

# 'Games-Makerization' - creation of the purple and red army

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## Methodology

A conceptual review of literature and analysis of visual imagery, examining traditional and contemporary management theory/frameworks (Koontz 1980, Mullins 2010) relating to the recruitment, training and development of staff within modern leisure service industries, applied to the London 2012 Games-Makers.

Scientific, classical / bureaucratic Management? (Mullins 2010)



There are patterns between management approaches, rising commercial 'corporate' cultures, the 'commodification' and industrialisation of service societies (O'Neil, cited in Ritzer 2013).

McDonalidation (Ritzer 1993) / de-McDonalidization (Ritzer 2013)

The uniform became synonymous with the London 2012 Games; in a much shorter space of time it established symbolic status comparable to that of a London red bus or a Beefeater - 'Games-Makers' were a 'brand'.

"A well designed and organised program will mean that the volunteer's efforts will be managed in the most effective way and should bring positive outcomes for the volunteer, the organisation and other beneficiaries" (Holmes and Smith 2009, p69).

## Introduction

'People' are key to the successful delivery of modern leisure services and it is essential that leisure managers acknowledge and respond to the differing *management approaches* which continually evolve, and which significantly influences, organisational effectiveness.

..... "ebullient, noisy, interactive - rather than reserved....In a way it is so -un British" (Heald 2012).



"dishing out smiles as readily as information" (Hirst 2012).



With Rio 2016 just around the corner, comes a perfect time to reflect on the '*human resource phenomena*' of the **London 2012 Games Makers**, and in examining this 'unexpected triumph' in recruiting, training and deploying 70,000 volunteers.



## Results of literature themes



Iceberg analogy (Halls 1976) / Cultural Web (Johnson, et al., 2005, Schein 2004)

Games-Makers X or Y? (McGregor 1960)



'The Smile Factory' (Van Maanen 1999) / Disneyization / Disneyfication (Bryman 1999, 2004)

"It looked like it had been churned out by a computer with no reference to a human being" (Girginov 2014 p56).



"interviewers kept rigidly to the standard questions and transcribed word for word the responses" (Girginov 2014, P55).



The mantra from the first orientation session was described as..... "I am to be inspirational, distinctive, open, alert, consistent and part of the team" (Kenyon 2012.)

## Contribution to theory & practice

The review analyses recent research of the London 2012 Games Makers (Girginov 2012, 2014) and associated themes, exploring how traditional management approaches (scientific, classical and bureaucratic principles), are arguably still underpinning successful leisure services today. Concepts such as 'McDonalidization' and 'Disneyfication' are applied to the management of the Games Makers, and attempts are made to dispel the myth that 'old school' management has no place in contemporary leisure industries. Recognising instead the benefits of "people" THROUGH "process" management.

"The efficiency of the Uniform Distribution Centre on processing 280 uniforms and 800 accreditations per hour was widely acknowledged" (Girginov 2012: p56) - an assembly line approach.

## Conclusions:

The Games Maker Volunteer Programme, managed by McDonalds emulate traditional management approaches and whilst there is recognition of 'some' human relations influence, this is limited in comparison to the intense mechanistic culture that has become apparent in underpinning the whole process. The success achieved through adoption of this approach is clear and suggests that today's leisure managers can consider prioritising 'process' ahead of 'people' in the right circumstances, to achieve effective results, particularly in the dynamic, commercialised, leisure industries of today.

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