

COMPUTER APPLICATIONS IN SPORTS AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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Managers need information. The main management functions of planning, organizing, leading, deciding and evaluating are dependent on information. However, many administrators are overwhelmed with data and are hard pressed to filter out the essential information needed to operate their sports organizations.

An important consideration in selecting a computer is to determine what software it can run. First, decide what software will perform the desired tasks, and then select a computer to run it. The office trend is to network many computers to share data and expensive hardware devices.

The main software application areas for management purposes are: (1) Word processing, (2) Data base, (3) Spreadsheets, (4) Graphics, (5) Communications, (6) Personal information managers, And (7) Expert systems.

Professional sports teams and athletic departments noted that the most frequently mentioned problem areas were (1) inadequate user training, (2) problems in coordination and compatibility of their computer systems, and (3) scarce resources.

Sport-specific software is available to help managers operate tournaments, calculate game statistics, manage road races, and control the vast amount of data needed to effectively host a major multi-sport event such as the Olympic Games.

To use computers effectively in an organization, managers should carefully consider the following (1) Selection of software and hardware, (2) Staff resistance to technological change (3) Ergonomics, (4) Possible detrimental effects on the health of users, (5) Training programs, (6) The tendency to computerize trivial tasks that can be handled adequately without the computer, (7) Data safety and security, and (8) The effect computerization has on the role of a manager.

To improve the effectiveness of computerization and to reduce staff resistance to change, ensure that those who will be affected by a new system participate in setting the specifications for its design and in planning and overseeing its implementation and operation.

The addition of a computer system to an employee's work area necessitates a consideration of many physical factors. Users may experience real or imagined health related problems with extended use of computers. Managers should provide time and the necessary resources for members of their staff to learn the software before they are expected to use it productively.

Managers should recognize that some tasks should not be computerized. A computer does not necessarily mean inefficiency. Managers should ensure that staff

members make frequent back-ups of all data. Security measures are necessary to prevent confidential data from being viewed and to discourage computer crime.