



## Sports Career Insights from the Game Face Search Division

“The supply of serious, dedicated sports job seekers has grown significantly due to the rapid rise in interest, producing stiffer competition for jobs, yet demand for full-time employees has seemingly decreased, partly because teams can't justify anything more than an internship for someone who doesn't have the requisite skills. Game Face is tired of seeing low or non-paying internships that lead nowhere or which represent the 'slow track' to a sports career.”

-Rob Cornilles, President, Game Face Inc.

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**Who is Game Face?**

**“The Mets are the most longstanding Game Face client for one reason: their positive impact on the results of our sales efforts”**

**-Bill Ianniciello, Vice President, New York Mets**

Since its launch in 1995, Game Face, the first sales, service, and marketing training company in sports, has grown into the undisputed leader in developing better prepared, highly professional sport executives through its original training programs, and activities in search and recruitment.

Founded by Robert Cornilles and supported by a talented team of seasoned experts, Game Face has transformed the way organizations go about finding, recruiting, and bettering sales and service personnel. Like an athlete groomed by a coach, professionals who experience Game Face services witness a marked improvement in organizational productivity and individual success and marketability.

**“Game Face has really professionalized the way sports executives do business. That is why we trust their advice and use it regularly”**

**-Jamey Rootes, President, Houston Texans**

**Game Face by the Numbers**

**“Game Face has dominated the training business for more than 13 years. No one comes close”**

**-Steve Griggs, Executive Vice President, Orlando Magic**

- 13 years ..... and counting since our launch in 1995**
- 350+ ..... front offices Game Face has been invited into**
- 20,000+ ..... sports executives Game Face has trained since 1995**
- 9 years ..... and counting since the launch of our Search Division in 2000**
- 500+ ..... entry-level careers launched by the Game Face Search Division since 2000**

**“Game Face knows the sports business inside and out”**

**-Scott Loft, Vice President, Miami Dolphins**



## **Introducing the Game Face Search Division**

**“We know exactly what we’re getting when we hire through Game Face. It’s our first stop for hiring”**  
**-Stephen Zack, Senior Vice President, DC United**

## **Breaking into Sports**

No other company in the world has assisted more candidates in landing full-time sports jobs over the last 15 years than Game Face. Hundreds of sports organizations rely on our expertise when seeking new talent and are eager to be introduced to quality candidates. Our ability to leverage our insider knowledge and deep relationships for worthy job seekers is unsurpassed.

**“Game Face is exceptional at identifying great talent. For five years we’ve experienced great success from our partnership”**  
**-Ben Shapiro, Vice President, Golden State Warriors**

## **Climbing the Ladder**

By leveraging our unprecedented access to teams and decision-makers, Game Face opens doors for executives ready to take the next step on the career ladder. Whether you need to move up, move over, or just move on, we have the contacts and insights you need to identify the right position where your experience will be valued and your goals attainable.

Our Search team formally introduces qualified candidates to entry-level and advanced executive opportunities and middle- and upper-level management positions.

**“Without Game Face, I would never have been given a chance in this industry”**  
**-Ryan Barefoot, Director of Suite Sales, Atlanta Hawks & Thrashers**

**“Game Face gave me the skills and direction to catapult my career”**  
**-Steve Brandes, President, Idaho Stampede**

**“I never imagined the skills Game Face taught me would open so many doors for my career”**  
**-Matt Wikstrom, President, Los Angeles Avengers**

**“I’ve experienced nothing but success since my Game Face training”**  
**-Arlo Graham, Corporate Development, Toronto Blue Jays**

**“After pursuing several jobs on my own, Game Face found the perfect match for me”**  
**-Christie Landi, Manager of New Business Development, Florida Panthers**

**“Your ideas and goals have allowed hundreds and hundreds of individuals like myself to go after what it is they truly want professionally”**  
**-Gregg Allen, Season Ticket Account Executive, Charlotte Bobcats**



## Recent Game Face Search Division Success Stories

After nearly 10 years, the Game Face Search Division continues to be excited about following the blossoming careers of the hundreds of candidates who have participated in sport career conferences featuring Game Face. We are especially pleased to see that our training caters not only to candidates with diverse backgrounds, but to sports teams and organizations at all levels who are hiring attendees.

The following is a recent sampling of Game Face Search Division entry-level success stories over the past few years. These are conference attendees who have broken into the industry!

### Football

- Season Ticket Sales Representative, Oakland Raiders (4)
- Premium Seating Sales Associate, Denver Broncos (3)
- Ticket Sales Account Executive, St. Louis Rams
- Account Executive, Miami Dolphins

**“When looking to hire, I only look to those with experience. Game Face training is some of the best experience I could ask for”**

Rob Sullivan, Vice President  
Oakland Raiders

### Baseball

- Season Ticket Account Executive, Kansas City Royals (4)
- Consumer Sales Representative, Toronto Blue Jays (5)
- Corporate Development Account Executive, Toronto Blue Jays (4)
- Account Executive, San Diego Padres (2)
- Group Sales Representative, Baltimore Orioles
- Premium Seating Services, Washington Nationals
- Ticket Services Representative, Kansas City Royals
- Account Executive, Washington Nationals
- Season Ticket Service Account Executive, Washington Nationals
- Inside Sales Representative, San Francisco Giants
- Inside Sales Representative, Texas Rangers
- Inside Sales Representative, Kansas City Royals
- Corporate Ticket Sales Executive, Portland Beavers (2)
- Corporate Ticket Sales Representative, Sacramento Rivercats
- Group Sales Executive, River City Rascals (3)
- Director of Group Sales, Yakima Bears
- Group Sales Manager, Boise Hawks
- Sponsorship Sales Manager, Boise Hawks
- Group Sales Representative, New Jersey Jackals
- Account Executive, Sacramento River Cats
- Account Executive, Peoria Chiefs (2)
- Account Executive, Dunedin Blue Jays
- Ticket Sales Representative, Altoona Curve

**“Game Face candidates have met and most times exceeded our expectations”**

Chris Gargani, Executive Director  
Washington Nationals

**“With a reputation of being one of sports’ best minor league franchises, our trusted source for the best talent has always been Game Face”**

Alan Ledford, President  
Sacramento River Cats  
2007 ‘AAA’ Baseball Champions



## **Basketball**

- Season Ticket Account Executive, Golden State Warriors (4)
- Ticket Sales Representative, Minnesota Timberwolves (3)
- Season Ticket Account Executive, Sacramento Kings (2)
- Account Executive, Charlotte Bobcats (2)
- Fan Experience Account Executive, New Orleans Hornets
- Account Manager, New Jersey Nets
- Group Sales Manager, New Jersey Nets
- Group Ticket Account Sales Manager, Portland Trail Blazers
- New Season Account Executive, Atlanta Hawks and Thrashers (2)
- Account Executive, Seattle Supersonics/Oklahoma City Thunder
- Account Representative, Portland Trail Blazers
- Account Executive, Orlando Magic
- Season Ticket Sales Account Executive, Charlotte Bobcats
- Inside Sales Representative, New Orleans Hornets
- Inside Sales Representative, Charlotte Bobcats (2)
- Inside Sales Representative, Houston Rockets (2)

**“Hiring from Game Face is like an empty net: It’s easy and you know you’ll score”**

Colin Faulkner, Vice President  
Dallas Stars

## **Hockey**

- Package Sales Account Executive, AEG/Staples/LA Kings (2)
- Group Sales Account Executive, AEG/Staples/LA Kings
- Account Executive, Dallas Stars (2)
- Corporate Account Executive, St. Louis Blues
- New Business Account Executive, Maple Leaf Sports
- Season Ticket Account Executive, Columbus Blue Jackets
- Client Services Representative, Edmonton Oilers
- Ticket Account Executive, Las Vegas Wranglers (9)
- Account Executive, Utah Grizzlies (5)
- Director of Stadium Operations, Fresno Falcons
- Manager of Community Programs, Houston Aeros
- Amateur Hockey Coordinator, Houston Aeros
- Senior Account Executive, Houston Aeros
- Account Executive, Quad City Flames (2)
- Account Manager, Bakersfield Condors (2)
- Account Executive, South Carolina Stingrays (2)
- Account Executive, Wichita Falls Wildcats
- Account Executive, Fresno Falcons
- Account Executive, Trenton Titans
- Account Executive, Rockford IceHogs
- Account Executive, Worcester Sharks
- Account Manager, Bossier-Shreveport Mudbugs
- Account Executive, New Mexico Scorpions

**“I hire from Game Face because they really understand this business”**

Matt Strelo, Former Vice President  
St. Louis Blues

**“Since getting my first and second job in sports, Game Face has impacted my career. Being named ‘Salesperson of the Year’ by the Bobcats proves it”**

Wade Leaphart, Premium Sales  
Charlotte Bobcats



## Soccer

- Corporate Marketing Manager, Chivas USA (2)
- Corporate Sales Manager, D.C. United
- Account Executive, New York Red Bulls (4)
- Direct Marketing Representative, New York Red Bulls (5)
- Inside Sales Representative, D.C, United (5)
- Direct Marketing Representative, Chicago Fire (5)
- Youth Club Administrator, FC Dallas
- Affinity Sales Representative, FC Dallas
- Customer Service Representative, FC Dallas
- Hispanic Programs Account Executive, D.C. United
- Account Executive, FC Dallas (2)
- Account Executive, Houston Dynamo (2)
- Inside Sales Representative, FC Dallas (2)
- Corporate Ticket Sales Account Executive, Houston Dynamo
- Account Executive D.C. United
- Account Executive, Washington Freedom

**“Game Face gave me the essential tools for a long term sports career”**

Brian Lowe, Director of Ticket Sales  
Washington Nationals

**“My continuing relationship with Game Face has been key to my sports career”**

Denise Gove, Group Sales Manager  
Atlanta Hawks & Thrashers

## Motorsports

- Motorsports Marketing Representative, Lincoln Electric (Motorsports Division)
- Corporate Sales Executive, Dover International Speedway (2)
- Business Development Manager, Gateway International Raceway
- Corporate Sales Account Executive, Gateway International Raceway
- Group Sales Representative, Indianapolis Motor Speedway
- Corporate Account Manager, Nashville Superspeedway
- Group Sales Account Executive, California Speedway
- Season Ticket Account Executive, California Speedway



## What to expect at an event featuring Game Face

**“Well prepared candidates and great training are why we continue to use Game Face for training and hiring”  
-Dawson Hughes, Senior Director of Sales and Service, Kansas City Royals**

### Direction

Universities invite Game Face to present at their sport career conferences because of our unmatched reputation and expertise throughout the sports industry. Game Face training, used by hundreds of teams around the world, provides a highly regarded edge for job seekers looking to land a full-time, non-internship position in sports.

With the sports industry now a \$240 billion business, one would think sports career opportunities abound. So, why are sports job seekers struggling to find work? Because sports are becoming such a big and influential business, and power brokers have decided they can't hire just anybody to fill positions.

Successful individuals looking for a sports job are smart, well trained, educated, and most of all, skilled!

Our presence at various university sport career conferences serves as the bridge between sports organizations looking for better people and the prepared sports job seekers who want to work for them. Competition for sports jobs is at an all-time high, as is the scrutiny put on applicants. No longer is "passion for the game" a qualification for entry. Skilled sports marketing executives are in demand, and the Game Face network is the place teams go to find the right talent for their front office.

### Guidance

Executives from the Game Face Search Division, which has risen to national prominence placing hundreds of people into management and entry-level positions, will attend a portion of every event we have a presence.

**“Teams executives are inundated with hundreds of unsolicited resumes every week. That's why we hear from them daily, hoping that we'll know of enthusiastic, qualified candidates. As with all conferences we attend, we'll be interested to see if there are any 'stars' who we may want to introduce to industry executives”**

**-Stephen Masterson, Recruiting Manager, Game Face Inc.**

**“If you're looking to make your people better and more productive, do what we've done for 10 years: Call Game Face!”**

**-Shawn Sullivan, Senior Vice President, Boston Celtics**

**“Rob Cornilles is definitely the best in the business when it comes to sports training and seminars”**

**-Mark Murray, Director, St. Louis Cardinals**

**“Thanks for being a reliable partner, giving us training and personnel that equal our aggressive goals”**

**-Tom Glick, Former Chief Marketing Officer, New Jersey Nets**



## Content

Game Face provides executive training for professional sports teams on a weekly basis. This grants us access into the unique challenges facing our industry, and ensures that the core content we deliver is current and relevant.

Those who participate in sport career conferences involving Game Face generally receive the same instruction Game Face provides its team clients, and the focus of the instruction revolves around developing the sales and marketing skills the industry wants.

Because candidates receive the same training that teams provide their own staff, those who have participated in Game Face presentations quickly jump to the front of the hiring line. Topics include:

### **The First Principle for All Successful Sports Franchises**

The universal truth all sports operators need to know to run a successful sports property

### **Second and Third Principles in Professional Sports**

Creating demand for your product when it's not living up to expectations

### **"7 Skills to Success" Overview**

The 7 Skills that all sports executives possess as they climb the ladder to success

### **Skill One: Building Trust**

The power of relationships to get ahead in sports  
How 15 seconds may make or break your success

### **Skill Two: A Thorough Assessment**

Understanding your fans and corporate partners

### **Skill Three: The Presentation**

Communicating your message effectively to fans and clients

### **Skill Four: Overcoming Obstacles to your Career**

The lost art of listening  
Keys to becoming an industry problem-solver

### **Skill Five: Opening the Doors of Success**

Understanding the secret to progress and prosperity

### **Skill Six: True Partnerships**

The Law of Reciprocity and other tips on how to enhance connections with long-term partners

### **Skill Seven: Long Term Success**

Successful sports executives know that if you do the right things, long enough, consistently, success will follow

**"I have tried other trainers in sports, but in the end it's clear that the most effective, expert training in our business comes from Game Face"**

**-Chris Overholt, Vice President of Marketing Partnerships and New Media, Miami Dolphins**



## Sports Jobs FAQ from Game Face

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### **Q: What are the right reasons for pursuing a sports job?**

**Rob Cornilles, President, Game Face Inc. (RC):** It depends on what motivates you. Undoubtedly, you feel the excitement that surrounds the sports world. After all, what other industry has its own section within a newspaper? What other business has numerous cable and satellite channels dedicated to it? What other field produces worldwide attention, whether you're speaking of the Olympics, the World Cup, or the Super Bowl? Indeed, this is a global business that runs into the billions of dollars. And growing! Something about it has excited you. You've got the bug, and there seems to be no remedy.

But what drives you?

Do you have the sports bug because you have a "passion" for the game? Or is it because you're intrigued by the business side of the industry? Is it because someone has counseled you to follow your interests and to do those things that most excite you? Or perhaps you're disenchanted with where sport is headed and you want to have a positive influence on its future.

It's necessary to ask yourself if you're really willing to make the sacrifice necessary to get that break you're looking for. Collegiate and minor league players will do what's necessary to "play in the big show." Are you willing or even able to make similar sacrifices... of your time, money, ego...to play in the Big Show yourself?



**Q: What are the realities of working in sports?**

RC: This is not a 9-5 career. It's the entertainment business. When others want to be entertained, you have to go to work. I recall working in the NBA for the Los Angeles Clippers. In 1991 we were invited to play our very first-ever nationally broadcast game. But there was a catch: it was to be played on Christmas Day, the first such NBA broadcast by NBC.

While everyone else was enjoying the biggest holiday of the year with their families and loved ones, I found myself rising early, saying good-bye to my young family, and heading straight to the arena. It didn't take long to realize that when I'm working in sports, others are being entertained. I'm one of those behind the scenes, making the show happen. And, as luck would have it, a year later, NBC did exactly the same thing to us; they scheduled us to be televised on Christmas Day against the San Antonio Spurs. So, for two years in a row, I had no real Holiday.

This is an industry of long hours and long weeks. If you're in basketball, you may work as I did on Christmas day. If you're in hockey, perhaps it will be New Years Eve you'll miss. If baseball's your thing, you may not have a Fourth of July barbecue with the family and friends anymore. New Year's? Better get to bed early, because tomorrow you've got a football game to put on. People who work in sports must realize this is part of the price we pay.

The sport business has some glamour, but it's full of sacrifice and hard work. Perhaps you know someone who's working in sports now. Do yourself a favor: Never ask them—at the end of their season, when all the players are on vacation—don't ask them, "So, what do you do now? Play golf? Go fishing for the summer?" Because the nature of the business side of sports is this: When the team is not playing, that is when the executive office is doing the most work. They're wrapping up unfinished business from the season that just completed. They're planning and preparing for the upcoming season. There really is no holiday when you're working in sports.

I'm not suggesting that we have no vacation time or sick leave, but it is a business that demands the constant attention and energy of those people who are fortunate enough to be in it.

**Q: Is getting a sports job really about who you know?**

RC: Have you ever been told by well-meaning teachers, mentors, or even relatives that it's "who you know"? That's true, if you're looking for someone to talk to or for someone to give you an interview. But, is that really what we want? A visit doesn't put food on your table or gasoline in your car. "Who you know" gets you in the door, but "What you can do" gets you the job.



Connections are important when scouring for opportunities or seeking significant advice. There is a specific process to get into sports; yes, it sometimes opens doors to know people. But in the end, if you can't do what is asked or expected or required of you, those connections won't help, or they won't help for long. In fact, they may avoid your calls!

A job-seeker needs to have capabilities and skills that their competitors don't have. As I travel around the industry, and work with people responsible for the bottom line of a franchise or athletic department, I know it's not about getting their friends into the business or office. Rather, it's finding the right people who can produce the best results for them. It's people who can drive revenues, people who can make their company, their athletic association, more profitable. Those are the people who can secure jobs both now and in the future.

It's not about who can quote the box score or recount inning by inning that classic game from 1974. If it were really about "who you know," then every owner's grandson and niece and nephew would be working for them. But they aren't. And the reason is, a smart business owner, a team owner, needs people in their organization who can help them achieve revenues and reduce expenses to help make them profitable.

**Q: What is the difference between working in major league sports vs. minor league sports?**

RC: Major league teams have considerably more positions to fill, with executives having specific responsibilities. Whether those jobs are in the accounting department, media relations, player personnel, sales, marketing, merchandising, venue operations, everyone who works for a major league organization has a very clear role to fill. And in fact, because the responsibilities are well-defined, more is expected of each person to produce within their given area.

If you're one who likes to dip your toes into a lot of different areas of the team sports business, and want to experiment and gain exposure to the different facets of working for a team, the minor leagues might be a better route for you to take. In the minor leagues, historically you're able to play a part in more facets of the business. Because franchises have fewer employees, more is expected of everyone to contribute and pitch in. One who wants ultimately to be a general manager of a ball club, and I'm speaking on the business side, might find it worthwhile to pursue a course that leads to the minor leagues.

Of course, these are generalizations and it varies from team to team and even from person to person.

**Q: How much does an entry-level job pay in sports?**

RC: Pay should not be the primary reason for going into the sports industry. With so many experienced and skilled executives available now in the work force, sports organizations are able to select from a wide variety of candidates. And candidates who regard significant pay as a primary concern, or prerequisite to taking a starting position with a particular club, certainly make their candidacy more difficult for the club that's making that decision.



Pay will vary sharply from one market to another. All things considered it's fair to say that earnings are the result of efforts and performance. Organizations are willing now to pay more than they have historically if they can find someone that has the right skills and knowledge to match their needs. When I first started in sports it was not as common to pay people respectable wages and other benefits. As a general rule within the industry, entry-level candidates were, according to most, a "dime a dozen."

Over time, however, as the sports industry has become more competitive, as it has realized the need for greater skills and abilities among its own executives, it has begun to reflect general industry by paying more for talented, qualified candidates. It's fair to suggest that most full-time, entry-level positions, again, depending on the market and depending on the work experience that someone brings, would be on the modest side around \$30,000 a year, on the upper side somewhere around \$60,000 a year.

As far as the benefits and perks that come with working in sports, few industries match it. Three months after I began working for the Clippers, my wife and I found ourselves sitting in overstuffed chairs on the private team jet, heading to an "away" game with the team. In front of us sat a player who would later go on to win four championships in the NBA and across from us sat a former national college player of the year. This was a perk I had earned based on my performance that previous month. As we sat there sipping cold drinks and eating our cheese and crackers, I thought, "Not a bad perk, when 90 days ago it would have seemed like only a dream."

For many, one of the biggest thrills is the day they get their own box of business cards with their name alongside that logo they have longed to work with for so many years. That's something that's very difficult to put a price tag on. And with that business card comes greater access and credibility in many cases. And that leads to better opportunities professionally. In addition, clubs are becoming more and more progressive in providing retirement plans and other financial benefits that you'd find in general industry. Of course, I'm referring to full-time positions, not internships, which typically offer no noticeable benefits.

Many clubs—in fact, most—will offer season tickets to their employees, thereby increasing the value of the overall compensation. The bottom line about pay in sports is that there is no cap or ceiling to what you can earn, especially if you're a revenue producer versus an overhead position. It's all based on your ability to produce. That's one of the great things about working in any industry: If you are a producer, if you are someone that can drive top-line revenues for an organization, you will be valued. And I've found you will always be compensated fairly.

**Q: Do teams value an internship on your resume?**

RC: Of greater value to an organization is discovering through your resume and your work experience that you can either produce immediate revenue results for them, or you can reduce their costs due to your understanding of best business practices.

Many people believe the best way to get a foot in the door is to get involved in some type of internship where a person can learn some of the ins and outs of the sports business while experiencing it firsthand. I would never



discourage an internship if it goes along with the goals of introducing oneself to a particular side of the industry. An internship is often valuable exposure to different facets of sports without having to commit to a full-time position in an area where you might not want to be involved after all.

However, if one can find a paying, full-time position instead of an internship, that seems like a more valuable option worth pursuing.

It's important that when an individual interviews with a club or organization offering internships, that they are very specific in their questioning of that organization as to the nature of the internship. Unfortunately, too many people have had bad experiences with internships that did not afford the kind of learning forum they believed it would be.

The goal should be to take an internship that helps you develop certain skills that will be transferable and give you greater marketability. Every place that benefits from your efforts should in turn make you a more attractive candidate to an organization hiring full-time executives.

Possibly the most important inquiry to make with those organizations you're looking to move into via an internship is, how many of the previous interns have been moved into full-time positions? This gives you an indication as to how an organization may grow their own, internal people ... or not. This is an important consideration when deciding where you're going to dedicate your time and energy. You don't want to be forever known as "the former intern" with the team that employs you. Don't be so anxious that you go where there is no future for you.

### **Q: What is the hiring process in sports?**

RC: It's important to recognize that resumes, for as much time and effort as we may put into them, really are not an effective tool to get noticed in the sports business. It has about as much impact as a direct mail piece does in your mailbox.

In any given hiring manager's office – a manager within a sports team -- if you walk in their office you might find, literally, a stack of unsolicited resumes on the far corner of their desk. Many executives have gotten smart and turned that stack of paper into a stream of resume files in their database. The problem, however, is that whether your resume is electronic or in paper format, it's still sitting among a stack of people who look just like you do.

The key is to put something on that resume that will capture their attention, preferably work experience within the sports world or specific training you've received that is applicable to the sports business. You can spend a lot of money submitting your resume to a huge resume bank, but in doing so, you are now grouped with a lot of unqualified candidates, making it harder for the hiring manager to find you. What you need to do instead is to develop some experience, along with an appropriate network, that can introduce you to a hiring manager. Then, within that introduction, you'll be able to relate the work you've done and/or the training you've received that is applicable to their job opening.



Who is the best person in the front office to whom you should send the resume? It's becoming increasingly difficult to identify the exact person because more and more major league clubs, in particular, are developing human resource departments. This can be a great service to the right candidates and employees alike. However, it does add another layer of scrutiny to screen out your resume and sometimes makes it more difficult for you to get the attention of the eventual decision-maker within a particular department. My best advice would be to identify which department you want to find entry into, along with the individual who oversees that department, and find a creative way to get their attention...something that will stand out from all the other unsolicited resumes that come across their desk. Remember, though, as long as you have the requisite skills, an introduction by a credible source is the best way to get your foot in the door.

**Q: How easily can I jump from a different industry into sports?**

RC: Any time you move from one industry to another, there's going to be some sacrifice. But generally if you've had the opportunity to learn skills in sales, marketing, customer service, law, accounting, etc, those skills are easily transferable to the sport business. Because after all, it's still a business. One might say that no matter what product or service you can sell, selling is still the same.

I think the bigger question one should ask themselves when going from another industry into sports, is, "are they willing to (a) be mobile, to relocate if necessary, and (b) are the work hours of sports conducive to their current lifestyle. (Or, is their current lifestyle something they're willing to adjust in order to take on the rather atypical hours involved in working in the sports industry?)"

Sport is not a complicated industry, but it is certainly a unique industry. It has its own language, its own rhythms, and those are things that are only learned through time and practice. A testament to that is seeing how many sports owners, whether you're talking about major league or minor league, who get into sports because they feel it might be a great way to exercise a hobby, or a passion, or perhaps a way of satisfying an ego-driven itch to "be a part of the community." But once inside the business, they learn that it is not as easy to make an organization profitable as it was in their original, chosen field. While it is a game; it is also a very unique business which requires specialized skills and understating as to what goes into making a very successful franchise.

If one goes into sports on the sales or marketing side, one of the unique challenges that we confront in sports is we have very little, if any, control over the product. If the team is losing eleven games in a row or nobody likes the coach or the star player got some very bad publicity in the local market..., or, if you're in the minor leagues and don't know what you're product is going to look like until a week before it's revealed to the public, there's very little, if anything, the sports executive can do to fix that problem. The public side of the product is what it is. Sport executives must work through it. They must have skills to get them through difficult, challenging times when representing their product. That is something that people must realize and respect early on when getting into sports.

There are specific skills required to effectively market and sell around the product, but most people fail to step up to those challenges. They allow the product to speak for them: a fatal error in sports marketing and sales.