



Careers in Sports Management Webcast Q&A Section

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*Answers provided by Brian Freeland, Program Director of Sports Management
at American Public University*

How will the Masters in Sports Management prepare me for a career as a sports agent?

Brian Freeland: The courses in this degree path prepare students by teaching financial implications of sports along with leadership and managerial lesson that are important when working with athletes. The most important course for this career is sports law which covers contract development, liability, and laws that exist within athlete representation. A Master's Degree in Sports Management is a good start to this career. A law degree following would be the best option beyond a Master's degree.

I have been recently applying to jobs in sports, and most of them are asking for a "List of Athletic/sports Experience and activities to go with my resume" – have you heard of this before?

Brian: Yes, this is common not only in sports related jobs, but many other jobs as well. Experiences in either working or playing in sports comes in very handy for a lot of positions which require employees to show dedication, hard work ethic, teamwork, and competitiveness. I suggest listing all athletic experiences that apply.

What skills or skills do you believe are important to be successful in sports management?

Brian: There are a plethora of important skills, however the job categories have so much diversity that it is hard to generalize this question to just sports management. For example, skills that allow you to be successful at marketing are completely different than those that are needed to be successful at facility management. However, there are several qualities that apply to all jobs such as being professional, competent, creative, innovative, someone that works well with others, effective communicator, and trustworthy. In most sports management positions, you must also be able to think critically, make quick, ethical, and effective decisions, understand how profit effects the organization you are with, understand the value of quality leadership which includes organizing and delegating. You should also possess a hard work ethic, develop your written and oral communication skills, embrace diversity, and think out of the box. Strong moral values are also essential for employers.

What is your ultimate goal within the sports field?

Brian: My personal ultimate goal is to grow this program to be an empire and leader within the sports management industry. APUS already provides an excellent education platform and our degree program is as high of quality as you will find. However, my objective is to find innovative strategies to help our students succeed in the sports industry.

What type of degree did you get in school to work in your job field?

Brian: I earned a Bachelor's in Physical and Health Education, a Master's in Sports Management, and I am currently working on a PhD in Sports Leadership and Management.

Do any of the presenters have a mission statement or morals they follow on a day-to-day basis that they also try to present to others?

Brian: My personal mission statement is to make ethical decisions every day that are in conjunction with the mission statement and vision of the university. By demonstrating a hard-work ethic, polite, friendly, and helpful demeanor, and using my skills in a positive manner, my belief is that good things will happen in my professional life and personal life. Being passionate about your career and life is the key to success in my opinion.



Are there websites for either the SMA or NSMN?

Brian:

<http://www.sportmarketingassociation.com/>

<http://www.sportsmarketingnetwork.com/>

Who would be a good point of contact at a local college/university when trying to get a job within college athletics (not coaching)?

Brian: It does depend on the size of the college or university. For example, larger universities have associate and/or assistant athletic directors. Ideally, that would be the start. However, smaller colleges may not have this. Going straight to the Athletic Director can be difficult due to their busy schedules. Most AD's do have secretaries and their job is to be helpful. I suggest starting with them to see who the best person to contact along with when is and how to contact them. Also, if you know which department that you want to work in, contact the director. For example, if you know that you want to work in public or media relations, contact the sports information director.

I have much experience in my sport from the top to the bottom. I am now an athletic director at a private school. Will my degree really help me more than my experience as far as moving into a college sport career?

Brian: Personally, I think it is important to have a combination of the education and experience. Unfortunately, one without the other will typically be the issue that doesn't permit people to advance in organizations. When employers research candidates, education is typically the first item they look at followed by their experience. A combination of both is the best method.

What is your best advice for someone that does not come from a sports background, but wants to break into the field? My background is in event management.

Brian: Event management is huge in the sports industry. Even though your experience may not be directly in sports, the concept is the exact same with game day and event management.

Would you recommend spending extra time and money to get certified (e.g., physical trainer) in order to stand out more?

Brian: Yes, these credentials and certifications will put you above other candidates. A combination of educational background, certification, and experience is tough to beat in the market place. The NSCA and NASM are considered the best resources for these certifications.