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from the Icelandic national football team's
managers in project management?**

Anna S. Vilhelmsdóttir

Thesis of 12 ECTS credits
Master of Project Management (MPM)

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WHAT CAN PROJECT MANAGERS LEARN FROM THE ICELANDIC FOOTBALL TEAM'S MANAGERS IN PROJECT MANAGEMENT?

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ABSTRACT

Football is one of the most popular sports in the world. In this thesis it is aimed to answer the question: What can project managers learn from the managers of the Icelandic national football team in project management? The thesis is built up in two ways: Qualitative study and quantitative study. Two in-depth interviews were conducted with the Icelandic national football team's managers and one open question was sent out to the Icelandic national football team. The IPMA eye of competence was used as a framework to categorize the results. The conclusions are that values, structured working environment, mutual trust, mutual respect and repetition are the main building blocks for the Icelandic national team's success. Football environment provides a good testing ground for project management, but since fewer variables affect the outcome in football it can be difficult to apply it directly to business.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Project Management is a young discipline, evolving and expanding at an increasing pace. Project management is affected by many different aspects such as technology, psychology, management, leadership, finance, chemistry, arts and many more. That is why it is important for project managers to gather lessons from different angles and to apply these lessons in their personal development as project managers. The football environment is very complicated but also very structured and rule based. The financial aspect is more important and it has billions of television audiences all over the world (Giulianotti and Robertson, 2004).

The Icelandic national football team has slowly been climbing up the FIFA World ranking list ("Men's ranking", 2015). In this MPM thesis it was decided to find out if there was a winning formula or a philosophy that lead to the Icelandic national football team's success. First and foremost the goal was to try to find out if the two managers of the Icelandic national football team could bring some new insights to project management.

This thesis is written in cooperation with a MPM colleague, Erna Kristjansdottir. The results are two theses:

- a) What can project managers learn from the Icelandic national football team's managers in project management? The author of this thesis is: Anna Sigridur Vilhelmsdottir .
- b) What can project managers learn from the Icelandic national football team's managers in shaping group dynamics? The author of this thesis is: Erna Kristjansdottir

The thesis covers two in-depth interviews with the head managers and one open question sent out to the players of the Icelandic national team. The questionnaire used for interviews covered preparation, strategy, stakeholders, the team, the players, the match day and other topics. IPMA eye of competence was used to categorize the responses from the interviews. The story of the Icelandic national football team's success is about many stakeholders: The players, the managers, the team behind the team (who takes care

of the players, including a doctor, a masseuse, a physiotherapist and others), the supporters, the media and the community.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Project Management Institute (PMI) defines a project as temporary, it has a defined beginning and end. It also creates a unique result. Projects can have a social, economic and environmental impact that outlives the project. Project management is “the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to project activities to meet project requirements” (PMI, 2004). The International Project Management Association (IPMA) states: “Project Management (PM) is the planning, organising, monitoring, and controlling of all aspects of a project and the management and leadership of all involved to achieve the project objectives safely and within agreed criteria for time, cost, scope, and performance/quality. It is crucial to optimise the parameters of time, cost and risk with other requirements and to organise the project accordingly” (IPMA, 2006). The eye of competence (EOC) introduced by the IPMA describes three competences of the project manager: Behavioural, technical and contextual (see figure 1).

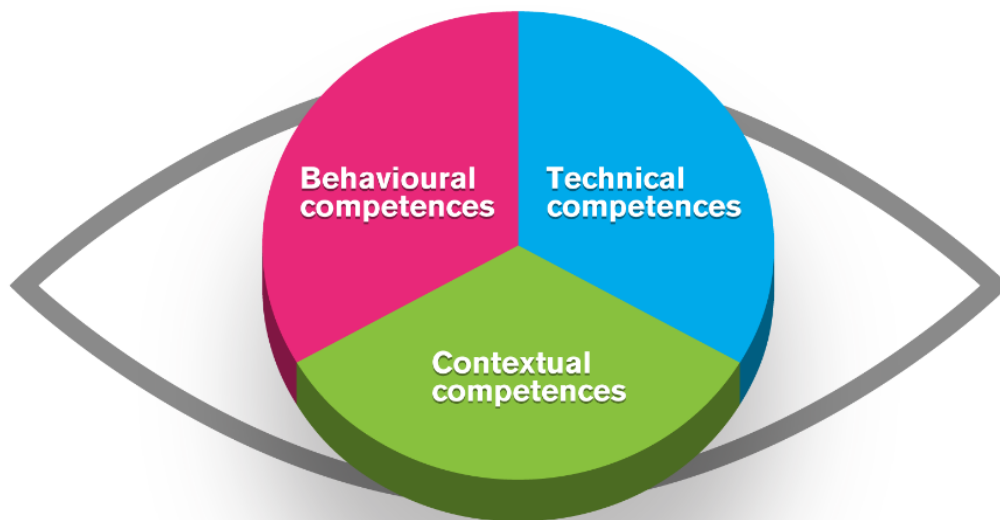


Figure 1 IPMA's Eye of Competence (EOC) (IPMA, 2006)

The thesis will aim to draw attention to the technical competences in the management of the Icelandic national football team. The Technical competence consists of 20 elements that refer to IPMA's Periodic Table of Project Management Competence Elements presented on the IPMA's web site (IPMA, 2015; see table 1). The main focus of the thesis

will be on project management success, interested parties, project requirements & objectives and time & project phases.

Table 1 IPMA Technical Project Management Competent Element Groups (IPMA, 2015)

1.01 Ps Project management success	1.02 Ip Interested parties	1.03 Rq Project requirements & objectives	1.04 Ri Risk & opportunities	1.05 Q Quality
1.06 Po Project organization	1.07 T Teamwork	1.08 Pb Problem resolution	1.09 Ps Project structures	1.10 Sd Scope & deliverables
1.11 Tp Time & project phases	1.12 Re Resources	1.13 C Cost & finance	1.14 Cn Procurement & contract	1.15 Ch Changes
1.16 Cr Control & reports	1.17 In Information & documentation	1.18 Ca Communication	1.19 Su Project startup	1.20 Cs Project closeout

Various articles have been written about project management success and failure. There are some that stress the importance of time, cost and quality and there are some additional articles that claim that measurement of other factors like the human factor is also important (Cooke-Davies, 2002; Kendra and Taplin, 2004). Cooke- Davies (2002) identified 12 factors critical to project success. These are risk management factors, scope and time factors, strategy matching the benefits to stakeholders, the portfolio and learning from experience. According to Kendra and Taplin (2004) there are four dimensions to a project success. The dimensions are: Project manager's skills and competencies, organizational structure, measurements systems and practises that represent the culture of the organization. The reference used in this thesis will be to Pinto and Slevin (1987) that identifies ten important factors leading to the success of a project. The first factor they identified was the project mission or the importance of having clearly defined goals and benefits from the beginning. It is important not only by the team to understand what are the goals and benefits as well it is important for the whole organization. The second factor is top management support. The support of the senior management is important for the project manager as they are responsible for the allocation of the resources (financial, manpower, time). Project management confidence

increases in accordance with management support. The third factor is the project schedule and planning. The importance of having a detailed plan of the stages of implementation is vital for a success. In the plan the milestones, resources and equipment are described. The fourth factor is client consultation. The need for a client consultation is important in the successful project implementation as the client will be the end user. Once the project manager is aware of who will use the result he will be more likely to fulfil the client's expectations. The fifth success factor is personnel issues like recruitment, selection and training. The nature of the personnel involved with regards to skills needed for the project. There has to be considered the goals, personalities, skills and knowledge. This is important as the personnel contribute to the empowerment of the organization. The sixth factor claims that the personnel are able to perform the technical tasks and have adequate technology to be able to perform tasks associated with the project. The seventh factor is the client acceptance that must be taken into account. The eighth factor is monitoring and feedback. The key personnel receive information on how the project is going in comparison with the initial plan. This gives the project manager opportunity to anticipate and make corrective measures if the project is going off track. The ninth success factor is communication. The environment must support good communication channels as the organization and clients exchange information. The tenth factor is trouble-shooting as the project manager has to be able to anticipate problems if they arise.

To better understand the stakeholder's environment in football and the relationship between stakeholders, reference is made to Events Management by Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris and McDonnell (2012; see figure 2). Media is very important as it provides information to the spectators, both images and words. The media affects both publication of the event and the players in a psychological way. It is the link between the player and the observer. The larger the event, the media can gain more revenue by selling more expensive advertisements as sponsors will get more exposure. The participants and spectators are also important as it looks better to have the sports hall filled with audience (Bowdin et al., 2012). As globalization increases images are easily distributed online all around the world. Only one wrong word or act can travel across the globe in seconds as the team and players are living in the public eye. It is therefore important to include the media as it also builds trust between the public and the team (Bowdin et al., 2012).

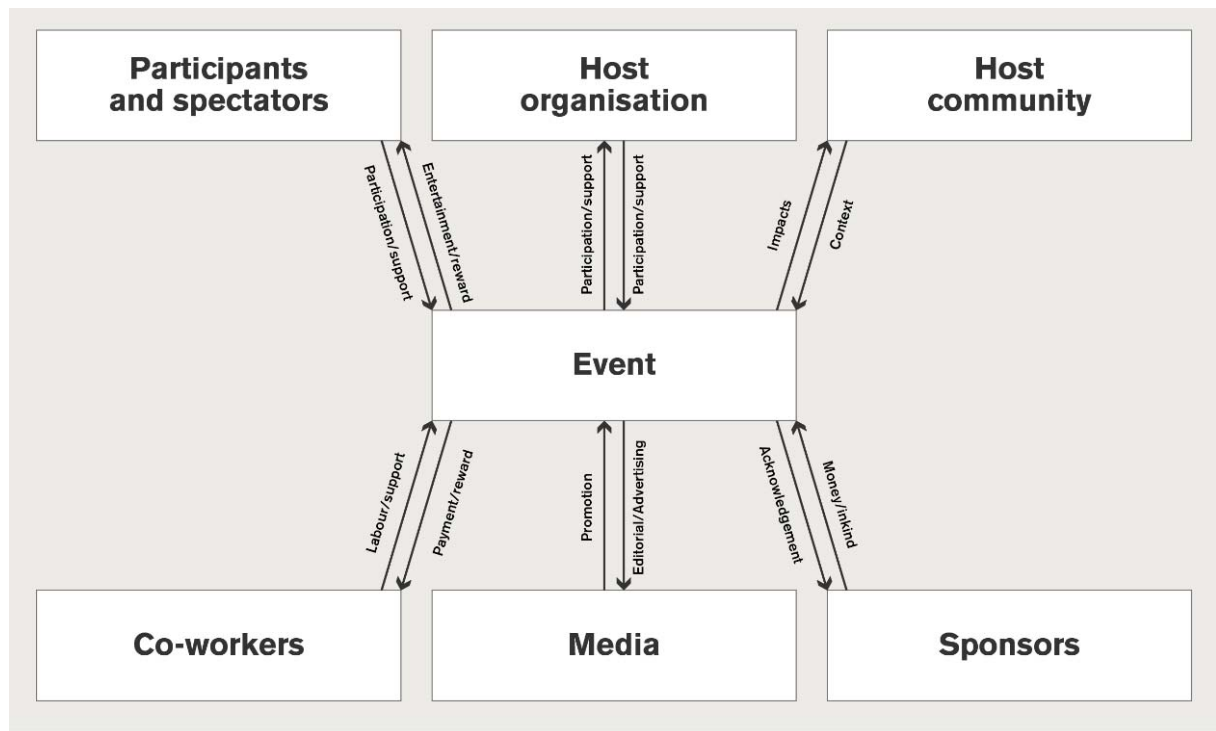


Figure 2 Relationship between interested parties in an event (Bowdin, Allen, O'Toole, Harris and McDonnell, 2012)

The strategy of an organization is where to put the focus in the future. It is how to manage the resources that the company has for a better performance.

‘As a theoretical and theological project, strategy aims at transforming reality. Its transformative powers derive from the way it structures conversations and calculations about the future. Strategy represents certain conditions that allow the articulation and the discussion of the future in the present’ (Kornberger, 2013)

In this thesis a model provided by Steinthorsson (2003) will be used to evaluate the strategy (see figure 3). There are a few important dimensions to look into when creating a strategy: The existence, the content, the process and context. The existence dimension is especially important for sports clubs and similar organizations. The existence of the company is very important in strategy as it provides the legal frame and agreements that creates the future of the organization. The environment is constantly changing and the organization has to follow by updating the plan and guidelines. The client's and interested parties are important as they are affecting the organization with their demands. In the inner/outer environment the technology is evolving and knowledge and information is easily accessible.

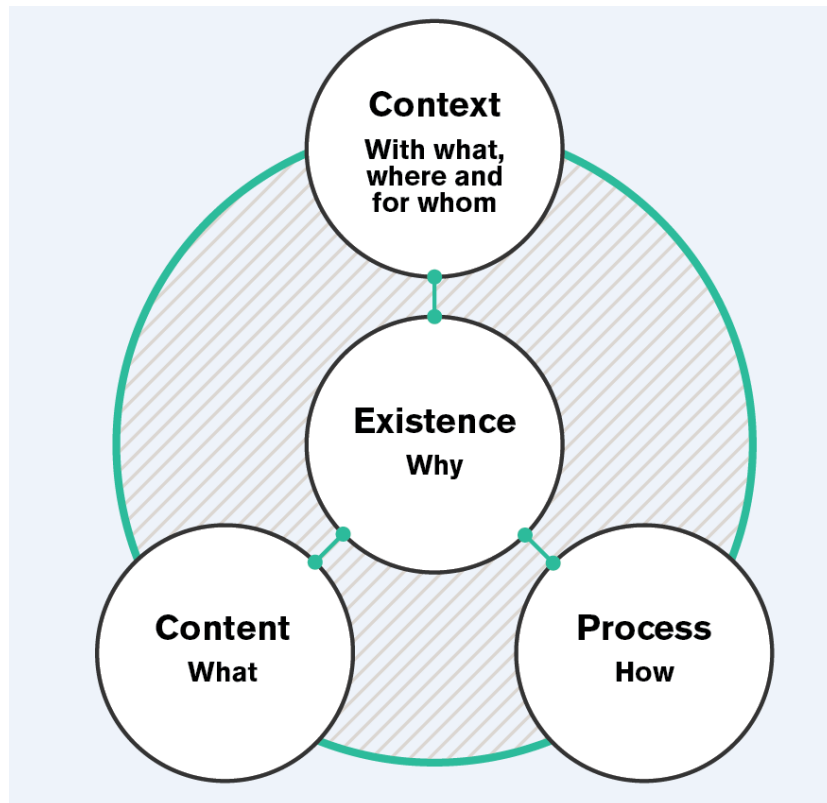


Figure 3 Four dimensions of Strategy (Steinthorsson,2003)

In theory there is a clear focus on finding the strategic style that fits the company. A research by Reeves, Love and Tillmanns (2012) showed that companies are not taking into account the competitive environment they are in when they are planning, developing and executing the strategy. The right strategic style depends on the predictability (how accurately you can forecast the future in regards to performance, demand, dynamic and expectations) and malleability (to what extent these factors can be affected). You have to be able to predict the environment and know the culture. The strategic styles are: classical, adaptive, shaping and visionary. In start-up and declining phase of a company the environment is malleable consequently shaping and visionary methods strategy styles are better. Better understanding of the environment is essential to know when to use each style. During the growth and maturity phases classical and adaptive strategy styles are best. Classical style is setting goals for best marketing position and then that position is kept by qualitative methods. Adaptive style requires more swift changes and goals and tactics change constantly. There are hypothesis made based on available data. Shaping style has short cycles of planning cycles similar to the adaptive style. The difference is that in the shaping style has focus beyond the company as in making platforms for a new market. Visionary style like the shaping considers the environment as something that can be moulded (see figure 4).



Figure 4 The right strategic style in the relations to the environment of the organization (Reeves, Love and Tillmanns, 2012)

Not all business can be put under the same hat. An innovative company does not have the same dynamics in the environment as a corporate company. The new and fashionable companies are among so many other companies that are looking for what might make them special (niche). The football environment is very rule driven (Fédération Internationale de Football Association, e.d.) hence football is somewhere between classical and adaptive environment in the Reeves, Love and Tillmanns (2012) model.

Burnes and O'Donnell (2011) and Carson (2013) mention the importance of the leader, creating and preparing the right environment for success in football. The importance of creating and building trust enables the manager to change behaviour. Additionally the manager has to lead by example and philosophy. Elberse (2013) identifies qualities held by one of the most successful football manager in history, Sir. Alex Fergusson. That is to start at the foundation, dare to take down and rebuild the team, to set high standards and hold everyone to them, never ever cede control, match the message to the moment, prepare to win, rely on power of observation and never stop adapting.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

The approaches chosen for this master's thesis are both quantitative and qualitative. The goal of this research is to examine what project managers can learn from the Icelandic national football team managers, in project managements.

3.1 Participants

Lars Lagerbäck and Heimir Hallgrímsson are the Icelandic national football team's managers. Under their leadership the national team climbed up the FIFA World Ranking List, from 104th place when they started in 2011, to 33rd place by the end of 2014 ("Men's ranking", 2015).

Lars Edvin Lagerbäck, born July 16, 1948, is best known for his former position as Sweden's national football team's manager. Lagerbäck led Sweden in five big tournaments until he resigned. After he resigned from the Swedish national football Team, he started coaching the Nigerian national football team and led it to the FIFA World Cup in 2010. In the summer of 2011, the Football Association of Iceland (KSI) made the decision to hire a non-Icelandic football manager. Lagerbäck was then introduced as the national team's manager on October 14 that year. He was the main national team's manager until 2013, when, Lagerbäck and Hallgrímsson became joint football managers of the Icelandic national football team (Lagerbäck, 2015).

Heimir Hallgrímsson was born June 10, 1967. Hallgrímsson had great progress as a coach at the club, Íþróttabandalag Vestmannaeyja (ÍBV). On October 14, 2011, the football Association of Iceland (KSI) announced his appointment as assistant manager of the Icelandic national football team (Hallgrímsson, 2015).

3.2 Analysis

The analysis was constructed through two processes: Qualitative and quantitative, as listed in Figure 5. In the first process, questions were put forward by the author and her colleague. These questions were reviewed with an input from two former national team managers and two youth coaches. A final questionnaire was revised according to the input. Two in-depth interviews were conducted with the Icelandic national team managers. Based on the interviews, qualitative data was reviewed by the co-authors through the framework of IPMA eye of competence. The focus was on the behavioural and technical results, but the contextual competences were excluded from the analysis. In

the second process one open question was inserted into the Survey Monkey website and sent to all the players of the Icelandic national team via e-mail . The aim of the question was to get feedback from the players on what, in their opinion, makes the team successful. The quantitative results categorized into sixteen success factors by the co-authors, see Figure 5. Process 1 and process 2 are described in detail in section below.

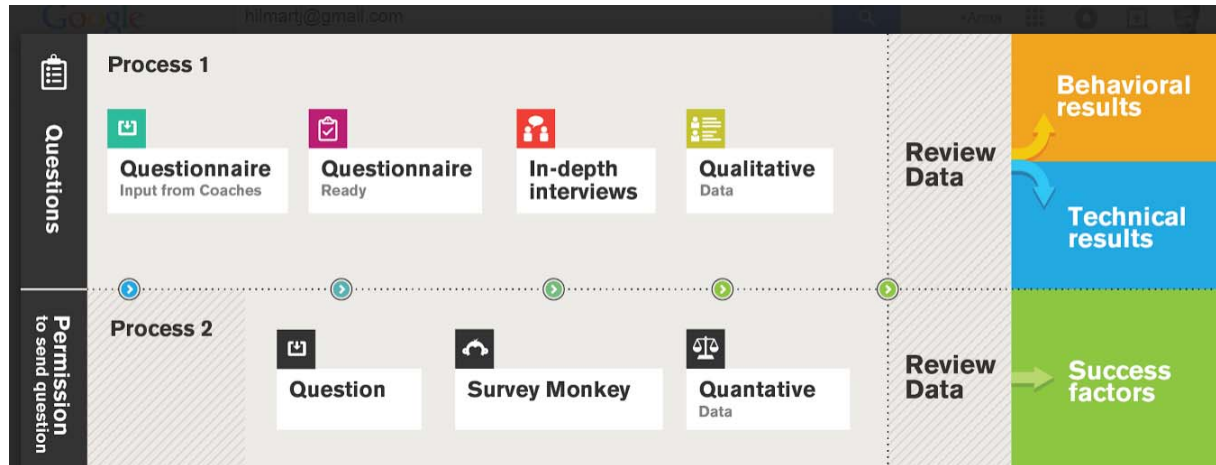


Figure 5 Research methods - a graphical representation

The analytical strategy for the interviews was designed to identify the two areas of competency, behavioural and technical, of the International Project Management Association (IPMA). The author took a further look into technical competence, as listed in Figure 6.

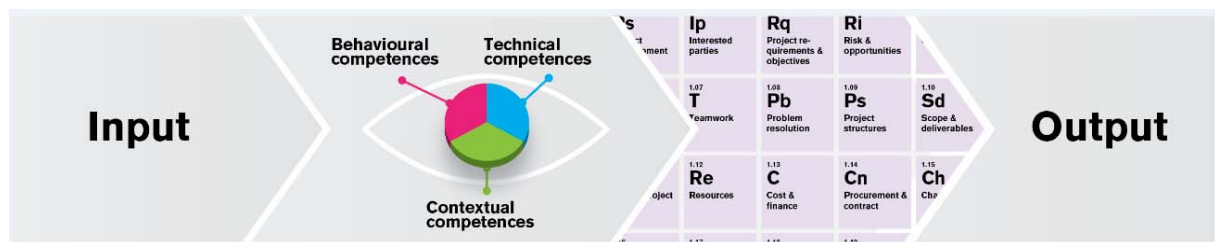


Figure 6. Research framework and fundamental categories for data analysis.

3.2.1 Process 1

Initially the author and Erna Kristjánsdóttir², prepared 10 questions from a project manager's perspective. In the preparation phase the author and her colleague contacted Guðjón Þórðarson a former Icelandic national team manager. He gave a good insight

² In the thesis: "What can project managers learn from the Icelandic national football team's managers in shaping group dynamics?" author Erna Kristjansdottir will focus on following topics: group dynamics, team leadership and the teams' behaviour.

into the football environment and reviewed the questions. The meeting was recorded and uploaded to a shared site where both the author and her colleague could access it. The questionnaire was updated with new questions. Þorlákur Árnason, former national U17 football team manager, was contacted next. A meeting with him was held at the Football Association of Iceland (KSI) headquarters in Reykjavík. The meeting was set up in the same manner as the previous meeting with Guðjón Þórðarson. At first football was discussed in general and then the questionnaire was revised. After the meeting the questionnaire was updated once again. This meeting was also recorded and uploaded to a shared site where both the author and her colleague could access it. The co-authors contacted two youth coaches at Fimleikafélag Hafnarfjarðar (FH), Bjarki Benediktsson and Kristmundur Gudmundsson, and asked if they were willing to review the updated questionnaire. They reviewed the questionnaire in detail and came up with good suggestions on how to improve it even further. They also added a question about youth coaching. This was a good opportunity for them to hear from experienced and qualified managers on how they thought youth coaching should be. This meeting was not recorded. The final questionnaire was sent to the supervisor, Helgi Þór Ingason, for final review. The questionnaire included 32 questions about: Preparation, strategy, stakeholders, the team, the players, the match day and other topics. The final questionnaire used for interviews can be reviewed in the appendix.

Two in-depth interviews were conducted with the two national football team managers. They decided on the places where the interviews would be conducted. One was held at the Football Association of Iceland (KSI) headquarters and the other at a hotel in Reykjavík. The researchers were introduced and the research questions were asked. A smartphone was used to record the interview. After the interview the results were sent to Rev Transcript Service. The co-authors divided the questions between themselves. One researcher asked questions with a focus on group dynamics, while the other focused on project management. Then the research method was changed to a qualitative approach, an in-depth semi-structured interview where the questionnaire was used as a guide.

Lars Lagerbäck agreed to meet the author and her colleague in January at a hotel in Reykjavík. The interview lasted 1 hour, 24 minutes and 11 seconds. It was recorded and uploaded to a shared site where both the author and her colleague, could access it.

Heimir Hallgrímsson agreed to meet the author and her colleague in February at the Football Association of Iceland (KSI) headquarters. This was also an in-depth semi-structured interview where the questionnaire was only used as a guide. The interview

with Hallgrímsson took 1 hour, 29 minutes and 49 seconds. It was recorded and uploaded to a shared site where both the author and her colleague, could access it.

3.2.2 Process 2

The author and her colleague contacted Ómar Smárason at the Football Association of Iceland (KSI) and asked him to send a Survey Monkey questionnaire to the players of the national team. The questionnaire had one open question: *What in the training process of national team leaders makes the Icelandic National Football Team successful?* The players were asked to state the key success factors that came to their mind. The questionnaire was sent to a total of 31 players. A few of the team members were not active at the moment, but had been on the national team in the past. 12 individuals out of 31 or 40% answered the questionnaire.

4. RESEARCH RESULTS

Results from Process 1

The results from the interviews are built on a manager's perspective and were organized according to the framework of eye of competence.

4.1 Project management success

The managers consider the success of the Iceland national team all about the correct timing of different variables. First of all you would need to have rather good players, players that are reaching the peak of their carriers. According to the managers every player embodies a positive attitude and a strong character and enthusiasm to play for the national team. Then the managers mention the team behind the team. They work well together, are especially skilful in their job and have wonderful relations with the players. This behind the scene team invest selflessly their own time to support the players considering its pro-bono work and not their paid day job. The managers consider KSÍ as supportive in structuring advantageous working environment. The managers consider that they have a free role in their job, only the financial part has to be confirmed by Football Association of Iceland (KSI). The managers have developed a clear idea of how they would like the team to play and think they are skilled at communicating it. The managers consider it important for the players to know at all times what the managers are doing. According to the managers Iceland has one of the best organized national teams in Europe but there is always room for improvement.

Defining and making the working environment stable or routinized was new way of thinking in Icelandic football. This is what Hallgrímsson considers that Lagerbäck has brought to the Icelandic football environment. To emphasize this here are always the same types of meetings and the agenda is always the same. In the welcome meeting the goals are explained then there are separate meetings for defence, offence, the opponent and tactics. The whole team knows what to expect; training in the morning, lunch and then leisure time until evening when there is a meeting and a snack and after that they relax. In the evening the player is free to do what he likes but he stays at the hotel during the night. Conditions are important for the team when they are abroad. The hotel must have a swimming pool, a workout room and a lounge where the team can have some privacy. Regardless of the game result it is always the same routine and the players will always know what to expect, the routine meetings, the training and how to behave in the hotel. There is a freedom within the rules. If the player's don't want to take part in this, they can refuse but then they are no longer part of the team. No one is trying to influence how things are done. As a manager you have to be constructive and supportive but also to be able to criticize. The managers put demands on the players and they have to be clear on actions. Most often the feedback is about the positive things. The point of the feedback is to push them or give side advice. More generally the managers work a lot with own responsibility. There are only few rules and the players are to take part at the highest level. The players also realize that they will become better players if they follow the rules. If players are true professionals they must take responsibility for their own actions. The managers do not interfere with the private life of players, unless there is something unprofessional going on in the player's life. Then the manager will have to talk to the player about that particular problem. The managers have the means to act like a dictator but they are attempting not to. In team sports continuity is the key word, there are steps taken all the time to develop the team and repeat. The Icelandic team slowly gets better by continuity and repetition. Quoted from Lagerbäck "especially when you're in team sport, I think continuity is the keyword for me" When the managers do not agree they use the "Swedish way" which is to discuss the problem until they reach a conclusion on how to resolve it. The team captain is the communicative path between the players and the managers. According to Hallgrímsson the most challenging aspect of being a national football manager is "To keep your head up high when things are not going well. How you handle it when the success stops".

4.2 Interested parties

According to the managers it is important to include the interested parties in the process. When the team is doing well both managers and players get more opportunities. The managers get more respect and the players are more willing to play for the team. The organization Football Association of Iceland (KSI) has more earnings as more tickets are sold, sponsors get better coverage and broadcast time and the stakeholders get more advertisement.

The media has an enormous influence on the public. The spectators and the media are important and influence the players, but it is about mentality or what is inside the head but not what is on the outside that should matter. But it can affect the players similarly to that when actors are influenced by critique of their performance. The Iceland Team managers decided to include the media from the beginning and help the media write the news. Giving access to the team increases professionalism and positive news. Making it more correct at least to inform what the plan is. For the coach Lagerbäck one of the most challenging aspects of being a national football manager is "Being a public person when you would like to be able to choose to be private".

4.3 Project requirements & objectives

When the team is chosen it is important that it supports the values. The players and the team behind the team have to support the values as they are the working instructions on how the team as a whole is to operate. The team's values are: hardworking, relentless, joyful, disciplined and focused. According to Hallgrímsson "You never get far unless there are elevated goal to strive for... the goals are always set high and there is belief in that the team can reach them". The ambition also needs to come both top-down and bottom-up. A survey was sent out to the players in the beginning and now managers are setting the vision and goals. The short term goal is to win the next game and get the 3 points. The goal is to win every game, the points are what matters. Everyone should always do their best but some games are more important than others. Long term goals are set every two years. The players have a winning or competitive mind-set. The team's goal is to reach the UEFA European Championship in France 2016. The FIFA World Rankings are providing feedback to the team that it is on the right track towards reaching that goal.

Lagerbäck's philosophy, as the manager, is optimist realism. To put the skills you have against the opponents. His offensive tactical strategy is to play two forwards but it is most common now to have only one. You have to be ready to change your philosophy though. If there is only good forward available the philosophy has to be changed according to the qualities of the players. The players are raised in a way that the manager is the boss and he makes the decisions. They hopefully believe in and respect their manager. The basic strategies and tactics are shown to the players and very seldom players object to that. When they are playing well it is difficult for others to criticise.

There is trust in players at their clubs to be professionals. The team is motivated and it is not necessary to set goals for each player in the national team. They set their own goals in their clubs where they have psychologists and sports scientists that support them.

4.4 Risk and opportunity

The manager has a better overview of the whole game, even though a few players have the skills to see the whole game. As a national team manager you have to watch games and see how the players perform, both within the national team and at their clubs. You have to analyse the team you are playing against and the games your team has played before the players receive feedback about what they can do better. There is a priority list used since there is a different approach used in each game. The players are shown motivational videos and clips from games.

Analytical internet site called Viscount is used for statistics. The last games are also reviewed on videos. There is also a scout that always watches the last game before playing. The scout has better opportunity to get the whole picture than someone watching the game on TV since it is only about 30-45 seconds the player has the ball each time in every game. He sees what every player is doing off- screen.

4.5 Time and project phases

The manager's work is done before they meet up with the players. The strategy and training exercises have been decided and each player's role is well defined before they meet the players. The preparation is divided into two phases: "First there is a lengthy process of making the strategy and then the work gets more intense". There is a lot of planning and collecting information before you meet the players. There is ongoing process of studying how players and opponent are playing. The team mainly focuses on

the next game they play. But there is always a higher goal to win the competition in the end by points. When the team has arrived there is less time and more pressure combined with intense environment. The managers divide the work between them. Lagerbäck has more focus on the team itself and Hallgrímsson on the opponent, defining the strengths and weaknesses. About a week before each game the work gets more intense, the tactics are planned and the players are chosen according to the game plan. Everything is ready when the players arrive. There is a team meeting 4-6 days maximum before a game and the game plan and game tactics are shown to the players. There is always the same routine in how things are done but there is freedom within the schedule. Normally there is one training a day and one team meeting a day, sometimes there are two team meetings a day. Normally the interaction is with the whole group the whole time. On match day, as little as possible is done because all the preparation have taken place before that. Not much can be changed in the halftime interval, sometimes there is one-on-one dialogue with a player about tactics but no considerable changes.

Results from Process 2

The open question that was sent out to the players was: What in the training process do you think makes the team so successful? The responses were categorized, the frequency of themes was assessed and the outcome is presented in figure 7.

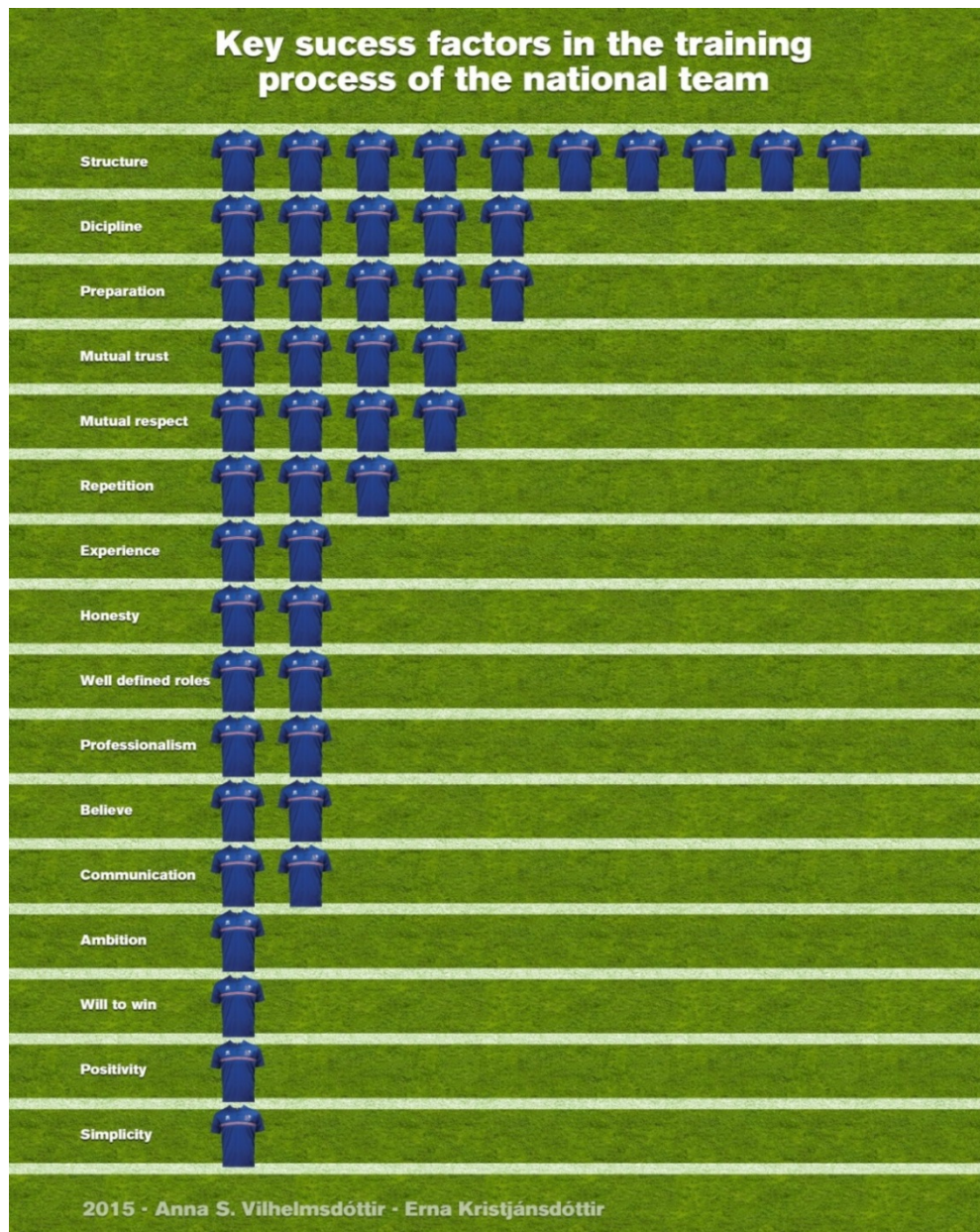


Figure 7. Key success factors in the training process of the national team.

Players that answered considered the following most important in the training process for the success of the team are structure, discipline, preparation, mutual trust, mutual respect and repetition.

5. DISCUSSION

The structured environment is important for that the sports professional to flourish and therefore it is important for the manager to make the environment as predictable as possible (Burnes and O'Donnell, 2011, Carsons, 2013 and Elberse, 2013). This is what the

Icelandic national team's managers were emphasizing by making the environment structured and routinized. The structured environment is also most frequently mentioned factor for creating the success of the team in the survey sent out to the players of the national team. The environment will have to be built up to motivate the workers/employees/athlete.

The values guide the organization in the right direction. If the organization does not know where to head, it will go nowhere. The national team managers have been setting the goals high and this explains the national team's success. It is the obligation of the leader to have a strategy and long term vision to be able to encourage his team to success (Jónasson and Ingason, 2012, Lewis, 2002). Correct strategic style depends on predictability and malleability (Reeves, Love and Tillmanns, 2012). It is important to know the culture to be able to predict the environment at hand.

To achieve excellence it is paramount that everything falls into the right place at the right time. The project mission, or clearly defined goals and benefits, are factors that are considered vital for a project to be considered successful. The objectives have to be supported and understood by the whole organization (Pinto and Slevin, 1987). In this case the Football Association of Iceland (KSI) is very supportive of the team and its managers and that is considered a success factor for the Icelandic national team by the Icelandic football managers.

The will to win is the drive and for the athlete the focus is on improving all the time. Step by step with repetition and continuity constructing the winning culture of the Icelandic national team. The national team is an exciting workplace and the team is motivated to be a part of the team. This is considered of great importance for the success of the team but does not tell the whole story. The footballers live a very high profile lifestyle and they are under constant scrutiny of the public both professionally and personally. The leader must be able to motivate the people and have the trust to do it (Pinto and Slevin, 1987). In the Icelandic national team the manager allows the players take their own responsibility by having few rules and respect the players to be professionals. The experience of the managers in this case that helps make the leaders great. The author considers the collective experience of the managers and teamwork a very valuable factor in the Icelandic national team's success, as well as how the managers focus on making the environment very structured. For a company in business it is important to ask if the task member fits into the culture or values of the company (Pinto

and Slevin, 1987). This is what the Icelandic managers have done. The values affect how the team members are picked in the team.

The authors decided to remove the teamwork element from the technical competences and considered it as more applicable as a behavioural competence. There is a suggestion from the authors to IPMA to include it the behavioural competence rather than in the technical competence section. Even though in real project management the behavioural and technical competences cannot be separated like that and the overall competency consists of the combined abilities. This was done in our case to be better able to review the project management of the Icelandic national team. The eye of competence provided to be very useful to review and compare the results and the authors recommend using it. The behavioural and technical competences of a project manager both have to exist in a project to be successful.

There are flaws to the study. The in-depth interview is semi structured and it could be that we are only getting what we are asking for. There is also the possibility that other researchers would categorize the results in a different way than we did using the eye of competence. Generalization of the results is difficult as this was an in-depth interview but at the same time the results are in accordance with other research on the subject. That strengthens the results of the study. But it needs broader studies related to the field to support the finding. It is at least safe to make some general conclusions on how to structure a successful team within an organization, the importance of making the correct environment for the team and picking the correct team members according to the values when possible. It is possible that the sports environment will always provide much purer samples for research than the business world because there are considerably fewer variables affecting the outcome. Therefore, while sport provides a good testing ground, the absolute findings should never be directly applied to any business.

For further research, it would be valuable to do a case study on a business leader or leaders to see how a leader represents the values in his daily work. Is the leader leading by example and how does he motivate the employees. For example companies like Nova which has been elected the business company of the year for two years in a row. How their slogan “*stærsti skemmtistaður í heimi*” which translates to *the most fun place on earth* in English affects the attitude and spirit of the employees. It would be useful and informative to see what the company is all about and how it is managed to structure an organization according to mission and values. Additionally contrast the strategic style of

corporate companies with the younger companies to trace the maturity levels and strategic culture.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The conclusion of this thesis is based on the initial research question: “What can project managers learn from the Icelandic national football team’s managers in project management?” The managers consider the success of the Iceland national team all about the correct timing. It is important that all the variables that are included in the project success. It is important that the players are good. Every player embodies a positive attitude and a strong character and enthusiasm to play for the national team. The project manager is responsible for choosing his team members carefully and according to the values of the organization. Connecting the workers to the strategy (the core fundamental values of the company), and supporting and trusting the workers and leading them to success. The author considers it significant that the project manager will take time to consider what the organizations needs and create the environment to support it within his team. One approach is to have structured meeting schedule for instance to develop the meeting schedule according to and throughout the life cycle of the project. The manager must have clear objectives and guide his team towards those targets, making sure that all team members have one united and shared goal and have trust and respect to do this.

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Appendix- Questionnaire in English for the Icelandic national team football managers

What can project managers learn from the Icelandic national football team's managers in project management?

Preparation

1. How would you describe the preparation phase, before a game?
2. How is the preparation phase managed? Is it divided to smaller units? Is the time factor important?
3. Do you take each game case by case or do you plan many games ahead?
4. How are the players of the team - and the competing team - evaluated, e.g. in terms of their strengths and weaknesses?
5. How important is the time spent on meetings, training and tactics?

Strategy, goal setting and vision

1. How do you define the vision, goals and strategy?
 - a. To what extent are the players included in this process?
 - b. How do you communicate the vision to the players?
 - c. Could you describe the process for communicating the vision to the players?

Stakeholders

1. Who are the main stakeholders? How do you manage communication with them?
2. Do you - as team managers - have the authority to make the necessary decision, or do you need approval from KSÍ for some decisions?
3. Can you explain communication with foreign football managers and organization managers?

4. When you need to call for a national player, outside of Iceland, do you then talk directly to his team manager in that country or do you need to go through his agent?

Other topics

1. What is the most challenging aspect of being a national football manager?
2. How do the people behind the team help it to get maximum performance?
3. In your opinion, what is the X-Factor, for the success of the Icelandic national team?
4. What is the main difference between training a club and national team?
5. Can you name one item which you think that youth trainers should focus more on in their training, so that the future national team members will be better players.
6. Once a game is concluded, do you as a team do something together to celebrate success or to keep the team spirit up?