

Daniel Loftus
Professional Development Plan
MSMG 60150: Transformational Leadership Portfolio

Personal Mission

I am passionate about connecting individuals who share my love of sports. I have tried to engage in opportunities that expand my knowledge and experience in the sports industry, and I strive to work in a place that allows me to call upon my communications and business background within the industry. In five years, I hope to be managing a public relations or marketing department for a sport organization – be it a team, league, brand, or athlete, I want to work somewhere that allows me to utilize my skills in a way that creates value and impact in an industry I am extremely passionate about. Money and prestige are not the most important factors in my career. I hope to lead a working life that follows my passions, and I want to work at a place and within an industry that excites me every morning. If that means working long hours and sacrificing my salary, I am willing to accept it. I believe that doing something that makes me happy will also help drive me to always do my best because I care personally about the outcome. The pay and status will come from the results of my hard work towards something I love.

Two SMART Goals

My first goal is to have a full-time, salaried position in marketing or public relations for a recognizable sports brand or agency within six months after graduating in May 2022. I define “recognizable” as an organization that carries prestige within the sports industry and is a company that creates real impact on the industry landscape. This could include a division I athletic department, a sports team in one of the major U.S. professional sports leagues, a sporting brand like Nike or Adidas, or an agency like Wasserman or CAA. I believe within six months I

will have the ability to capitalize upon my experience and expertise, and I will be able to contribute in a meaningful way to an organization that carries influence.

My second goal is to be a director or manager of a PR or marketing department within the sports industry by the time I am 30 years of age (January 2029). Over the next eight years, I will need to hold positions and gain experience working as a tactician in marketing and public relations to understand how the industry operates on a day-to-day basis. However, I hope that by the time I am 30 years old, I will have the expertise and network connections to make me a valuable leader of a team or organization at the companies I mentioned previously. I believe this is not only attainable, but it also fulfills my mission to have influence on the sports industry through my communications and business understanding.

Current State of Competencies

At my current position, I carry three main competencies that already prepare me to succeed in pursuing my SMART goals. First, I have extensive industry experience for my age. I have worked in three college athletic departments, for the National Football League, and for a professional athlete in the PR and marketing space. These experiences have given me a great baseline understanding of the industry and will serve as jumping off points no matter which direction in sports I lead. Also, I have a strong network of people and resources that I can call upon for career advice, opportunities, and industry lessons. The sports industry is highly connected and competitive, so having access to individuals who are willing to assist in my development is extremely valuable for the line of work I hope to enter. Finally, I have a diverse education background which can differentiate me from competition. My public relations undergraduate degree and master's in management provide me with a unique skillset of both quantitative and qualitative elements that are useful for a sport communication professional.

These experiences have left me with a skillset that can allow me to impact the sports industry from various angles, and it qualifies me for roles as a marketer, PR practitioner, social media manager, and any position involving effective communication and management in sports.

Additional Necessary Learning

To achieve my mission and reach my goals, I must gain experience in various disciplines to improve my career outlook. The first area that I need to work on is the real-world application of the business concepts I have learned at the University of Notre Dame. Prior to my master's program experience, I had almost exclusively worked on the public relations side of the sports industry. Although I have gained a great understanding of the business world through a classroom setting, in order to expand my experience base, I must seek opportunities to apply my newly earned business knowledge in a real-world scenario. I hope my current internship with the Notre Dame athletic department can be a first step in that direction.

Another current area of weakness is my narrow focus on perfection. To this point in my career, I have focused my job and career search solely on communications-based jobs in college or professional athletics. This focus is based on my own assumptions of my skills and interests, but it has limited my options and my belief that I can accomplish great things. Improving my openness to other career opportunities in sports, whether it is with a brand (i.e., Verizon and their sport partnerships) or with an agency (like the PR firm DKC and their sports division), can provide new windows to potential career opportunities that match my mission. Being more open to opportunities beyond what I determine as the "perfect" fit for me will increase my chances of doing something I love while expanding my understanding of the industry. If I focus on these areas of improvement while capitalizing on the skills I possess, I believe in my ability to complete my goals and meet my personal mission.