Success in the World Cup

Before we began this project, we carefully thought on why the United States Men’s National Soccer Team did not qualify for the 2018 World Cup. We analyzed what makes a national soccer team successful in the World Cup and determined our definition of success, any team who has at least qualified for the Quarter Final stage consecutively for the past four tournaments. We analyzed World Cup datasets and found seven national teams that were deemed successful. We evaluated four common statistics from these seven national teams that led them to consistent success throughout the previous four World Cups. These statistics were goal average per game, pass accuracy, shot accuracy, and offensive pass accuracy.

Next, we obtained same statistics from the United States Men’s National Soccer Team to compare and determine the distinction between successful and unsuccessful teams. Although, we found USA’s pass accuracy to be similar between the seven teams, the offensive pass accuracy was significantly lower. Given the data provided, USA’s goal average per game and shot accuracy were sufficient enough to qualify for the World Cup and be deemed successful in the tournament.

Based on our analysis, the USMNT does show potential to regularly qualify for the World Cups in the future given the increase of offensive plays toward goal.