

# Developing a High Performance Programme in a Small Federation

# Sporting Landscape

- \* Today's operating environment for the National Governing Body of a sport

Rowing Ireland

British Rowing

Dansk Forening for Rosport

Deutscher Ruderverband e.V.

Veslaška zveza Slovenije

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# National Governing Bodies

National Governing Body

=

National Federation

=

Non Profit Sports Organisation

# Internal Characteristics of a Federation

- \* Not driven by financial motives, may have imprecise objectives; difficult to monitor performance
- \* Accountable to many stakeholders; members, government, sponsors, volunteers, staff
- \* Organisational structures can be complex
- \* Organisations rely heavily on volunteers
- \* Non-profit sports organisations created & maintained on the basis of a set of values about the service the organisation provides
- \* Relationship between board and paid staff potentially difficult if uncertainty remains about who is in control of organisation

Fishel (2003)

# Motivations for Sport Volunteers

- \* Altruism – Helping others
- \* Personal Development – Personal growth, new skills, new experiences
- \* Community Concern – Obligation to community
- \* Ego enhancement – Positive self feeling
- \* Social Adjustment – Relationships with other people

Wang (2004)

# Government Sport Policy

- \* Shaped by:
- \* Government Departments
- \* National Governing Bodies
- \* Olympic Councils
- \* Specific Sports Agencies

# Government Interest in Sport

## Two Key Policy Motives

- \* Health through participation
- \* Elite sport

# Relationship With Government

- \* Co-operative: Goals & Means are similar (Elite Sport)
- \* Complementary: Same Goals, Different Means
- \* Co-optive: Dissimilar Goals, Similar Means
- \* Confrontational: Goals and Means are both dissimilar

Najam 2000

# Stakeholders



# Dual Leadership - Professionalization

The changes that have occurred as a result of hiring paid professional staff.

- \* Initially an increased pattern of centralisation
- \* Then a decreased pattern of centralisation, often to a point lower than before the appointment of the professional staff member

Thibault et al., 1991:95

# Studies of Professionalisation & Bureaucratisation within Sport

- \* Alters the role of the voluntary board members. Relationship between volunteers and paid staff has evolved and requires negotiation to define boundaries.
- \* Increased potential for conflict over who has real power and influence in decision making
- \* Conditions have been created for 'Dual Leadership' with board chairs and executives assuming various elements of leadership role.

Slack & Hinnings, 1992;1994; Amis, Slack & Berett, 1995; Kikulis, Slack & Hinnings, 1995a,1995b,1995c  
Hoye and Ciskelly (2003a, 2003b)

# Ethical Principles That Underpin Corporate Governance

- \* Accountability – to shareholders and stakeholders
- \* Transparency – provision of information to interested parties excluding that which would infringe the privacy or intellectual property of individuals or is not in the national interest
- \* Fairness and balance – in the use of organisational power
- \* Honesty – in the provision of information to internal and external stakeholders
- \* Dignity – upholding the right to human dignity in all dealings
- \* Legal – exhibit full compliance with the law and adhere to conventional codes of behaviour
- \* Goodwill – in the conduct of all organisational activities

Standards Australia 2003

# High Performance

- \* England won the World Cup . . . because we had an outstanding group of players . . . the most intense preparation . . . [and] a powerful team spirit both on and off the pitch. Most importantly, we had a strong, dynamic organisational culture that fully supported our new approach. Without it, our systems would have been built on a foundation of sand and wouldn't have weathered the mildest of storms.

Woodward, 2004, p.6

# Performance Management & Leadership in Elite Sport

- \* 13 National Performance Directors (11M/2F)
- \* Age Range 42-54
- \* Elite Sport experience 4-35 years
- \* 24 Medals at Beijing
- \* \$264m USD of Public Investment

# Performance Management & Leadership in Elite Sport

## 4 General Dimensions of Performance Leadership

- \* Vision
- \* Operations
- \* People
- \* Culture

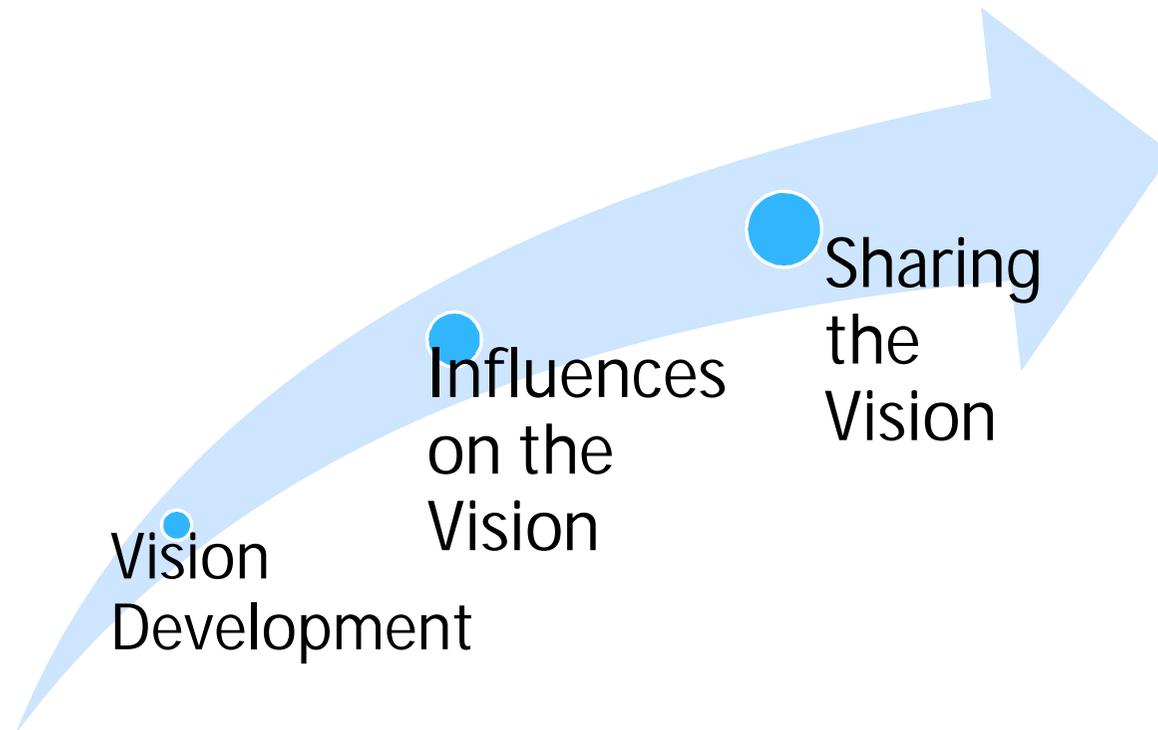
Fletcher, D. & Arnold, R. (2011)

# Vision

- \* The vision for the organization needs to be clear, and specific to what you want to achieve, where you want to go . . . it's got to be stretched, though at the same time remain realistic and achievable . . . and, I think, ultimately targets and goals need to be owned by everyone who is working towards that vision . . . that way, people will buy into what you are trying to do.

Fletcher, D. & Arnold, R. (Participant 10) (2011)

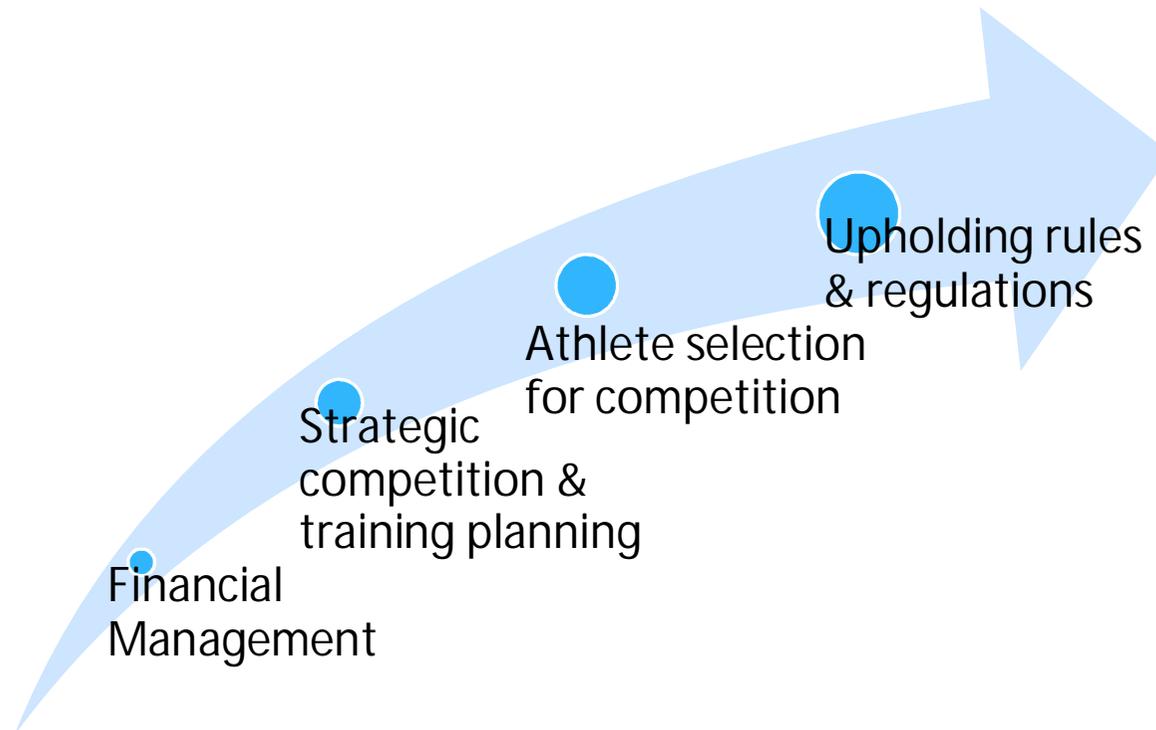
# Vision Themes



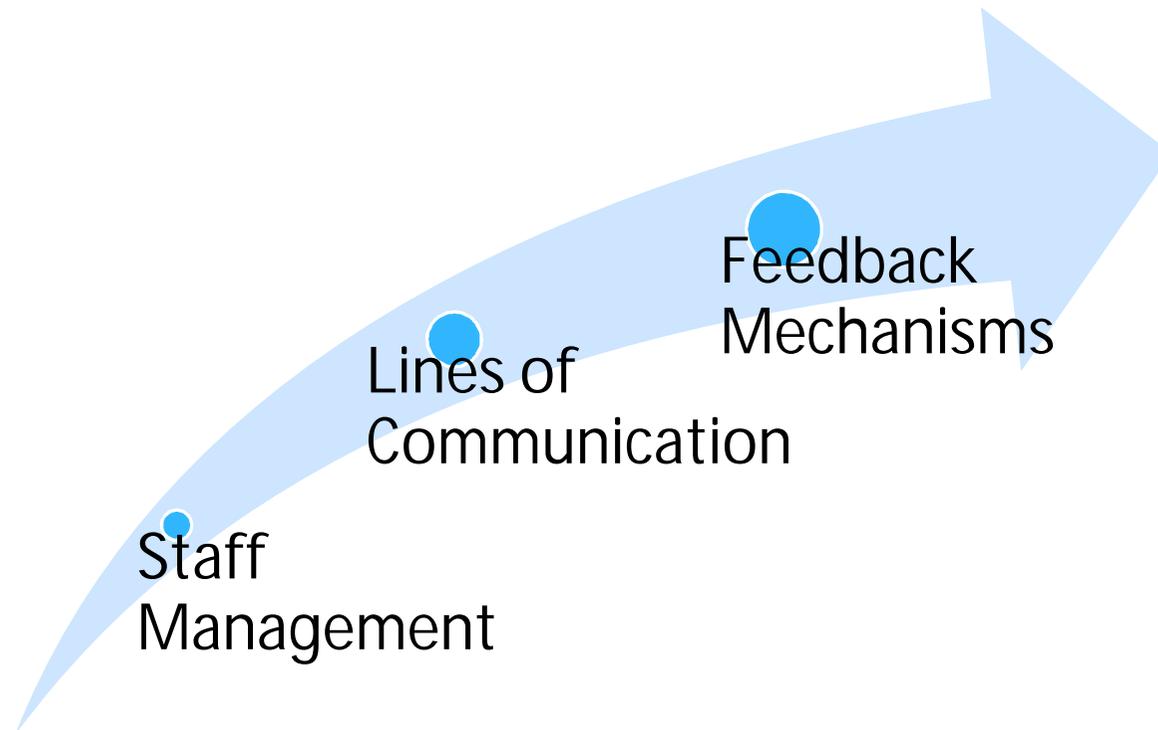
# Managing Expectations

“Managing expectation is vital across far more than just performance—it relates to what we’re trying to achieve and where we’re aiming to be . . . I think it will be a big issue in the build up to [the] 2012 [Olympic Games] because, well . . . expectation of [nation] results . . . will need managing . . . get it wrong and you are in trouble. . . . So you can’t just publicize the vision—you need to manage people’s interpretation of it and their expectations too. “

# Operation Themes



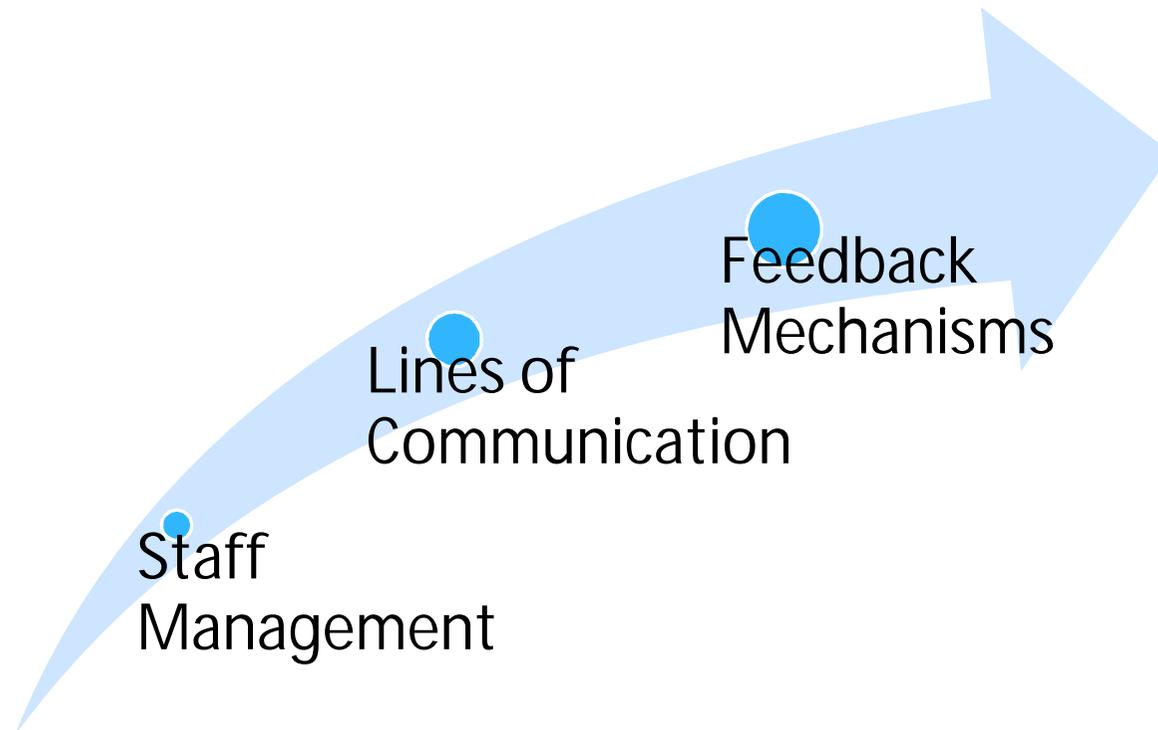
# People Themes



# Staff Management

I think it's crucial that you inspire and encourage them [staff] in their jobs, you have also got to empower them to do it. That shouldn't be mistaken for not communicating with them regularly; I just try not to be constantly looking over their shoulder . . . We also try where possible with administrative staff to make sure that they travel once with the team, so that they get a feel for what it's like on the receiving end of what they do, and at the same time it's recognition for the work they have done.

# People Themes



# External Assessments

We have immersed [name of external assessment program] into our own reporting structures so we don't have a separate recording structure . . . we have been able to tailor it to our needs and it is part of our process now. That is important to me since the last thing I want is another reporting structure . . . Though I can see why some NPDs might find it a pain in the a\*\*, but we don't because we are already doing it; it's engaged and integrated into our procedures.

# Culture Themes



Establishing  
Role  
Awareness

Organisational  
& team  
atmosphere

# Role Awareness

We have annual 'world class days' where we bring everyone on the program together. . . .When they [the staff] join us their role is made clear through extensive induction sessions, job descriptions, and contracts. However, one way I particularly like to make people aware of their role is through team circulars and, whether you are a team leader, assistant team leader, doctor or whatever you are, your role is summarized in that circular . . . [including] who you are managed by, to whom you are accountable, and where the buck stops.

# Culture Themes



Establishing  
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# Creating a Team Atmosphere

We have two major camps each year which everyone goes to, and everyone coming together then kind of builds up a team atmosphere . . . We have tended to also have a reception before we have gone away, and when we go to major events we will start off with a meeting for everyone. . . where we establish certain rules, like (unless they are competing the next day) we require them to come to the venue, in their tracksuits, to support the other athletes . . . We go as a team, come back as a team.

# Summary

- \* Professionalisation driven/funded by Sports Agencies & the search for improved performance is changing the structure/dynamics of NGBs
- \* Continuous articulation of vision is important
- \* Clear vision must be underpinned by aligned performance & process goals at organisational, team, and individual level

# Role of a PD

- \* Management and Operations within a team
- \* Financial Management
- \* Strategic Competition & Training Planning
- \* Athlete selection process for competition
- \* Upholding Rules & Regulations

Strategic investment in elite sport is a critical factor in achieving success at the highest level

(De Bosscher, Bingham, Shibli, van Bottenburg, & DeKnop, 2008; Green & Houlihan, 2005; Houlihan & Green, 2008)

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