



Professional Competencies of Managers in the Sports and Recreation Industry in the United States of America and Eastern Europe

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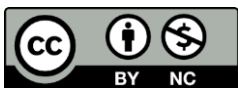
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ABSTRACT

The article examines the current problems of finding and forming professional competencies for managers of the sports and recreation industry using the experience of the United States of America and Eastern Europe as an example. The purpose of the article is to study the model characteristics of the functioning of the sports and recreation industry in the United States of America and Eastern Europe and to substantiate the complex of professional competencies for managers of this sphere. To achieve the set tasks, a set of general scientific research methods was used, in particular, systemic, competency-based, comparative and interdisciplinary approaches to the study of the sports and recreation industry. The following methods were used in the research process: analysis and synthesis of scientific literature, regulatory and program documents; comparative analysis to identify the features of the functioning of the sports and recreation industry in the United States of America and Eastern European countries; generalization and systematization of scientific data to substantiate the complex of professional competencies of managers; theoretical modeling method to determine the model characteristics of the functioning of the sports and recreation industry in the studied regions. The article proposes model characteristics of the functioning of the sports and recreation industry in the United States of America and Eastern Europe and substantiates the most important competencies for managers of the sports and recreation industry.



KEYWORDS

manager, professional competencies, performance criteria, sports and recreation industry, United States of America, Eastern Europe.



Професійні компетентності менеджерів спортивно-рекреаційної індустрії в Сполучених штатах Америки і Східній Європі

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У статті досліджено актуальні проблеми пошуку та формування професійних компетентностей для менеджерів спортивно-рекреаційної індустрії на прикладі досвіду Сполучених Штатів Америки і Східної Європи. Метою статті є дослідження модельних характеристик функціонування спортивно-рекреаційної індустрії у Сполучених Штатах Америки і Східній Європі та обґрунтування комплексу професійних компетентностей для менеджерів цієї сфери. Для досягнення поставлених завдань використано комплекс загальнонаукових методів дослідження, зокрема системний, компетентнісний, порівняльний та міждисциплінарний підходи до вивчення спортивно-рекреаційної індустрії. У процесі дослідження використано такі методи: аналіз і синтез наукової літератури, нормативно-правових та програмних документів; порівняльний аналіз для виявлення особливостей функціонування спортивно-рекреаційної індустрії у Сполучених штатах Америки та країнах Східної Європи; узагальнення й систематизацію наукових даних для обґрунтування комплексу професійних компетентностей менеджерів; метод теоретичного моделювання для визначення модельних характеристик функціонування спортивно-рекреаційної індустрії в досліджуваних регіонах. У статті запропоновано модельні характеристики функціонування спортивно-рекреаційної індустрії у Сполучених Штатах Америки і Східній Європі та обґрунтовано найбільш важливі компетентності для менеджерів спортивно-рекреаційної індустрії.



КЛЮЧОВІ СЛОВА

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1. Introduction

Deep integration of national economies into the world space and expansion of international contacts contribute to increasing the importance of intercultural communication in the activities of specialists in various professional fields. The cultural originality of individual states is formed under the influence of historical, social, political, economic, religious and ethnic factors that determine the peculiarities of business behavior, management mechanisms and principles of labor organization. Differences in worldview guidelines, value systems and rules of social interaction often cause misunderstandings in the process of communication, complicate the coordination of joint work and can reduce the effectiveness of professional interaction in the international environment.

A significant factor influencing the nature of professional relations in the international environment is the cultural characteristics of societies, which are reflected in value systems, norms of behavior, and ideas about interaction and decision-making. The importance of this aspect is especially growing in the field of sports and recreational activities, which are actively developing and functioning on a global scale. The expansion of international cooperation necessitates the training of competitive specialists who are able to work in conditions of cultural diversity, take into account the peculiarities of national management models and build effective professional communication with representatives of different countries. In this regard, special scientific attention is paid to the problem of the formation of professional competencies of managers of the sports and recreational industry, which is considered on the example of the experience of the United States of America and Eastern Europe.

2. Literature Review

Theoretical and practical aspects of the training of modern managers have already been studied from the standpoint of digital transformation of the economy and innovation management [3], public [4] and anti-crisis [14] management, economic behavior of consumers [20], as well as the development of business communications and interorganizational interaction [22]. In addition, researchers pay considerable attention to Industry 4.0 [1] and European experience in the training of management specialists [29], which is necessary for effective professional activity in the face of modern socio-economic challenges. In turn, the management of the sports and recreational industry has relatively recently been formed as an independent direction of scientific research, in connection with which, some scientists are still debating the expediency of its separation into an independent branch of economic science. A product arises when one production process ensures the creation of two or more different goods or services [2; 8; 15], then the opposite situation is observed in the sports and recreational sphere: the participation of at least two independent subjects is required to create one product. Such entities can be sports clubs, teams, organizations, or other participants in recreational activities, while the final product is a sports competition, match, tournament, or recreational event. The peculiarity of this phenomenon is that, unlike traditional business, where enterprises seek to minimize competition and strengthen their own monopoly position, in the sports and recreational industry, the presence of competitors is a necessary condition for the functioning and development of the market. Moreover, the higher the level of rivalry between participants and the more unpredictable the outcome of the competition, the more interest consumers show, which has a positive effect on event attendance, ticket sales, media rights and total revenues of organizations. Therefore, ensuring the high quality of a sports and recreational product is directly related to maintaining a competitive environment and attracting a sufficient number of participants, clubs and organizations to the process of its creation. In our previous publications, the issues of formation and development of human resource management skills in organizations of recreational and sports orientation were covered [25], the system of the recreational industry was studied through the prism of basic management, pedagogical approach and its impact on public health [23]. The peculiarities of management of recreational and sports facilities on the territory of student campuses in the United States of America are also analyzed [26] and the specifics of management in the field of physical culture and sports are considered on the example of Ukraine and the Republic of Poland [24]. Within the framework of this study, an attempt is made to substantiate the complex of professional competencies of managers of the sports and recreational industry in the United States of America and Eastern European countries.

3. Problem Statement

The purpose of the study is to study the model characteristics of the functioning of the sports and recreational industry in the United States of America and Eastern Europe and to substantiate the complex of professional competencies of managers in this area.

4. Methods and Materials

The methodological basis of the study is systematic, competency-based, comparative and interdisciplinary approaches to the study of the sports and recreational industry. In the process of research, the following methods were used: analysis and synthesis of scientific literature, regulatory and program documents; comparative analysis to identify the peculiarities of the functioning of the sports and recreational industry in the United States of America and Eastern European countries; generalization and systematization of scientific data to substantiate the complex of professional competencies of managers; method of theoretical modeling to determine the model characteristics of the functioning of the sports and recreational industry in the studied regions.

5. Results and Discussion

In modern conditions of globalization, the sports and recreational industry is becoming increasingly important as an important tool for the socio-economic development of territories [30]. In this regard, sports and recreational programs are actively integrated into the development strategies of many countries and regions, acting as a means of modernizing public spaces, improving infrastructure, increasing tourist attractiveness, improving the quality of life of the population, stimulating physical activity and strengthening social cohesion. The implementation of such initiatives also contributes to the expansion of inter-organizational cooperation and increases the effectiveness of management processes.

The global nature of the development of the sports and recreational sphere contributes to strengthening the positions of individual territories in the international space, increasing their competitive attractiveness and expanding opportunities for social interaction of the population. Such activities play an important role in the consolidation of local communities and the formation of a unique image of regions. Sports tourism is of particular importance, which is considered not only as a type of tourist activity, but also as an effective mechanism for stimulating economic growth, promoting territories in foreign markets, strengthening their positive image and attracting new visitors.

An important role in these processes is played by international sports and recreational events, which contribute to the formation of a positive information background, drawing attention to the territory and popularizing its socio-economic and cultural achievements [11]. The greatest impact is on large-scale world-class sporting events, in particular the World Championships and the Olympic Games, which act as a powerful stimulus for the development of sports tourism [10; 28] and the intensification of international contacts. For the states that host such events, they are not only sporting events, but also an effective tool for the implementation of foreign communication policy. Thanks to them, countries have the opportunity to strengthen their international authority, expand economic and business ties, attract investment resources and form a positive perception at the global level. Thus, the holding of the 2008 Olympic Games in China [21] became an important element of the country's international positioning and demonstrated its economic, infrastructural and social potential to the world community. Therefore, international sports competitions increasingly perform the function of a strategic resource for the development of territories, contributing to improving their image, strengthening international ties and increasing attractiveness for tourists, investors and partners.

Organizations are the basic element of the functioning of the sports and recreation industry and ensure the implementation of its social, economic and managerial tasks. The development of organizations in this area took place gradually and was accompanied by changes in the management structure, forms of activity and interaction mechanisms in accordance with the evolution of organizational theories. Despite the variety of types and scales of activity, modern organizations of the sports and recreation industry are characterized by the presence of a clearly defined management system, the distribution of functions between managers and employees, the focus on the professional competence of personnel, as well as the focus on the collective and rational achievement of the set goals.

An understanding of the theoretical foundations of their functioning and development is of great importance for the effective operation of such organizations. Knowledge of organizational theory allows managers of the sports and recreational sphere to more effectively design the organizational structure, adapt it to changes in the external environment, implement modern management approaches, provide effective leadership, manage human resources, prevent conflicts and achieve the strategic goals of the organization. Accordingly, organizational competence is one of the key components of professional training of managers of the sports and recreational industry.

Traditionally, management is considered a process of coordinating human, material, technological and financial resources necessary for the organization to achieve its goals [7]. In the sports and recreational industry, management provides an effective combination of resources, personnel, finances and material and technical base to increase the effectiveness of the organization. It covers task planning, organization of work processes, coordination of joint activities and creation of conditions for effective interaction of employees. Managerial activity is of particular importance in the sports and recreational sphere, where the effectiveness of the functioning of organizations is largely determined by the coordination of collective actions. By its content, management provides leadership, coordination and strategic direction of activities, uniting the efforts of different groups of employees to achieve common organizational goals.

Managers of the sports and recreational industry are responsible for achieving organizational goals regardless of the specifics of the institution’s activities, which can range from the management of bowling centers, water parks, fitness clubs and gyms to the management of professional sports teams, youth sports and recreational programs, international sports organizations, or enterprises for the sale of sports and recreational goods. Despite the variety of functional areas, all organizations in the sports and recreational sphere are united by a focus on achieving certain goals, which form the basis of their activities and development.

In performance studies, in particular interuniversity sports programs, the multi-criteria nature of evaluating the effectiveness of management is emphasized. The authors [5] proposed a system of 11 performance criteria, namely: compliance with infrastructure; achievement of high results; operating costs; satisfaction of athletes; sports as a way of life; interest of spectators; career opportunities; opportunities for competitions; potential for recruiting students; distribution of costs between teams; sports performance through fitness. Based on these efficiency criteria, we will create models of the functioning of the sports and recreational industry in the United States of America and Eastern Europe (Figure 1).

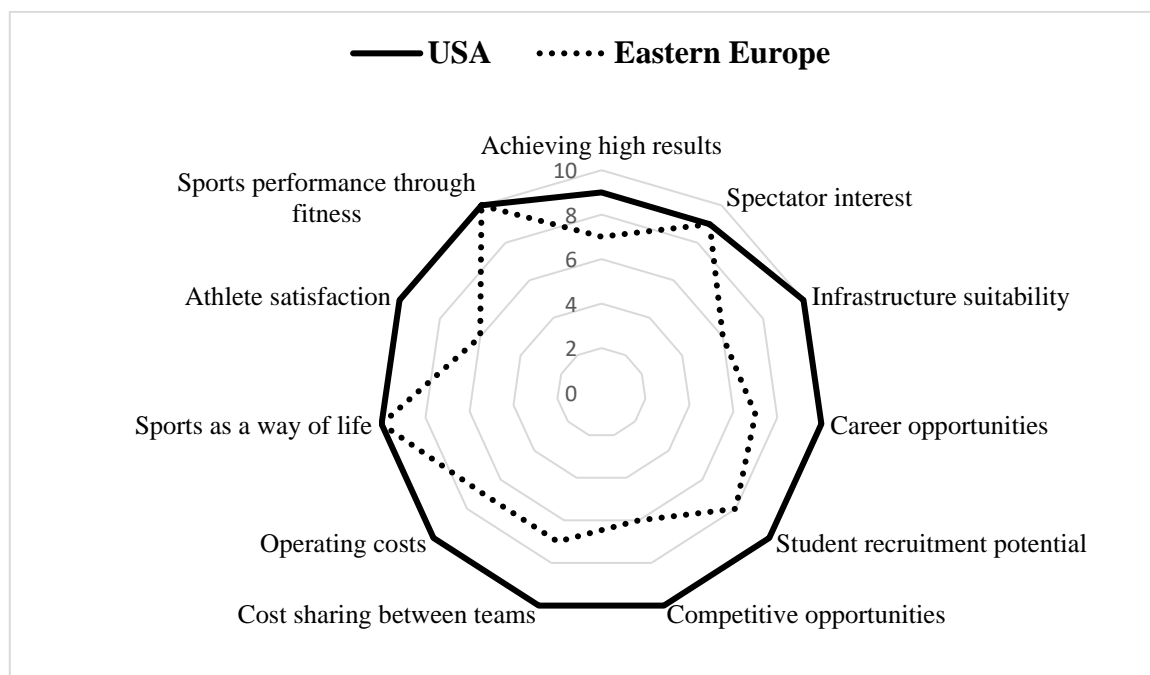


Figure 1. Model characteristics of the functioning of the sports and recreational industry in the United States of America and Eastern Europe

Source: Compiled by the author.

Next, we will consider the patterns of distribution of model characteristics of the functioning of the sports and recreational industry in the United States of America and Eastern Europe. According to the results of the author's generalization [6], the internationalization of the sports and recreational industry in the United States is determined by three main factors: the development of a market economy, the transformation of the demographic structure of the population, accompanied by an increase in the level of income and an increase in the volume of free time, as well as significant investments from the public and private sectors. The combined effect of these factors creates favorable conditions for the intensification of international cooperation and the expansion of global ties in the sports and recreational sphere. The active expansion of international relations in the sports and recreational sphere leads to the growth of cultural exchange between countries, contributing to the spread of various traditions, value orientations and models of behavior. A significant contribution to this process is made by professional sports organizations, clubs, associations, individual athletes and commercial structures, whose activities increasingly go beyond national borders. An important catalyst for intercultural interaction is modern information and communication technologies, as well as television and radio broadcasting, which provide prompt dissemination of information and access to cultural content on a global scale. Such processes are clearly traced in the sports and recreational sphere of the United States of America, where international integration and mutual influence of cultures have become important factors in the development of both this sphere and the country's economy as a whole.

For a long time, the potential of the market of sports and recreational industry goods remained insufficiently estimated. If in the early 80s of the XX century, public attention was focused only on a few leading manufacturers, such as Rawlings, Spalding, Titleist and Wilson Sporting Goods, then by 2017 this sector had turned into one of the most profitable segments of the industry. During this period, more than twenty companies achieved annual sales of products exceeding 1 billion US dollars. The expansion of entrepreneurial activity in the sports and recreational sphere became a prerequisite for the transformation of the market environment, which gradually acquired a more complex and multicomponent structure. Along with traditional sports products, the market offer began to include numerous related products, specialized services and innovative solutions aimed at different categories of consumers. Companies specializing in the production of sports equipment and equipment had a significant impact on the formation of the industry, among which Adidas, Everlast, Hillerich & Bradsby, Penn, Spalding and Wilson Sporting Goods occupied a particularly prominent place. It was their activities that created the basis for the further formation of the international market of sports and recreational products. Further development of the industry was accompanied by a steady increase in the production and sale of sporting goods. Leading positions in the global space have long been held by companies of European and North American origin, including Adidas, Nike, Puma, Reebok and Under Armour. At the same time, the role of Asian manufacturers has gradually grown, among which Mizuno and Li-Ning stand out, which are actively expanding their presence primarily in domestic and regional markets. As noted [18], the deepening of international economic ties in the sports and recreational industry has created additional opportunities for business development, increasing competition between global market participants and increasing the requirements for their efficiency and innovation.

Another characteristic feature of sports and recreational management in the countries of Eastern Europe [16] is the practice of interdisciplinary scientific support for the training of athletes, formed since the beginning of the 70s of the twentieth century. To increase the performance and preserve the health of athletes, specialists in pedagogy, medicine, psychology, physiology, biomechanics, biochemistry and engineering are involved, which provides an integrated approach to sports training management. In the system of training coaches and sports managers, an important place is occupied by regulatory and methodological requirements, in particular, the regulation of the minimum age for the beginning of specialized classes and the use of unified educational programs. To ensure the professional continuity of the sports career, the countries of Eastern Europe actively regulate the processes of education, certification and professional development of sports specialists. Coaches are trained in specialized institutions of higher education with a sports profile and a step-by-step certification system, which provides for several levels of professional qualifications. Historically, in the countries of Eastern Europe, which were part of the Eastern bloc, a model of sports education of the Soviet model was formed, based on a network of state specialized universities and centralized financing of the sports training system.

Higher education institutions, which traditionally provide training of managerial personnel, today need further modernization of educational approaches to the formation of professional competencies

of managers for effective activities in a dynamic and changing professional environment. Such an environment is characterized by continuous changes in the content of managerial functions, an increase in the complexity of information processes, as well as an increase in the level of awareness of employees about socio-political and economic phenomena, which creates new requirements for the organization of management and interaction in teams.

Under modern conditions, the effectiveness of management increasingly depends on the readiness of managers to promptly respond to dynamic changes in the external environment. Among the key challenges, the processes of global economic integration, the growth of international interaction, the digital transformation of professional activities and the constant updating of personnel qualification requirements are of particular importance. Economic, social and psychological factors that increase the level of uncertainty and complexity of management processes have an additional impact on the quality of managerial decisions. At the same time, managers carry out their activities in the context of significant changes in public expectations regarding management. In particular, there is a weakening of trust in managerial institutions, the preservation of widespread stereotypes regarding the functions of managers, as well as the rethinking of employees' own professional and life priorities. As a result, there is a growing need to improve the system of training managerial personnel, focused on the formation of a wide range of professional, communicative and strategic competencies necessary for successful activity in modern society and economy.

For the educational systems of Eastern European countries, the formation of professional competence of management specialists requires a significant update of the organization of the educational process, as well as its technological, methodological and institutional support in higher education institutions. The modern model of managerial training should be based on rethinking the existing training experience and focus on the comprehensive improvement of the content, forms and methods of professional training. The key areas are: formation of scientifically grounded methodological foundations for the development of professional competence of future managers; updating educational programs based on the analysis of modern management practices in the public and private sectors; integration of interdisciplinary knowledge (pedagogical, psychological, sociological, economic, legal and marketing) into the process of training specialists; strengthening the practical component of education through the involvement of students in the real activities of enterprises, institutions and organizations of various forms of ownership; taking into account the individual characteristics of students and their professional potential; introduction of innovative educational technologies and overcoming established stereotypes of learning; as well as the development of scientific research aimed at improving the theory and practice of the formation of managerial competencies. The implementation of these approaches creates prerequisites for the systematic formation of professional competence of future managers and improves the quality of their training in accordance with the requirements of the modern labor market.

The formation of professional competencies of managers of the sports and recreational industry is one of the priority areas for the development of the modern system of higher education and professional training of specialists in the field of sports, recreation and leisure [27]. In the context of globalization of the sports market, intensification of international cooperation and growing requirements for the effectiveness of managerial activities, the analysis of the experience of training managerial personnel in different regions of the world is of particular importance. The United States of America and the countries of Eastern Europe demonstrate excellent approaches to the formation of professional competencies of managers in the sports and recreational sphere, which is due to the specifics of educational systems, managerial traditions, socio-cultural background and models of functioning of sports organizations. Comparison of these approaches creates an opportunity to identify the most effective models of professional training, as well as to outline promising ways to develop and improve their competencies, taking into account current trends and needs in the field of sports and recreational services.

Researchers of intercultural management [9; 12; 13; 17] emphasize that the effectiveness of managerial activity largely depends on the ability to take into account the peculiarities of national and professional cultures. For managers of the sports and recreation industry, the following competencies are of particular importance:

- *Ability to function effectively in the conditions of various models of organizational management and distribution of powers.* In the sports and recreational sphere of the United States of America, management models based on delegation of authority and granting employees greater independence in solving professional tasks have become widespread. In contrast, many countries of Eastern Europe are

characterized by the dominance of hierarchical management systems, within which key decisions are made mainly by senior management. In this regard, a modern manager must be able to work in various organizational conditions, flexibly adjust the leadership style in accordance with the specifics of the management structure and ensure effective interaction regardless of the degree of independence of the staff.

- *Developed leadership and communication competencies.* The management system in the sports and recreational sphere of the United States of America is characterized by an emphasis on performance, market competition and the constant search for new approaches and solutions. However, in many countries of Eastern Europe, management practice is largely based on the development of trusting relationships between employees, collective interaction and preservation of the internal unity of the workforce. long-term tasks of the organization and pay attention to the human factor, creating conditions for constructive communication, cohesive teamwork and maintaining a positive working atmosphere.

- *Ability to work effectively in conditions of uncertainty and risk.* The organization of sports events, outdoor activities and international initiatives is often carried out in conditions of high dynamism, when the success of activities depends on a timely response to new circumstances and the ability to quickly make managerial decisions. Such managerial competencies as flexibility in decision-making, the ability to quickly adapt to changes, the ability to predict possible threats and function effectively in conditions of uncertainty and increased complexity are of great importance.

- *Ability to strike a balance between individual initiative and team collaboration.* In management, which is widespread in the United States of America, much attention is paid to the independence of employees, their readiness to take responsibility for the results of their activities and take the initiative in solving professional problems. stimulation of individual activity of staff and the development of effective teamwork, which contributes to the achievement of the common goals of the organization.

- *Developed strategic thinking and focus on long-term development.* In the field of sports and recreational activities, the manager is required not only to ensure the proper functioning of the organization and coordinate its current processes, but also to be able to determine priority areas for future development. Effective management involves the development of long-term strategies, the formation of sustainable business partnerships, the search for sources of financing and the creation of conditions for the modernization and expansion of infrastructure facilities. Perspective tasks of the organization and general trends in the development of this area.

An important component of the professional competence of managers is also the possession of modern communication technologies. The peculiarities of business communication in the United States of America and the countries of Eastern Europe differ significantly. The American managerial culture is characterized by the predominance of low communication, which is characterized by clarity of formulations, written fixation of agreements, and detailed regulation of duties and procedures. Employees are expected to comply with established standards, and most management decisions are made in the form of official documents.

Many countries in Eastern Europe have a high model of communication, in which personal relationships, trust between partners, informal contacts and verbal agreements play an important role. Under such conditions, the manager should pay special attention to establishing and maintaining interpersonal connections, strengthening trusting relationships and coordinating effective interaction between all participants in project activities.

Significant differences between the countries are also manifested in the peculiarities of building the negotiation process and regulating partnerships. The business environment of the United States of America is characterized by a focus on clearly structured legal mechanisms of cooperation, where the key importance is detailed agreements that regulate the powers, obligations and responsibilities of the participants in the interaction. On the other hand, in many Eastern European countries, along with official legal documents, interpersonal trust, informal agreements and established business reputation have a significant impact on the development of business ties. Such features determine the specifics of partnership interaction and can significantly affect the effectiveness of cooperation. In this regard, managers of the sports and recreational industry must have intercultural negotiation skills, take into account the specifics of national business cultures and act effectively in the conditions of international interaction. Therefore, professional training of managers of the sports and recreational industry in the United States of America and Eastern European countries involves the formation of not only thorough managerial knowledge and practical organizational skills, but also the development of intercultural

competence, the ability to effectively communicate in a multicultural environment, strategic vision and adaptability to various models of professional interaction. The comprehensive formation of these professional qualities and skills creates prerequisites for effective managerial activity in the conditions of international interaction, and also contributes to the effective adaptation of a specialist to rapid changes and trends in the development of the sports and recreational industry.

6. Conclusions

The deepening of international integration has significantly transformed the sports and recreational industry, strengthening its global orientation and increasing the requirements for the level of professional training of managerial personnel. Under such conditions, the constant development of managerial competencies, professional knowledge and personal characteristics of managers necessary for work in a competitive international environment is of particular importance.

Active attraction of investment resources has become an important factor in the modernization of sports and recreational infrastructure, the creation of new organizations and the expansion of the range of business areas related to marketing, branding and the sale of goods and services. At the same time, representatives of the field are increasingly included in international professional networks, participating in the formation of the global sports and recreational space as full participants.

In such conditions, the issues of effective use of financial resources, ensuring the economic sustainability of organizations and maintaining their competitiveness are of priority importance. Achieving these goals requires balancing the interests of investors, consumers of services and representatives of the sports and recreational community. With this in mind, modern managers focus on optimizing the asset structure, increasing the efficiency of financial management, as well as developing new market segments through diversification of activities and development of related areas.

Modern changes taking place in the sports and recreational industry of Eastern European countries necessitate the training of specialists of a new generation, whose professional level corresponds to the leading international practices, in particular the American management model. Such managers must have the ability to predict the consequences of global trends, make informed strategic decisions and ensure the long-term development of organizations and the sports and recreational industry as a whole.

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