges already feel that their athletes and coaches work too much as it is, and adding more drills into the so-called offseason is the wrong path to go down. Indiana University’s Head Coach Kevin Wilson voiced his concern over the recently tweaked rule, wondering how to ‘find the balance’ (Shanker, 2014). He also was concerned with the possibility of having coaches burning out from the already exhaustive 365-day coaching calendar (Shanker, 2014).

Relating to the Tough Mudder, the process is much more important than the end result. Tough Mudder participants pledge that they will help others throughout the course (Tough Mudder, 2016e). This strongly correlates to the ethical theory of deontology. As participants crossed the finish line, those who helped, encouraged, and supported total strangers to the finish line would be more rewarded because they completed the course the ‘right’ way. Having the ability to choose to help someone else also relates to the ethical theory of existentialism.

The theory of existentialism is defined in that a person should find oneself and the meaning of life through free will, choice, and personal responsibility (Existentialism, 2016). Furthermore, each person should be forced to choose and be responsible without the excuse or help of laws, ethnic rules, or traditions (Existentialism, 2016). Relating to the Tough Mudder, each participant is faced with choices throughout the race of whether or not to help others, go around obstacles, or follow directions at the obstacles. Each choice made throughout the course contributes to the identity of one's true self and provides further meaning to one's life.

Benefits

With adding in the football drills, coaches can work with the incoming freshman, transfer students, and walk-on players. This would allow the freshman to be able to work with the coaches and help them begin their relationship in a positive manner. This is one of the biggest benefits from the rule change according to Wake Forest Head Coach Dave Clawson who stated:

It used to be awful, the first time a freshman's ever on campus and you can't be around them...part of recruiting is parents trusting you with their son, and the first time they drop them off, to not be allowed around them was very hard. (Shanker, 2014, p. 2)

Other coaches have deemed the academic path as the biggest benefit. Incoming freshman in particular can start school in the summer session (Medcalf, 2012). This allows the freshman to come in and take a few classes when there are not 40,000 people at the university (Medcalf, 2012). According to Michigan State Head Coach Tom Izzo, this is significant because:

There's not all the pressure of classroom work, athletic work, and then the social activity that goes on with kids their first year away from home. I think it's going to make our freshman a lot more under control and not so overwhelmed. (Medcalf, 2012, p.1)

This academic luxury would exist with or without the added drills into the rule. The rationale for this rule included the fact that student-athletes who enroll in summer school tend to experience enhanced academic success during their collegiate enrollment (Kersey, 2014), and many coaches across the country agree that this helps their teams immensely (Medcalf, 2012).

Concerns

As with most situations, positive and negative consequences exist. One of the biggest concerns is whether athletes will burnout faster due to this new rule (Shanker, 2014). Working up to eight hours each week is hardly an ‘off-season’, and adding in football drills most likely would not help with the burnout concerns. Many athletes do not have jobs because of the long-hours already committed to their respective sport. This ‘full-time job’ status was exemplified when Northwestern quarterback Kain Colter requested that collegiate athletes be represented by a labor union (Farrey, 2014). Colter wants players in the NCAA to be protected physically, mentally, and financially for their efforts (Farrey, 2014). If athletes were asked to constantly work out and perform practice drills throughout the year, the argument for being considered a full-time employee may be strengthened. If that were to happen, this rule change could prove to be very costly for the NCAA.

After examining all of these potential consequences, both good and bad, one must thoroughly examine whether the process is good. The NCAA institutions should keep a close eye on the athletes because after all, the most important piece for a team is to remain healthy. The athletes are the most important stakeholders in the current collegiate athletics system.

Conclusion

Many people believe incoming freshmen will benefit the most from this rule (Shanker, 2014), and with this newly tweaked rule, coaches are positively influencing more kids at a younger age. Coaches can communicate with incoming players and make sure they are transitioning well into the new chapter of their life (Medcalf, 2012). Having that extra time for the athletes to get situated, find where classrooms, buildings, dorm rooms, and everything else are located will help ease parents' concerns (Shanker, 2014).

Having the football drills in the new rule will also affect coaches and those on the football operations side. Coaches also have indicated that they may just keep handing the chain of command down to seniors on the roster because doing so builds leadership and team chemistry (Mizell, 2014). This creates valuable skills that the players can translate into the real world. Every company needs leadership and creating these opportunities for athletes to grow and build these positive traits is extremely important.

Players who attended summer school also found enhanced academic success during their collegiate enrollment (Kersey, 2014). With schools having to meet graduation rate requirements, this 'enhanced academic success' strategy would appeal to every school. Overall, players have more communication with their coaches (Medcalf, 2012), are able to create team chemistry (Mizell, 2014), and have higher academic success (Kersey, 2014).

Chapter Seven: Personal Reflection

Higher Education

I pursued a higher course of education within the Sport and Recreation Management field for a multitude of reasons. The main reason is based on my career choice. I have been working in some capacity for a collegiate football team for the past five years of my life. As a coach, my goal is to keep working my way up the coaching ladder and hopefully reach the Division I level. In order to do so, one needs his/her Masters degree. In fact, one needs this in order to even be interviewed for an opening.

Graduate Program

My time at Concordia University has helped prepare me for real world experiences. The biggest takeaway I learned is hearing other people's experiences and perspectives on jobs, managers, leaders, and work. People often say that there is no substitute for experience. I tend to agree with this, however, the next best thing is to listen to others' stories and hear about how they encountered an obstacle, and then went over, under, around, or through it. Hearing their ideas for solutions encouraged me to think about solutions in different ways that I had not before. Using ideas from others' experiences will help assist me in future problematic scenarios.

Leaders and Leadership Qualities

Leadership can be thought of in many different ways. In my opinion, the setting is somewhat important. You may act differently at the gym leading a Crossfit class as compared to teaching someone to play the piano. One of the most common features of a leader involves motivating others. In fact, the article by Kruse (2013) states that leaders must have the ability to motivate others to reach a goal. I would add in the fact that leaders, while not necessary but

proven to be helpful, should also lead by example (Kruse, 2013). While I do believe one can lead verbally, the demonstration of showing one's effort, sacrifice, and determination goes a long ways to get others to follow. It also helps showing that you are "all in" on whatever task you are doing. Another important piece to note is that a leader can be anyone, and that no hierarchy needs to exist to be a leader (Kruse, 2013). One does not simply become a leader overnight by getting a specific job title, rather, one gains this elite status based on the day-in day-out effort, focus, and positivity while producing results.

Leaders come in many forms, sizes, and shapes. Some are vocal, some lead by example, but many possess similar characteristics. A few essential characteristics exist in order to be an effective leader, including honesty, ability to delegate, and effective communication (Prive, 2012). The honesty factor is important, and being able to trust a leader is vital. People will not follow someone who says one thing, and then acts different from their statement.

Communication plays a key role as well. Keeping everyone involved and informed with honest results, feedback, etc. is also important, as those around a leader will be looking for feedback (Prive, 2012). Good leaders are honest with their evaluations in order to improve the company or team with which they work. The ability to delegate is also important, and a leader must be able to distribute tasks to those who will be most effective at them (Prive, 2012). For example, if working with social media, a smart leader should delegate that task to a 20-year old instead of a 50-year old because the 20-year old most likely is around social media more often. Effective leaders need to be able to surround themselves with people who are just as motivated as they are themselves.

Personal Leadership Beliefs

As a leader, I personally believe that being positive is an important attribute. A positive attitude will have a trickle-down effect to those who look up to the leader. This in turn allows the followers to have higher intrinsic motivation levels, which keeps their self-esteem at a high level. I try to bring positive energy to any situation in order to boost others around me. My coworkers have told me they are happy that I was hired because I am fun to be around, whether it is the constant bad jokes or upbeat music.

I believe the leadership approach that best represents me at this current moment is the Blake-Mouton Managerial Grid (Mind Tools, 2016). The Blake-Mouton model utilizes both a people-oriented approach in addition to a task-oriented approach. Under the people umbrella, leaders focus on organizing, supporting, and developing team members (Mind Tools, 2016). For example, I would include these traits in my position meetings during football season. I'd have one young wide receiver draw the formation, and then another young receiver would then draw the play. I would provide instant feedback on their answers, which demonstrates the supporting and developing team members' traits. When taking a task-oriented approach, one sets structures in place, define the work that needs to be done, and plan and monitor the progress made in finishing work (Mind Tools, 2016). For example, during my position meetings, I would inform the wide receivers of the practice schedule and what drills we would be performing that day. I set a rigid schedule, and then monitored the progress of each player during each drill.

Another leadership approach that represents me is the style approach. This approach focuses on what leaders do and how they act (Northouse, 2013). By focusing on the behavior of the leader, leaders do not necessarily need to be extremely vocal. Rather, they lead by their actions (Northouse, 2013). I have never been a super loud vocal person, but instead use my actions to get others to follow suit.

In my opinion, a leader also provides feedback to those around him/her. A good leader communicates frequent and often, and occasionally the feedback will be negative. Negative feedback is equally important as positive feedback. However, I believe promoting good behavior is more beneficial than punishing bad behavior. This line of reasoning relates back to being a positive influence among others. As a football coach, I was consistently providing feedback to our players, both positive and negative. I always tried to bring out something good in spite of something done poorly. For example, a player could miss his block but have great effort and desire. While the end result is not ideal, he is playing hard which is something that coaches strive for.

I also made my position players strengthen their mental aspect of the game. Our meetings were very interactive with players asking questions, answering questions, drawing on the board, and being part of the process. Additionally, I tried to demonstrate the life lessons through football. While we had a rough year going 1-10, I still maintained a positive attitude each and every week. One reason was that these losses were merely a bump in the road. Losing a football game did not make anyone a bad person because being a football player was only part of who they were as a person. Also, when players questioned their ability, I would ask them, "What's your mindset?" The answer: I can do anything. I made sure that this mentality transferred off the field as well to interviews, to class, and to being confident. Hopefully, this is the lasting impact that 'Coach Dove' had on his squad.

A good leader will help develop those around him, whether they are coworkers, players, fellow mothers/fathers, sons/daughters, or others. I had the joyous experience of learning and growing from Concordia University's Special Teams Coordinator, Joe Lardinois. Joe was a phenomenal listener that listened to what I said and thought for the upcoming gameplan each

week. While he put me in charge of our Kickoff Return unit, I came to him with questions and sought his advice. Sometimes, he would help me and other times he would say he did not know, forcing me to do what I thought was best. This was a great learning tool and a great confidence booster, as it allowed me to be in charge and had a big-time say in the gameplan and practice preparation. Having been taken under the wing of Coach Lardinois, I can now spread his influence onto others. Listening, guiding but not controlling, and helping people grow and develop is what coaching is all about. Performing these duties will allow others to reach their goals and dreams.

Goal setting is also very important for any organization. Leaders need to be specific on what the task is, what the goal is, and the process that will take them to achieve that goal. Having an open mind is important because people surrounding the leader may be able to provide ideas and solutions to problems (Myatt, 2012). In the football world, we talked about having goals each week, both on the field (i.e., time of possession, no turnovers, etc.) and off the field (i.e., on time for morning lifts, 3.0 team GPA, etc.). Having goals allows one to see if he or she is growing and reaching their hopes and dreams.

My Plan

The goal-setting procedure is what I would use to help evaluate my leadership plan. One of my goals is to become a better public speaker. My plan for this is to simply practice. I have meetings right now with many different people in many different places. This will force me to be outside my comfort zone while also speaking to groups of people. The evaluating tool will be the number of speeches I am asked to give. If this is a higher number (more than seven invitations), this must mean I have improved my public speaking ability.

My other main goal is to create a lasting positive impact on those around me. This goal will be evaluated based on the number of times people ask to use me as a reference. Being asked to be a reference means that the player thinks we not only have a good relationship, but also a meaningful one. This would demonstrate that I have made an impact on others – and hopefully for the better.

I also have a goal of being coaching football at the Division I level within the next five years. This would mean that others within my profession see me as a leader. Having this distinction would also mean that others respect me for my character and core values.

Conclusion

Many different people are leaders for various reasons. I have been lucky to be around a few that are incredibly gifted in what they do. It is through my personal experiences and listening to others' experiences that will elevate my ability to grow, develop, and create a lasting impact on those around me.

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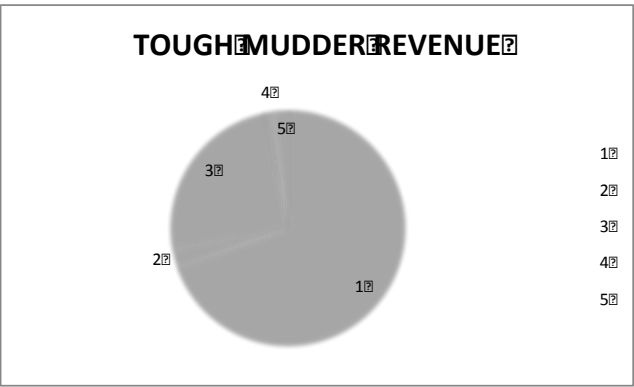
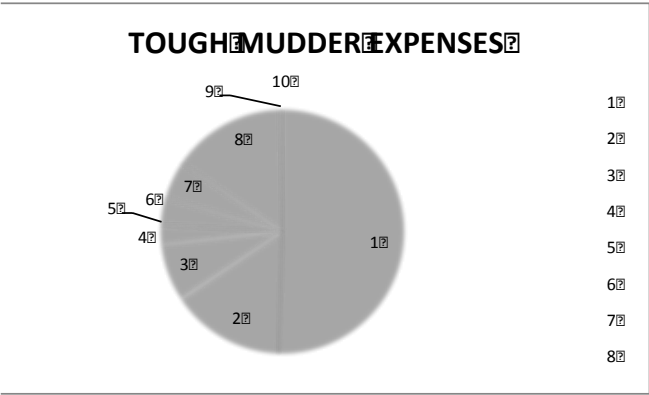
APPENDIX A

TOUGH MUDDER EXPENSES FOR EVENT DAY

	COST	SECTION OF GRAPH
EMPLOYEES	\$100,000	1
LAND FOR COURSE	\$30,000	2
MATERIALS TO MAKE OBSTACLES	\$15,000	3
FIRST AID CREW	\$5,000	4
TENTS	\$400	5
MACHINERY TO BUILD COURSE	\$7,000	6
ADVERTISING	\$10,000	7
T-SHIRTS & HEADBANDS	\$30,000	8
TABLES/STANDS	\$500	9
OFFICE SUPPLIES	\$200	10
TOTAL	\$198,100	

TOUGH MUDDER REVENUE FOR EVENT DAY

	REVENUE	SECTION OF GRAPH
TICKETS	\$500,000	1
PARKING	\$18,750	2
SPONSORS	\$175,000	3
CONCESSIONS	\$10,000	4
FUNDRAISING	\$15,000	5
TOTAL	\$718,750	



This figure provides information regarding the expenses and revenue streams of the Tough Mudder Company on event day (Author, Year; Author, Year; & Author, Year).

APPENDIX B

This shows the Q&A session with Jodi Kovacs. All communication was conducted via email in February 2016.

1. How do you determine where to host the TM?

We have a dedicated team for venue scouting and community relations that's responsible for searching all over the country to find the most unique or beautiful venues imaginable to host our events. It's important for us to continue bringing the event to new participants all over the world, so we strive to find new venues and head to new cities each year to provide a new experience to Mudders.

2. How much land do you need to prepare the course?

Even though each course is 10-12 miles long, we don't need as much land for the event because the course can wind around itself. Depending on the venue, we usually need at least a few acres of land to accommodate the course, parking areas, spectator zones, base area, Tough Mudder employee zones, medical tents and more.

3. What risk management protocol do you use? (before/during/after event)

TMHQ is always working to improve our safety capabilities. We are highly analytical and data-driven and invest heavily in:

- *Course flow analytics*
- *Emergency response team modelling (number of necessary personnel determined in Obstacle Safety Analysis)*
- *Traffic management and transportation design*
- *Engineers reviewing obstacles and extensive testing, from CAD specs to build sessions to to-scale prototypes that go through rigorous testing, iteration, and approval before they ever make it on course*
- *Scenario testing and planning is a crucial aspect of course design and staff training throughout the year*

Additionally, our size enables us to hire and engage industry experts from many fields to come in and review, question and constantly improve event delivery and the safety on course (reference hires from LOCOG and other major events)

4. How many safety personnel are on standby during the event? Are they distributed by obstacles?

Tough Mudder has a fully operational and staffed field emergency medical tent at all of our events. The medical tent is run by an expert team of medical practitioners working in close partnership with local emergency departments and EMS providers. This field emergency medical tent provides advanced field medical care and can stabilize any injury which may occur onsite. It then has the capability to treat all but the most significant injuries, which are transported to the local hospital.

Additionally, each obstacle is staffed with the appropriate level of medical and rescue personnel which can include rescue divers, lifeguards, EMT's and First Responders, depending on the risk profile of each obstacle.

Finally, we staff a number of roving medics on specialized response vehicles throughout the course to provide expert initial care and transport of participants that require care in our medical tent.

Our current medical system provides an advanced level of care consistent with the injuries seen on obstacle courses. This robust onsite medical delivery model provides the care participants need quickly and efficiently and prevents unnecessary trips to an emergency department. We are proud of the system we have in place, and we believe our setup provides an industry-leading level of on-site care.

5. How do you lessen potential liabilities?

We take safety extremely seriously at Tough Mudder. We are continually reviewing our safety procedures at all of our obstacles. We work with onsite safety personnel, including some of the most well-trained ALS, EMT, paramedics, water rescue technicians and emergency response personnel, to ensure all necessary measures are taken. We also work with local medical services to ensure we have the most capable medical technicians informed of the event and potential needs onsite.

Tough Mudder has more than 100 employees with event experience, including more than 20 full time employees that collectively have more than 75 years of expertise in safety and mass participation event delivery for organizations including the Olympic Games, US Open, Wimbledon, Ironman, NY Roadrunners, IMG and more. Safety is collective responsibility, with every team accountable and measured against safety performance.

Tough Mudder invests hundreds of thousands of dollars annually in reviewing procedures, improving designs and protocols, and training TMHQ employees.

6. What risks are presented by the obstacles and what steps are taken to reduce risks at these obstacles? (Focus on more "popular" obstacles... i.e. Everest, ElectroShock Therapy, King of Swingers, Kiss of Mud, and Arctic Enema)

With any endurance or mass participation event, there are always inherent risks associated, so we do everything possible to reduce risks. The most common injuries at our events don't happen on an obstacle. The most common medical issues we address on-site are dehydration, heat exhaustion, and hypothermia. These issues are by far the most regular, but others injuries we treat include minor abrasions, contusions, and lower-body sprains. The majority of injuries do not occur at obstacles, but are sustained somewhere along the course.

7. How do you inform the participants of the risks that they are taking?

Our goal is to deliver an incredibly challenging event to participants around the world, while doing everything we can to prevent and eliminate overly dangerous elements and scenarios from the experience.

We want participants to push themselves, but we will never urge participants to try an obstacle they do not feel is safe. There is signage on course alerting participants to the dangers of certain obstacles, and our start line MCs remind all participants that they may skip any obstacle and to walk around anything they feel do not feel safe on. Additionally, we encourage all participants to read through our website to learn more about Tough Mudder, how to prepare, which obstacles will be on-site and more.

Our feedback from participants is continually "make the course harder." They pay for a challenging experience, and the nature of the event is based in some of this risk. Our team will never put safety behind anything else, and even as we innovate our obstacles and the events, we will not rush this process if it compromises safety.

Tough Mudder Waiver

[illegible]

This shows the Death Waiver that all participants must sign in order to participate in the event.

From: https://toughmudder.com/sites/default/files/PRO9783_TM_Participants_Waiver-1.pdf

APPENDIX D



An example of the signage posted throughout the Tough Mudder course.

From:

<https://www.google.com/#q=remember+you+signed+a+death+waiver&tbm=isch&imgref=e44Q1PVyfJXjvM%3A>