„Critical Success Factors of international Sport Events from the Perspective of Project Management”

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May 25th 2009
Abstract

The term of success refers to the consequences or results accomplished through an effective action and therefore success can have a different meaning for different people. This sentence might be true when looking at a ski racer whose goal it is to speed down a slope as fast as he/she can. Every single minute will count in this context to stand at the end at the winners’ rostrum.

But how does the situation look like for companies, which make such events happen? Which criteria and factors do they apply to measure the final outcome of an event? This view of point is vital for companies who are especially set up to plan and organize a one in lifetime event like the Olympic Winter games because as known this event type is mainly financed by public money. Also smaller event agencies may not neglected these circumstances because success goes along with competitive advantage and paves the way for future potential. Therefore it is crucial to address such principals and standards in order to make international sport events more successful.

Thus the aim of this study is to seek towards such criteria and factors whereas the research field is determined into two areas: Project management and sport event management. The reviewed literature should give information which aspects project and sport event manager perceive and how issues in this context are handled. The study is embedded in the Austrian and Swedish event industry where five companies contributed with there knowledge.

The investigation of the field has clearly characterized eight different success criteria, which are shown at the end of this study. Each factor shelters the potential for further researches and implies the opportunities for future studies.

**Key Words:** Project management, sport event management, critical success factors and criteria, major and hallmark events
Acknowledgement

Sport has taught me over the years that whatever will occur in life, stay focused, hold on to your dreams and belief in yourself!

Sometimes life is not predictable and you need more you can rely on.

The journey of life has brought me to Sweden last year where I was part of the master studies in the field of management. During my time here I have experienced many ups and downs, especially in the last few months where I was confronted with some new challenges. But my beloved friends in Innsbruck and far beyond these boarders supported me and have given me the energy and motivation I needed for writing this thesis. I would like to take the opportunity and thank my friends here in Sweden, student colleagues and everyone who accompanied me during this time and whatever future will bring I know where my “family” is.

My sincere gratitude goes also to my supervisor Dr. Ralf Müller who has guided me with insightful comments and feedback, which contributed to the outcome of this thesis. I really appreciate his profound knowledge in the field of project management as well as his patience and understanding he had during this time.

Last but not least I would like to address a special thanks to all participating companies and persons who shared their knowledge with me.
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<td>Chief Executive Officer</td>
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<td>CSF</td>
<td>Critical Success Factors</td>
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<td>EURO 2008</td>
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<tr>
<td>IBU</td>
<td>International Biathlon Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>IOC</td>
<td>International Olympic Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOC</td>
<td>Main Operation Centre</td>
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<td>PMI</td>
<td>Project Management Institute</td>
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<td>ROI</td>
<td>Return on Investment</td>
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<tr>
<td>SLOC</td>
<td>Salt Lake City Organizing Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>STAR</td>
<td>System for Tracking and Reporting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UEFA</td>
<td>Union of European Football Association</td>
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CHAPTER 1: Introduction

This first chapter of the thesis provides the reader general information about the background of the study and the field in which the research takes place. Furthermore the research question is presented and a brief overview at the end is given as guideline how the document is structured.

1.1 Background of Study

If looking back to ancient times one recognizes that sport events have already played an important role and affected the people’s life. The marathon and the Olympic Games where founded back in these days and if observing the same events nowadays it can bee seen, that the event industry has turned into an important sector.

The industry can be determined into various conceptual dimensions where single and multi-sport formats, either one-day tournaments or year around championships are organized during a year. The dimensions also vary in terms of ability and attainment which means so-called grassroots sport events (events that are new to the sports) or elite events (for skilled performers) attract different athletes and spectators (Masterman, 2004).

It can be seen further that especially larger events focus beside the sporting acts on elements like music and other entertaining factors and not always have sports activities and competition at their core. The customer expectation is therefore high and also the demands of the media have led to the fact that new innovations must be used for staging an event (Masterman, 2004). The environment can be perceived as fast paced and new sport trends occur almost every year.

Therefore in recent years the hosting of sport events, whether large international events (Olympic Games) or smaller niche interest events have become more and more important. The benefits, which are created during the period of staging an event, can have impact on the local economy and environment (Ritchie, 1984) like additional employment as well as long lasting impacts on the tourism industry. Ritchie and Smith (1991) emphasize here the importance towards destinations and brand image as a result of the related media exposure (TV and print). Due to this fact sport events can be perceived as short-term projects with long-term consequences (Roche, 1994).

The planning and organizing process have become therefore a complicated task, where the different duties and interests of various stakeholder groups need to be managed. But what does success in this context mean? When do companies and event agencies which are assigned for the organizing and planning process consider an event as successful?

In search which are these relevant success factors it was recognized that the field of project management has studied this subject for already 40 years where the concept of project success and failure was topic of numerous studies and many articles have been written in this field.
The approach from Atkinson (1999) for example sees project success within as specific frame where the task must be fulfilled in terms of budget, time and quality. Other studies (Müller, 2004, Clarke, 1999) focus more on the “soft” side of project success underlining the importance of communication and project structure of the team.

However, the understanding of success has changed over the years nevertheless it is crucial to know, which criteria and factors need to be applied in terms to know if the project (event) has fulfilled the expectation of project owner and other groups involved.

The purpose of this study is therefore to determine the success factors from this angle of view and align it with the relevant findings from the field of sport event management and try to find a common stage.

1.2. Research Question

“What are the critical success factors of international sport events from the perspective of project management?”

Towards this research two sub-questions arise which need to be specified:

- Do companies and event agencies in Austria and Sweden consider the findings from the area of project management as crucial in terms of success?
- Are there any critical success factors combined with the event planning process?

1.3 Scope of Study

To be able to provide the relevant answers towards the above-mentioned research questions is important to narrow down the scope of research. The study will therefore be based on insight and knowledge gained through using semi-structured interviews which are going to be held with employees from companies and event agencies that are familiar with the organizing procedure of international sport events in Austria and Sweden.

1.4 Structure of Thesis

This master thesis is segmented into six chapters whereas CHAPTER 1 starts with a brief introduction about the research field and as well addresses the research question and the scope of the study. The following CHAPTER 2 comprises information in form of a literature review in which part one informs about the findings regarding success criteria and factors in the field of project management and part two is concerned with the criteria in the scope of sport event management. The findings from this chapter will serve as basis to construct a theoretical framework. CHAPTER 3 describes the chosen methodology and applied research strategy and informs moreover how the data is collected. In CHAPTER 4 the results of the conducted interviews will be shown and a more detailed discussion of the findings is presented in CHAPTER 5. The last CHAPTER 6 sums up with an overall conclusion.
CHAPTER 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a theoretical framework in terms how project success criteria and project success factors are perceived from the perspective of project management. Therefore the latest accomplishments in this field have been reviewed and accordingly a twist to the findings of sport event management has been made. The literature review provides furthermore information regarding the international event stage and how success is defined in this field. To sum up the literature review ends with a short case study about the Olympic Winter Games of 2003 in Salt Lake City and analyzes the work of the project managers.

To be able to use the latest information and knowledge for this thesis the following databases have been scanned through:

- Umeå Universitetsbibliotek, Sweden: (www.ub.umu.se/eng_default)
- Universitätsbibliothek Innsbruck, Austria: (www.uibk.ac.at/ucb)
- Project Management Institute (PMI): [www.pmi.org](http://www.pmi.org)
- Google Scholar: (www.scholar.google.com)

2.2 Project Success Criteria

Most of early works and definitions into success criteria of project management focus on the variables of time, cost, and quality the so-called “golden triangle” (Atkinson, 1999). After almost 30 years where Oilsen (1971) firstly suggested these success criteria it looks like that nowadays the approaches of the “modern” project management go one step beyond. Authors like Turner (1999), Morris and Hough (1987), Waterridge (1998), de Wit (1988), McCoy (1987), Pinto and Slevin (1988), Saarinen (1990) and Ballantine (1996) state that these parameters should not be exclusively used as such criteria. There is no doubt that some projects must have time and cost as an evaluation indicator (e.g. next Olympic Winter games are held in Vancouver, start 12th of February 2010 – this event must hit the on-time objective or problems will follow).

If we follow the explanation of Turner (1999) project management should be perceived as a tool, which manages people to deliver a certain outcome and not only to be used to manage work. Turners approach is contradictory to the opinion of the 1970s where work breakdown structures, software and so forth supported the stance of project management. In the 1980s the literature started besides lifecycle costing, risk management and control systems (the
technically side of project management) to focus on team building processes and ten years later the literature covered entirely such topics (Jugdev & Müller, 2005).

However, criteria are important to measure a project in terms of success or failure and in the reviewed literature; criteria are characterized as principles or standards for such a judgement because they are seen as an “independent variable”, which inform how the outcome was achieved (Lim & Mohamed, 1999). On the contrary project factors are the set of circumstances, which influence a project in a positive or negative way. The next paragraph addresses more information regarding project success factors.

2.3 The Common Understanding of Project Success

In the past years barely any other topic has been discussed as the one about organizational effectiveness and how to measure the positive outcome concerning projects (Baccarini, 1999). McCoy (1986), Wateridge (1998) and Wells (1998) observed a lack of common understanding considering the definition of project success. They state that either a standardized definition doesn’t exist in the literature or the term is used among managers generally.

According to the Project Management Institute (PMI), which devoted their Annual Seminars & Symposium in 1986 to this topic, stated, that the criteria for measuring project success must be set out at the beginning of the project. Defining the relevant criteria after the project start will most likely cause difficulties consequently due to the reason that the definition of project success can mean so much to so many different people and lead to disagreements about whether a project is successful or not (Liu & Walker, 1998).

Freeman and Beale (1992, p. 8) noted in this context: “An architect may consider success in terms of aesthetic appearance, an engineer in terms of technical competence, an accountant in terms of dollars spent under budget, a human resources manager in terms of employee satisfaction. Chief executive officers rate their success in stock market.”

In this early stage of discussion de Wit (1988) and Cooke-Davies (2002) emphasize on the importance to draw the distinction between:

- Project success (measured against the overall objective of the project) and
- Project management success (measured against the widespread and traditional measures of performance against cost, time and quality).

In the reviewed literature it is common to confusingly intertwine the components of project success and project management success; thereby they should be seen as single, holistic group. Baccarini (1999) goes with the explanation about the success definition one step further by adding a third term product success, which deals with the effects of the project’s final product.
Unfortunately project managers have neglected it over the years to focus more on such a long-term criteria related to product success and are still focusing to manage the project within time and budget (Wateridge, 1998). However it doesn’t mean automatically not fulfilling the short-term criteria that a project is failed. An example therefore is Microsoft, which launched its first Windows software system with a substantial delay and required more resources and additional staff as from the beginning on planned. Nevertheless, if one looks at the worldwide PC users it can be recognized that approximately 90 % use the Windows operation system, which became an enormous source of revenue for the company (Shenhar, Dvir, Levy & Malz, 2001).

From the angle of view of de Wit (1998) and Cooke-Davies (2002) the project of Microsoft would have been a failure in terms of project management success but in comparison with the approaches from Baccarini (1999), Munns & Bjeirimi (1996) a project success, because the project has met the customer expectations.

At “The Nine School of Project Management” conference in Lille (France) Dalcher (2008) emphasized at his presentation to distinguish clearly the different levels of project success and failure. Therefore he classified four levels and scopes, which can be seen at Table 1 concerning project success, project management success and product success.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Scope</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Project Management Success</td>
<td>Efficiency and performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Project Success</td>
<td>Objectives, benefits, stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Business Success</td>
<td>Value creation and delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Future Potential</td>
<td>New opportunities, threats and competences</td>
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</table>

**Tab. 1**: Own description from Dalcher´s four levels of project success (2008)

A similar classification of Dalcher´s project success can also be found in the explanations of Shenhar et al. (2001) where the authors state that the different dimensions (levels) play an important role at different times with respect to the moment of project completion. This means that

- **Dimension 1** (project management success) expresses the efficiency with which the project has been managed (meet resources, was finished in time, with specific budget) and the success of the project can be assessed VERY SHORT either during or straight after the projects completion.

- **Dimension 2** (project success) relates on meeting the customers needs and the assessment follows after a SHORT TIME regarding to the customer satisfaction after delivery.
• **Dimension 3** (business success) addresses the direct impact (sales and profits), which the project may have on the organization and the evaluation of success can be done after one or two years (LONG TERM).

• **Dimension 4** (future potential) is in charge of preparing the organization towards future (organizational and technological infrastructure). The success in this stage can be measured after two up to five years and is therefore perceived as LONG TERM.

Considering the different opportunities how to assess project success, the next paragraph will discuss this with more detail.

### 2.4 Assessment of Project Success

Basically most organisations have traditionally applied financial and economic indicators to evaluate and measure their organisational success and effectiveness (i.e., return measures, market share measures, and stock value measures (Barney, 1996)). However, many studies in this field have shown that such financial measures cannot be perceived as sufficient indicators for measuring success at a corporate level. This is according to Allee (2001) quoted in Jugdev and Müller (2005) due to the reason, that those financial models emphasize just on the tangible assets and evaluate the monetary benefits but neglect the intangible assets and values of a project.

By examine the literature regarding project success and failure many authors stress the existence of numerous assessment frameworks, which reflect different interests and points of view. The approach from Pinto and Mantel (1990) identifies three aspects of project performance, which are the implementation process, the perceived value of the project, which have an impact on the client satisfaction. Additionally Freeman and Beale (1992) propose seven further criteria for project success measurement, including

- Technical performance,
- Efficiency of execution,
- Managerial and organisational implications (as well customer satisfaction)
- Personal growth, and
- Manufactures ability and business performance.

A more recent approach is concerned with the achievement of project objectives (Belout, 1998), which should be carried out by setting up a project. The success of a project can be measured thereby how well these objectives have been met. Baccarini (2001) uses as in Figure 1 can be seen, a hierarchy of project objectives which include goal, purpose, outputs and inputs.
The main idea of this logical framework method (LFM) is that “all projects should be supportive of the performing organization’s strategic goals” (PMI, 1996) and contribute to the long-term direction of an organization where the success of the purpose can be measured how well the customers are satisfied with the projects output. Thereby Davis (1995) suggests on focusing on just one purpose because otherwise the project design become to diffuse. Furthermore Baccarini (1999) contended in his LFM that the project management team should be responsible for the above mentioned project output and should recognize the project as part of the company’s intention to gain competitive advantage (Shenhar et al., 1997). Table 2 provides some examples of the LFM four-level project objective framework.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Inputs</th>
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<td>Power station project</td>
<td>Economic development</td>
<td>Electricity</td>
<td>Power plant</td>
<td>Resources and work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nutrition project in</td>
<td>Increase farmer income</td>
<td>Increase rice production</td>
<td>New farming practice</td>
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<td>Developing country</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fire hydrant project</td>
<td>Reduced fire losses</td>
<td>Prevent fight fires</td>
<td>Fire hydrants</td>
<td>Resource and work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light utility Vehicle project</td>
<td>Facilitate tactical</td>
<td>LUVs replace current</td>
<td>LUVs</td>
<td>Resource and work</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Command of combat</td>
<td>fleet and meet capability</td>
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Tab. 2: Own description from Baccarini´s LFM Examples (1999, p. 27)

2.5 The “Soft “Side of Project Success

As already mentioned in the paragraph concerned with the common understanding of project success many authors as well as Wateridge (1995) found out, those stakeholders would have their own viewpoint regarding success or failure. Additionally to Wateridge’s findings Müller (2003) identified three more conditions, which are relevant for project success. The investigation in the area communication structure has identified the following:
1. Projects must be perceived as a temporary organisation (Turner & Müller, 2003) where people should work together as best as they can. The likelihood that this will not always work is obvious, but nevertheless the project must be seen as a partnership (Scott, 2001) between all project partners. Therefore it seems to be important that the project owner (principal) should empower the project manager (agent) by delegating some decision-making authority and strives so to have a cooperative working relationship also called as principal-agency relationship (Bergen, Dutta, Walker, 1992). Jensen (2000) supports such an agency theory because the tension and conflicts between principal and agent (Moe, 1995) will be minimized through using special structures like contracts.

2. The second important condition is concerned with the organizations structure. The slogan here is not too much and not too little structure, which means that the project owner should impose medium level size of structure on the project. This is due to the fact the project manager needs to be flexible in any stage of the project-lifecycle where so-called bottleneck situations and other risks can arise in an uncertain manner. Therefore the owner should communicate clear objectives “objectives are the guiding principles that direct the efforts of the project team” (Shill, Bertodo, McArthur, 1993) to the project manager and help with a proper guidance to unfortunately constrained by to tight and rigid working practices as mentioned before in the principal-agency relationship (Turner & Müller, 2003).

3. The last point of Müller’s (2003) findings refer to the fact that there was a mismatch between the project performance reports. Problems in this area occurred because owners and other clients had a greater desire for information (the distinction must be drawn here between high performing projects where the request of communication was higher as vice versa in low performing projects). Clarke (1999) strives in this coherency the importance of updating the projects plan regularly which informs the engaged people working on the project over the positive/negative progand consequently this plans should be kept as simple as possible otherwise they will be abandoned as “dust-collectors” (Gilbreath, 1986).

However, the project environment can be characterized as complex and fast paced (Gilbert, 1993) and therefore it is necessary to develop an understanding that generates trust which leads to a constructive working relationship (Karlsen, 2002). Therefore also the management of stakeholders plays an important role according to Jergeas, Williamson, Skulmoski and Thomas (2000) and Cleland (1986). If stakeholder management is not adequately addressed at the beginning of a project the project manager may strive to meet goals, which were never intended by the stakeholders (Meredith & Mantel, 200). Further issues caused by stakeholders contribute to a negative project output because of poor communication, changes and scope of work, unfavourable news about the project in the press and negative community reactions to the project. In Figure 2 can be seen the different stakeholder groups or individuals who are positively or negatively affected by the project.
2.6 CSF – A Retrospective Look

Because of the fact, that at the beginning the literature was predominated by lists of project success criteria, the developments over the years led to new approaches, which allowed a more holistic view on projects and their success. Westerveld (2002) mentions here that the initial researches focussed just on the control aspect of projects by addressing standard tools and techniques for project management. This narrow direction changed over the last 40 years towards new approaches where the link between operations management and strategic management was noticeably. (Judgev & Müller, 2005).

This paragraph continues with a short review about the milestones of success frameworks by distinguishing four important periods.

1960s – 1980s

Early studies during this period examined critical success factors from the perspective getting the project done by supporting the “iron triangle” (Atkinson 1999, Cooke-Davies 1990, Hartmann 2000). The success factors were related to the projects goals cost, time, and quality (Pinto & Slevin, 1988) and focused more on the implementation phase, which was the longest and most resource consuming according to Lim and Mohamend (1999). This narrow research completely neglected it to focus on the stakeholders’ needs and what they consider as project success (Atkinson 1999). Besides the limited scope, authors criticised that too much attention was paid on the “hard skills” (reach financial targets and meet
financial plans) as on the “soft-skills” (behaviour and interpersonal communication) (Munns & Bjeirmi, 1996).

1980s – 1990s

This period was clearly concerned with the efforts about stakeholder satisfaction. Project managers recognized that users are more demanding concerning satisfaction criteria than completion criteria and this knowledge underlined the importance to gain market share through meeting the customers’ needs (Munns & Bjerimi, 1996). The literature emphasizes here to be able to pave the way towards customer service and satisfaction, projects should involve staff training and education, strong leadership and management as well development of the individuals, team and organization (Bounds, 1998). In the same time Pinto and Slevin (1987) developed a list of 10 CSFs (e.g. clear project mission, top management support, client consultation, monitoring and feedback, and so forth), which were applicable for a variety of project types and a helpful tool for project managers identifying the core criteria of project success in the implementation stage.

1990s – 2000s

The publications in this period addressed many concepts and frameworks were project success was perceived as stakeholder dependent (Kerzner 1987, Lester 1998). Apart from these findings it was Morris and Hough (1987) who developed general conditions of project success based on eight case studies. This framework was presented in Judgev and Müller (2005) and contains:

- Does the project meet financial and technical requirements?
- Did the project meet the budget, schedule, and specifications?
- Did the contractors benefit commercially?
- And in the case the event had to be cancelled, was this decision made reasonably and efficiently?

However, besides this more holistic view of project success were the internal environment can be viewed as a contributing factor it was Belassi and Tukel (1996) who identified some serious gaps regarding CSFs. In their opinion the literature was still focusing on individual CSFs without classifying them and furthermore tended to neglect factors like project and team-member characteristics as well as the external environment. Aware of these issues both authors came up with a new idea, which solved the problem by classifying CSFs into different groups. With the aid of this approach project success and failure could be assessed after their affiliation and how they affect each other. This more recent framework can be seen as a continuation of the 10 CSFs from Pinto (1987 – 1990), which integrates the whole
project life cycle with internal and external organizational factors. Similar to Pinto’s list of CSF’s but also wider in scope were Hartman’s findings that focused on the integration of the environment with its social, political, corporate and natural factors. Success was determined as “one where the stakeholders are satisfied with the outcome” (Hartman, 2000, p. 369).

To sum up it can be stated that projects of period three are profitable for sponsors and owners because they achieve not only the business purpose; they also meet the defined objectives, qualities, they fulfil the aspects of the golden triangle and all engaged parties are satisfied with the end product of the project (Wateridge, 1998).

2000s

This decade of research summarizes the results and findings form the previous years and try to find new ways to accesses a better understanding, which are the “real” success factors of projects. Müller (2003) and Turner (2004) x-rayed therefore the communication structure with the result that project owners need to delegate more responsibilities to the project manager in duty to make him/her work more independently but also need at the same time meaningful documents, which present the positive/negative course of a project. Cooke-Davies (2002) supports this theory and outlines clearly CSFs related to project management success. It’s the owner’s task to implement an overall strategy in alliance with the core business of the company. This engagement of an organizational level and a common understanding that project success can have an important impact on the business performance will help to move project management to a strategic level.

A further recognition of this stage is, that project success is dependent on the management and leadership style, emotional intelligence and other competencies a project manager possess and this is due to the fact that project types becoming more and more diverse through increasing globalisation (Müller & Turner, 2007). Different types of projects require special management approaches and it is up to the project sponsor to choose the appropriate methodology with which the success criteria can be identified (Wateridge, 1995). A study conducted by Müller and Turner in 2007 showed, that the customer satisfaction in projects where the project manager was working in his/her home country was higher. This leads to the point that cultural issues are not be neglected and are a further element when assessing project success.

2.7 New Insight

This evolution brings us to the core beliefs nowadays where a wide range of criteria can be identified with the main aim to meet the satisfaction of all stakeholders (Atkinson, 1999). This “open” view apart from cost, time, and quality allows it to establish three new
categories concerning the measurement of the project management process. These new criteria which are the technical strength of the resultant system, the benefits to the resultant organisation (perceived as direct benefits) and the benefits to a wider stakeholder communities (perceived as indirect benefits) measure the success of the project post implementation and can be seen at Figure 3. This model can be supported with the explanations, which have been made at the beginning of the literature review (see 2.1 critical success factors) where numerous authors stated that cost, time and quality should not only be used as such parameters.

![Diagram of the Iron Triangle, The Square Route, and The Information System](image)

**Fig. 3:** Own description of Atkinsons new criteria (1999, p. 341)

### 2.8 The International Event Stage

For a better and comprehensive understanding for the reader of this thesis, the second part of the literature review provides information regarding the international event scene as well tries to highlight the critical success factors of international sport events.

Due to the fact that there is a lack of standard classification what a sport event is, it is therefore essential to distinguish the different kind of events in terms of size, duration, occasion, frequency and economic benefits. This differentiation must be made according to Freyer and Gross (2002) because mainly international sport events have a great effect on the economy of the organizing country, region and host-city as well as for the tourism.
Sports event managers are concerned with those events that are planned over a long period and authors like Allen, O’Toole, McDonnell and Harris (2002) and Getz (1997) refer to these events as special events. At this point the reviewed literature varies in terms of the use of so-called special events and synonyms like hallmark, mega, major and minor events can be found. According to Goldblatt and Nelson (2001, p. 93) hallmark events are “a unique moment in time celebrated with ceremony and ritual to satisfy specific needs” and Hall (1992) considers therefore any Olympic Games as hallmark event. In Getz’s (1997) and Allen et al. (2002) point of view are hallmark events those ones where the city and the event becomes inseparable for instance the Wimbledon Tennis Championships. Figure 4 offers a model of Jago and Shaw (1998) that encapsulate all above-mentioned terms with a ranking in size and scale and connects furthermore the relationship between hallmark, major and mega events.

Fig. 4: A definition for events (Adapted from Jago and Shaw, 1998).

However, sport event and project managers need to work with different kind of owners (dependent on the structure and format of an event) such as local government and authorities, sports governing bodies and competition organizations, corporate organizations and volunteers. In many cases where the impact of the event is wider spread it can be recognized that more than one party is in charge of the control, development and implementation of the event (Masterman, 2004).
2.9 CSF of International Sport Events

In accordance with the definition of project management where a project incorporates the stages initiation, planning and design, executing, monitoring, controlling and the closing process an event can also be perceived as project management activity (Holzbauer, 2003).

Whilst studying the most important literature about success factors of sport events it has been recognized, that apart from fulfilling cost, time and quality there are barely any new approaches, which provide a more holistic view. To be able to identify the CSFs for international sport events and relate them to the findings of project management the event planning process, which consists of up to 10 stages has been scanned through (see figure 5) and the results are shown at the following pages (not every stage will be discussed in detail).

![Figure 5: The event planning process (Adapted from: Masterman, 2004, p. 48)](image)

2.9.1 Identified Success Factors within the Planning Process Frame

**OBJECTIVES**

Emery (2001) noted whilst researching 400 major sports event organizers that just 64 % of the respondents used a clear objective for their event and stated that the use would not be
widespread in the industry. The leading authors of sport event management texts (Alle et al., 2002, Getz 1997, Golblatt 1997, Hall 1997) emphasize in this context the use of objectives is necessary for the production of successful events and state further that the internal and external environment needs to be scanned before visions and goals are set up. The identification of the various stakeholders (e.g. customers, suppliers, partners, investors, and staff) plays an important role in this stage and the basic questions should be asked (a) why the event is to be held, (b) what is to be achieved and (c) who is to benefit an how?

CONCEPT

In the concept stage the key question is what does the event look like? This is an important question when applying for hallmark events, because the facilities constructed for this special occasion (for example a new football stadium) must also be usable after the event is over. According to Bernstein (2002) quoted in Masterman (2004) any new facility would be only of temporary use without identified and signed after-user. This can be seen at the Olympic Summer Games 2000 in Sydney where the organizers incorporated the Sydney Olympic Park as part of the strategy for the development of Homebush Bay.

FEASIBILITY

This stage is the key stage of the majority of events recognized by Allen et al. 2002, Getz 1997, Smith and Steward 1999. Therefore it is important (especially for major events) to deliver one similar event, which can be used as a learning curve (analyzed assets and drawbacks can help to improve the event). In Manchester for example at the 2002 Commonwealth Games the city hosted couple of similar events (2000 – 2002 the city run the championships in squash, table tennis and cycling) to test various aspects in terms of venue performance.

Furthermore in this stage a cost-benefit evaluation must be done properly in order to gain important stakeholder support for the event by evaluating costs versus benefits. Masterman (2004) pinpoints that the following considerations are necessary:

- Who is responsible for the delivery of the objectives (short/long term) and the timings?
- Which are the required resources (financial, personnel, facilities, equipment, marketing, services, and so forth)
- Any bidding process criteria and finance required?
- Are there any event implementation, execution and evaluations requirements and timings?

IMPLEMENTATION PLANNING

This stage is concerned with the strategies that can accomplish the event objectives and future potentials and should have a long-term focus. To make this stage a bit more
comprehensible the World Student Games, which were held in 1991 in Sheffield can be used as an example. On of the objectives was to regenerate an urban area where the unemployment rate was pretty high. The city authority department was set up to attract events and vice versa make use of the new build facilities (Masterman, 2004).

**EVALUATION**

The evaluation process can be considered, as a meaningful feedback tool to support decisions and it is also required in order to achieve future goals. This is not only important to assist the event during its durability it is furthermore important to help to professionalize the industry (Allen et al. 2002, Getz 1997, Hall 1997). Especially larger sport events will gain from such evaluations because managers who were involved during the event period might not be in charge when it comes to the past reports.

**2.9.2 Identified Success Factors beyond the Planning Process Frame**

Apart from the event planning process it can be recognized that some of the reviewed books and articles see the event manager as success factor. Thereby was observed that sport event managers have emerged from backgrounds in marketing, law, human resources and accounting and through their broad knowledge they have the right skills dealing with the different task, which occur in such multitude environment (Masterman, 2004). The literature states at the same time that new event management qualifications from higher education institutions would bring the sport event industry one step forward, because exactly those skills are demanded.

**2.10 The Case of Salt Lake City**

These before mentioned management skills were questioned for the planning process of the 19th Winter Olympics, which were held in Salt Lake City 2003. Primarily the whole project started with a tremendous deficit of 400 million dollars but due to excellent work of the project management team and its efforts the games ended with a surplus of 100 million dollars. What happened? To be able to conduct the Olympics out of the misery the managers installed the following tools:

**Integrated Planning Schedule**

One year in advance this schedule was set up to assist the team with the planning process for resources, budgets, constructions and operations for the top 100 Games-wide activities. The managers new exactly if they were on or behind the schedule and if additional resources were needed. Due to the fact that such a humongous project had incorporated so many different tasks it was obvious that issues would occur. The impacts of these disagreeable
factors were lessened because each functional area director requested changes as a part of highly structured process.

The procedure was followed strictly according to these points:

1. Submission of request to centralized management and tracking group.
2. Evaluation of change regarding impact and quantification by required funding.
3. Impacted areas approved or denied request and in special cases the Coo made the final decision.
4. The requestor was informed in written form about the outcome.

“In fact, through this management process we were able to save significant dollars, producing a needed contingency fund, which was used to answer unforeseen challenges and in many cases expand our service offering, venue sites and management efforts” stated Lehman (SLOC managing director) in the executive summary which was published at the PM Network of the Project Management Institute (PMI, 2004).

Cost Containment

To be able to handle the financial problems the Chief Financial Officer Fraser Bullok determined so-called “must-have” and “nice-to-have” items which were either funded from the core budget (must-have) or from a complementary augmentation budget which was used for example for the entertainment and torch relay program. Furthermore each money transaction higher than $2,000 was tracked to its origin and because of this strict control mechanism a surplus at the end of the Games could be generated.

Communication System

Aware of the fact that a broad group of stakeholder must be informed before and during the event took place, the project management team developed apart from a commercial system its own System for Tracking and Reporting (STAR) which met specific needs. All centralized information were moved to the Main Operation Centre (MOC) an access was given to local government and other venues to update information regularly and quickly. Sensitive information was transferred via text message to two-way pagers and mobile phones and through The MOC Daily information was carried out to the broad masses. The MOC provided additional information like statistical reports over email to more than 200 managers during the Olympics.
**Best Practice**

To eliminate risk, the project management team started to meet in the run up with spokespersons of critical customer groups, athletes, broadcasters, press, sponsors and the National Olympic Committees. Thereby the details of the project plan were discussed and scanned through in terms of identifying uncovered holes. Different scenarios and simulations were designed to test the venues, equipment and communication procedures. A beneficial aid was given through the employment of Petter Ronningen, chief operating officer of the Olympics in Lillehammer (1994) who was already familiar with the implementation process of such a simulation concept and Lehman stated in this context “we looked at risk factors from other games so we could include them in our contingency requirements”.

Through these extensive planning process and the applied tools, Salt Lake City was able to complete the payments to the vendors within nine month whereas other host cities took approximately six years and the Games received the “Project of the Year 2003” award from the Project Management Institute.

**2.11 Summary of Literature Review**

Through the findings in this chapter, which focused primary on how project success criteria and project success factors are perceived from the perspective of project management and in alliance with the relevant findings in the field of sports event management, a theoretical framework has been developed. The results of this research process have clearly shown that the critical success factors (within and beyond the planning process frame) for international sport events are:

- Clear objective of the event
- Clear concept of the event
- Feasibility of the event
- Event evaluation
- Good communication
- Management Skills
This gained insight underlines the justification to continue with the research and prove if the framework regarding success factors is applicable for international sport events in Austria and Sweden, and should finally close the gap of the research question towards to identify the critical success factors of international sport events form the perspective of project management. A further proposition is going to be followed, if the findings in the literature review regarding success factors beyond the “golden triangle” are crucial for sport event managers and companies who are working within this area.
CHAPTER 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will guide through the research process by informing the reader about the steps which have been chosen to examine the research gap in the best way. Therefore the background knowledge from the theoretical framework, which was build up in the previous chapter had been taken into consideration. This is an important fact when applying the chosen research methodology because this approach can have an impact of the final output of this study.

The approach followed in this thesis can be seen at figure 6, which informs about the developments in this stage.

![Diagram of methodology]

Fig. 6: Overview of applied methodology (own description)

3.2 Research Philosophy

The research philosophy is concerned with the question how someone views the world when developing new knowledge in a particular field (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2007). This reflection plays an important role when it comes to choosing the right method and strategy to fill the research gap. The overall literature distinguishes here between to approaches.
ONTOLOGY addresses the questions whether social entities can (should be) perceived as objective entities, which have an external link to social actors or if social entities should be seen as social constructions, which are created by social actors and their perceptions (Brymann & Bell, 2003). The emerged sub-categories are here:

- **Objectivism** portrays that humans do not have any influence on the social phenomena and sees them therefore as external factors.
- **Subjectivism** is concerned with social interactions in a prevailing surrounding and Remenyi, Money & Schwartz, (1998, p. 35) emphasizes the importance to study “the details of the situation to understand the reality or perhaps as reality working behind them”.

EPISTEMOLOGY at the other hand addresses the question what is (should be) regarded as acceptable knowledge and the issue in this context is should the same principles and procedures be applied whilst studying the social environment (Bryman & Bell, 2003). From this background a sub-categorization can be made:

- **Positivism** is implemented when researchers prefer “working with an observable social reality and that the end product of such research can be law-like generalisations similar to those produced by the physical and natural scientists” (Remenyi et. al, 1998, p. 32).
- The position of **Realism** reflects that the senses show reality as truth and that the human mind perceives those objectives (Saunders et al., 2007).
- **Interpretivism** highlights the importance that researchers should understand the human behaviours as a role embedded in the social environment and therefore a distinction must be made between analyzing people as social actors and objectives, which do no have any influence on the day to day life (Saunders et al., 2007).

The chosen methodology for this study follows the drift of realism because the investigated fields of project and sport event management should give an insight how projects and events are planned and organized in practice considering the findings from the literature review.

### 3.3 Research Approach

The research of a study can be done in two different ways; either the deductive or the inductive approach is applied. The distinction between these two ways can be seen that deduction belongs to the philosophy of positivism where laws present the bias of explanation and hypothesis are created out from theory to test propositions (the relationship between tow or more variables is examined through a research strategy). On
the contrary induction belongs to the philosophy of interpretivism where the first step is concerned with the data collection and consequentially these data need to be analysed to develop a new theory (Saunders et al., 2007).

The following Table (3) highlights briefly the differences between deductive and inductive research approach, which was outlined in the work of Saunders et al. (2007).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>DEDUCTIVE scope</strong></th>
<th><strong>INDUCTIVE scope</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● scientific principles</td>
<td>● gaining an understanding of the meanings humans attach to events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● moving from theory to data</td>
<td>● a close understanding of the research context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● the need to explain causal relationships between variables</td>
<td>● the collection of qualitative data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● the collection of quantitative data</td>
<td>● a more flexible structure to permit changes of research emphasis as the research progresses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● the application of controls to ensure validity of data</td>
<td>● a realisation that the researcher is part of the research process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● the operationalisation of concepts to ensure clarity of definition</td>
<td>● less concern with the need to generalise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● a highly structured approach</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● researcher independence of what is being researched</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● the necessity to select samples of sufficient size in order to generalise conclusion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Tab. 3:** Own description from Saunders et al. major differences between deductive and inductive approaches to research (2007, p. 120)

The applied method for this thesis is followed by the inductive approach where the main purpose lies in getting a better feeling of what is going on in a specific field (project and sport event management) and to understand the environment of the conducted topic better (Saunders et al., 2007).

This approach is also supported by Whittington’s (1989) explanations where the research findings are connected with the stock of theory and furthermore Glaser (1992) and Strauss
30

(1967) mentioned in Bryman and Bell (2002) propose this method to generate a strong theory out of data.

3.4 Research Strategy

Once the research approach is defined the next step is it to choose the way in which the data should be collected and take into practice. The literature distinguishes here between quantitative and qualitative methods, which differ from their epistemological and ontological position (Bryman and Bell, 2003).

- The quantitative research method is used as a data collecting tool for numerical data and synonymously it can be used for any data collection technique (such as questionnaire) or data analysis procedure (such as graphs and statistics) (Saunders et. al, 2007).
- Vice versa the qualitative research method is engaged with findings apart from numbers and the focus lies rather on words than quantifications. Following this insights a twist can be made to the inductive strategy where the link between data and theory is associated with this type of research method (Bryman and Bell, 2003) and it appears as a logical consequence that this strategy is applied for the research part in this thesis.

Case studies are defined according to the literature as “a strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence” (Robson, 2002, p. 178). By applying case studies the question “why?”, “what?” and “how?” can be followed and this allows the researcher to be strongly connected with the research process by gaining a deep and new insight (Morris & Wood, 1991).

Yin (2003) recommends the use of a multiple case study rather than a single one (this type of case study tends to be applicable for critical, extreme or unique cases where a strong justification for this alternative is required from the researcher’s point of view) because the advantages comparing tow or more cases are that the findings are more robust (Herriot & Firestone, 1983) and the circumstances can be established better regarding if a theory will hold or not (Yin 1984, Eisenhardt 1989).

The research of this master thesis is conducted as a multiple case study according to the above mentioned definitions, because more than one person and organization is going to be investigated to prove and back up the theory from the literature review apart from drawing any generalizations.
3.5 Data Collection

In the literature can be found that one of the most important sources regarding data collection is the interview because it appears to be a guided conversation where the stream between interviewer and interviewee can be perceived as fluid rather than in structured queries were it is likely to be rigid (Rubin & Rubin, 1995).

A distinction must be made here between three types of interviews (Saunders et.al 2007):

- **Structured interviews** with standardised questions, which are used for quantitave research interviews. When using this method, the interviewer reads exactly the question out as written down.
- **Semi-structured interviews** give the researcher a leeway during the interview, because the order of questions can be varied, some question can also be omitted and additional ones can be asked. The focus lies here in building up a theme list before starting the interview, which should provide a broad spectrum of the topic. The interview is conducted in the manner that the researcher chooses the questions in terms of organisational context aligned with the research topic. Therefore the interviewer needs to have a good empathy regarding which question should be asked to gain a broad insight.
- **Unstructured interviews** where the phrasing of the questions takes place during the interview. This method allows the interviewee to speak freely but the researcher needs to have a clear idea about the aspect he/she wants to explore.

According to King (2004) semi-structured interviews are basically used in qualitative researches because this method can be perceived as very flexible (Bryman & Bell, 2003). It is further a quite efficient tool concerning data collection as well the relationship among the parties involved in the process is more personal and this fact contributes to a higher response rate (Saunders et. al 2007).

Therefore the interviews conducted in this thesis are followed using the semi-structured interview method.

3.6 Sample of interview partners

The first step towards data collection was to define the right companies and individuals who are able to provide this master thesis with an excellent knowledge to fill the research gap.

The best way to do so is according to Saunders et al. (2007) using a non-probability sampling, which provides the researcher with a series of alternative techniques to chose the right sample. Neuman (2002) states here that the form of purposive sampling is often used for case studies where the sample size can be considered as small and these samples do not
have the ability to represent the total population. The advantage of this sample type is that the researcher selects due to his/her own judgement the cases, which are highly informative.

Taking this into consideration the author has applied the following criteria and parameters for choosing the interview partners.

- Sport event managers, project managers and event companies/agencies, which are familiar with the planning procedure of so-called hallmark, mega, major and minor events (according to the literature review abstract 2.6).
- Managers and event agencies that operate in Austria and Sweden (this is due to the Austrian origin of the author who studies currently in Sweden, Umeå).

In the next abstract a detailed description about the data collecting process as well as a brief introduction of the interview partners can be found.

### 3.7 Data Collecting Process

The search process towards the appropriate interview candidate was facilitated through the fact that the author of this thesis has already examined this field for earlier studies (the author was studying sport, culture and event management in Austria before starting with the master thesis in Sweden). The potential companies and persons where firstly contacted over telephone where the author introduced herself and the topic followed by the question if there is an interest for contributing in this research. All of the six chosen candidates agreed upon this point and allowed the author to use their data and information.

The six interviewees remarked the desire to receive a brief overview regarding the topic and a theme list of question over email before the interview was held. This was due to the reason that the Austrian as well as the Swedish interview partners wanted to prepare themselves before the interview was conducted. These circumstances led to the second step that emails with the required information (for the Austrian interviewees the documents were provided in German language) were sent over to all involved parties. In the mail was also stated that the interview process will not take longer than 30 minutes and all received data will be treated confidently.

The following table provides further information about the conducted interviews in terms of date and time. Due to the fact to keep the interviewees anonymous each person was marked with a number.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interviewee</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Date of Interview</th>
<th>Duration of Interview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Project manager</td>
<td>12.5.2009</td>
<td>17 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>12.5.2009</td>
<td>24 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Event production</td>
<td>14.5.2009</td>
<td>23 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>14.5.2009</td>
<td>36 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>15.5.2009</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>CEO</td>
<td>18.5.2009</td>
<td>21 minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tab. 4: Sample of Interviewees

The next section of the thesis presents information regarding the chosen company as well as a short overview about the organized sport events. Like in the previous abstract the companies are not presented namely and an alphabetical labelling is used therefore to keep the companies anonymous.

**Company A**

Operates in the field of marketing for ski resorts in Austria, Switzerland and Germany (indoor skiing) and is situated in the city of Graz, Styria (east Austria). The construction of so-called snow parks with different obstacles and jumps should attract the young customer group. Therefore numerous events are organized every winter season as well as for the indoor skiing arena in Germany during summer. The company is managed by four people each of them responsible for a department:

- Construction snow parks
- Concept and project development
- Cooperation and customer service
- Media.

Apart from this structure the company has employed various project managers and freelance workers who work part time for the events.

**Interviewees:**

**Project manager:** Has studied sport culture and event management in Kufstein/Austria and is currently doing the master in entrepreneurship in Innsbruck. Started working with snowboard events a couple of years ago and is since spring 2008 employed by the company.
CEO (concept and project development): Possess a university degree in philosophy and sociology and is one of the founders of the company. Is since 18 years involved with the organization of snowboard and ski events.

Overview of event:
After the construction of the snow park in accordance with the ski resort and other sponsors the event is set up for a duration of up to 4 days which includes elimination races as well as semi-final and final for international riders in the field freestyle snowboard and free ski. The snow park can consist of different features (half and quarter pipe) where the athletes perform different jumps and tricks.

Company B
The company operates since 1994 in the field of snowboard events and was founded in the same year the event took place for the very first time in Innsbruck. At the beginning just two persons where in charge of the organizing process (at that time the event had not more than 5000 spectators) and currently four employees plus the CEO of the company are working fulltime for the project. The event agency is divided into three departments

- Event Marketing
- Event Planning and
- Accounting.

Accordingly all the administrative work in alliance with the event planning process is done in these departments and additionally every year (the event takes place either in January or February) a numerous amount of volunteers as well as many subcontractors (e.g. responsible for stage and ramp construction) make sure that the event is up and running.

Interviewee:
Event production: Is working for this company fulltime since 2003 and was studying tourism before. Has gained some additional knowledge in the field of event organization through working as a freelancer for the different occasions (e.g. EURO 2008).

Overview of event:
The event was held for the first time in January 1994 as a straight jump snowboard contest and in the same year the organizers decided due to the enormous success (500 spectators were expected but more than 5.000 showed up) to repeat the event in December. From this time on the event developed into one of the most influential snowboard challenges nowadays with broad media coverage and is organized annually. Until 1999 the sponsorship exploded and over 45.000 visited the event, which includes also a music supporting program
and an after contest party. This was the last time when the contest was held in its home city Innsbruck because six people died after the show when everybody tried to leave the ski jumping stadium (venue of event) at the same time and the exits where not able to funnel the masses. The city authorities took back the permission and the event had to move to Seefeld, a small city approximately 20 km away from Innsbruck where in the following five years further contests were hosted. After the contract expired the snowboard contest moved to Munich/Germany where the program showed besides the snowboard competition (straight jump and quarter pipe) a freestyle motocross contest. After a long negotiating stage with the politicians the event returned to Innsbruck in February 2008 where the quarter pipe contest is an addition to the straight jump contest in Munich.

Company C

The company was founded due to the result that the Swedish Biathlon Federation and the city of Östersund were assigned to host the IBU Biathlon World Championships in 2008. To be able to coordinate all duties and responsibilities in an efficient way the company was structured into the following departments:

- Economy
- Stadium
- Race
- Administration
- Accommodation
- Information and Media
- Marketing and Events
- Logistic
- Functionary.

Furthermore a human resource manager and a sport coordinator were in charge for issues occurring in these areas. The company was directed by a CEO who was responsible for the final decisions making process in accordance with the Biathlon Federation and the authorities of the city.

Interviewee:

CEO: Has studied business at the University of Östersund and was working after his study from 1999 till 2005 at a bank where he engaged the position of the CEO the last view years. 2005 he was recruited as CEO for the World Championships (he was working already for the Swedish Biathlon Association during the World Cup race in 2005). After the event was over he returned to his former job at the bank and works part time as the general secretary for the Biathlon National Championships. For his excellent work regarding the planning of the Biathlon Championships he was awarded as the best project manager of the year 2008.
Overview of Event:

The event took place from February 8 – 17 2008 in Östersund (city is situated close to the Norwegian boarder near to Trondheim). The basic concept of a biathlon competition consists of a cross-country ski race around a track and either two or four shooting rounds (half prone position and the other half standing) where the total distance is divided. At the shooting round the biathlete must hit five targets and depending on the performance an extra distance or time is added to the athletes running distance/time. The race was divided into three categories:

- Male distances (sprint 10 km, pursuit 12,5 km, single 20 km, relay 4 x 7,5 km and mass start 15 km)
- Female distances (sprint 7,5 km, pursuit 10 km, single 15 km, relay 4 x 6 km and mass start 12, 5 km)
- Mixed distances (2 x 6 km women and 2 x 7,5 km men).

During the event more than 110.000 spectators where visiting the competition and saw the opening and medal ceremonies at the Winter Park stadium. In total 38 nations competed at the IBU Biathlon World Championships. Furthermore a banquet was held to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Biathlon Championships and events especially for children called the Little World Championships were set up were kids could try out a special biathlon course.

Company D

The company is located in north Sweden, city of Örnsköldsvik and has arranged and organized since 2001 a numerous adventure sport events. The basic concept of adventure sports combines running (orienteering race), paddling (kayak) and mountain biking but these disciplines can vary from event to event and seasonal requirements. The company started small with covering just the national sector but expanded its scope through establishing itself in the 2005 Adventure Racing Series which led to the fact that the Adventure Racing World Championships 2006 was arranged by the company.

The range of duty of the company is divided into two areas operations management and course design, which are carried out by the owner and his wife, who both actively compete in this field. The company supports additionally different brands to establish and maintain their position at the outdoor sport market. Furthermore the company organizes lectures in teambuilding, mental and physical training as well as introductions of adventure races for companies and other athletes.
**Interviewee:**

**CEO:** Before started the company he was employed at a communication company close to his hometown. Interviewee of company D does not have any qualifications in terms of a higher education.

**Overview of Event:**

**Adventure Racing World Championship 2006**

The Swedish region of Lapland in association with the region of Norland in Norway were scene for the 2006 World Championship in adventure racing where 32 teams (one team consisted of four people) from 20 countries had to master a course within seven days of non-stop-racing which required skills in the disciplines mountain biking, kayaking, whit water paddling, glacier mountaineering, rope works coasteering, canyoning, inline skating and caving. The covered distance was 800 km with an altitude difference of 1900 meter.

The event had enormous national and international media coverage and was evaluated to be one of the best races ever made in this field.

**Company E**

After the announcement of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) in December 2008 that the city of Innsbruck has won the bid for the first Youth Olympic Winter Games 2012 the company was set up and assigned with the planning and organizing procedure of the event. The following departments are going to facilitate the implementation of the different tasks, which need to be done before and during the event takes place:

- Marketing, Events and Innovations
- Finance and Communication
- Venues and Operations
- International Relationship and Project Management
- Sports.

Two assistants support this structure and the CEO is going to manage the daily operations in accordance with the IOC and the authorities of the host city.

**Interviewee:**

**CEO of the company:** Has studied sport science at the universities of Innsbruck, Cologne and Manchester with specifications in the fields sport economy and sport management and did several post graduate courses in the area “Management of Sport Organisations” at the Universities of San Marino (Italy) and Lausanne/Lyon. Worked freelance for various sport events (e.g. Handball Euro 1997, Women Handball World Championships 2001) and was
management assistant of the ISOC, which was engaged with the organizing of the World Student Games in Innsbruck/Seefeld 2005. At the Winter Olympic Games 2006 in Torino/Italy he took over the role as deputy venue manager and last year at the UEFA European Football Championship 2008 he was employed as the office manager of the organizing committee for the host city Innsbruck. Furthermore he gives lectures at the University Innsbruck Institute of Sport Science and at the University of Applied Sciences in Kufstein in the areas sport management and sport economics.

**Overview of Event:**

The Youth Olympic Winter Games are going to be held in January 2012 for the duration of 10 days. Young athletes between 14 and 18 years will have the chance to compete during this time in the fields

- Biathlon
- Bobsleigh and Skeleton
- Curling and Ice hockey
- Ice skating (short track, speed skating, figure skating)
- Sleigh
- Skiing (alpine, cross country, freestyle, Nordic combination, ski jumping, snowboarding).

The information regarding how the event is going to look like was not available when talking to the CEO.

**3.8 Interview Process**

Due to the strict time limitation and the local distance between interviewer and interviewee it was impossible to conduct the interviews on a face-to-face basis. This bias was further supported by the fact that a journey to Austria as well as to the two Swedish locations, which are approximately 350 kilometres away from the author’s residence, would have been too costly. Because of this matter of fact all six interviews were handled by internet telephony where a priori a special account was set up in terms to avoid high distant call fees. This approach is also being seen in the literature (Bryman & Bell, 2003) as more convenient way when lacking in time and money.

Not seeing once vis-à-vis underlines the importance that the interviewer strives to establish a personal contact and should therefore demonstrate competence to overcome interviewer and interviewees bias (Saunders et. al, 2007).
The checklist according to Saunders et al. (2007) contains:

- Opening the interview in a friendly way
- Using an appropriate language
- Using questions if something is not clear
- Listen carefully what the interviewee has to say
- Testing and summarising the understanding
- Recognising and dealing with difficult participants
- Recording data.

This guideline was considered while talking to the interviewees. The formal language used in the interviews with the Austrian participants was due to the origin of the thesis author German and the interviews with the Swedish interview partners were held in English.

Before the questioning process was started, all of the interviewees where asked if the text concerning the short description of the topic (which was sent over by email) was understandable and if some further explanations were needed.

To be able to gain a good recording quality apart from disturbing influences, which might have bothered negatively the interaction between interviewer and interviewee, the telephone calls were held in a quiet environment.

### 3.9 Interview Design

As already mentioned in the abstract data collecting process (3.6) a mail with a theme list of question was sent over to the interviewees before the interviews were conducted by telephone.

The list was divided into four major parts, which covered the important findings from the literature review.

- **FIRST PART:** Interviewee’s involvement in the project
- **SECOND PART:** Defining success
- **THIRD PART:** Critical success factors
- **FOURTH PART:** Soft-side of project success

This guideline was also used during the interview to be able to keep the “right” track. The whole theme list of question can be found in the appendix of this thesis.
3.10 Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity are important criteria when assessing the quality of the research done in an quantitative study. In the reviewed literature could be noted, that there have been some discussions among researchers about the relevance for this assessment (Bryman & Bell, 2003).

Due to the explanation of Mason (1996, p. 21) reliability and validity are “different kind of measures of the quality, rigour and wider potential of research, which are achieved according to certain methodological and disciplinary conventions and principles”. Authors like LeCompte and Goetz (1982) as well as Kirk and Miller (1986) go on step beyond and have included further termini in context of reliability and validity.

**External reliability:** The meaning refers here to the degree to which a study is replicable which might be a difficult criterion because regarding to the above-mentioned authors it is impossible to “freeze” a social setting and the circumstances.

**Internal reliability:** The expression refers to the situation that there is more than one observer among the research group and that the research team needs to agree upon the observed data.

**Internal validity:** This terminus points out how the theoretical developed ideas match with the researchers observations. This is in fact the strength of the qualitative paradigm because this model allows the researcher to ensure a high level of congruence between the developed theory and observation, which is done for a long period in a specific social environment.

**External validity:** The relevance lies in if a generalization can be made here across social settings. This might be a crucial question because researchers apply often for their studies small case studies and samples, which do not provide enough information.

**Construct Reliability**

The reliability for this research was created through conducting a case study; this is also suggested by Ying (2003) who sees the advantage, that later researchers are able to follow the same procedure as described (same case) which should lead to the same conclusion. The companies and events were described in detail in chapter 3.6 and for further researches in this area the author is willing to provide more information how to contact the mentioned companies.
Construct Validity

To prove the external validity semi-structured interviews are used because according to Saunders et al. (2007) a generalization about the entire population is neglected through applying this interview type. A further step made in this thesis is that a theoretical framework has been build up by using the latest accomplishments and knowledge, which provided the information by reviewing a certain number of important articles to narrow down the topic. Also the multiple-case study method supports the extern validity of this thesis by examine projects of the same nature (sport events) where the theoretical framework could be perceived as evident.

The thesis implies also a proposition if companies/event agencies consider the findings of the project management literature in terms of success factors as crucial. The intern validity is proved through the pattern matching technique (Saunders et al., 2007), which allows to test the adequacy of the set up framework.

3.11 Summary of Methodology

This chapter was to inform the reader about the chosen and applied methodology for this thesis and provided furthermore a proper background of the selected interview partners and the event they are/were responsible for.

So far the thesis has provided a theoretical framework to back up the research question and follow the preposition if sports event managers are aware of the success criteria of project management and has defined the methodology and paradigm, which was necessary in order how the research should be done and interpreted. The next abstract leads to the analysis of the conducted interviews.
CHAPTER 4: Analysis of Findings

4.1 Introduction

The current chapter is going to analyze the data, which were collected in the semi-structured interviews. As described in Miles (1994) qualitative researches are rich in information and therefore their analysis is quite difficult. Aware of this fact a strategy must be applied in order to prevent the researcher for so-called “analytical interruptus” (Lofland, 1971, p. 18) what means that data needs to be structured to give them a wider significance for further researches conducted in this area (Bryman & Bell, 2003).

The data analysis of this thesis is followed by the analytic strategy where a descriptive framework was developed out of the reviewed literature to guide the case study. The corresponding literature refers here, that this alternative approach is less preferable and applicable just for such cases where theoretical proposition and rival explanations could not be used (Yin, 2003). This descriptive approach was used to (a) identify a certain unit of analysis – sport event managers and companies who are in charge of the planning process of sport events and (b) which are the critical success factors of those events regarding the event planning process (within and beyond the frame).

For the proposition if sport event managers and companies are aware of the success factors from the view of project management, the theoretical preposition is used.

The analysis of the interviews is done in the following order:

- **Project success factors/criteria from the view of project management**
- **Project success factors/criteria within the event planning process frame**
  - Clear objective of the event
  - Clear concept of the event
  - Feasibility of the event
  - Event evaluation
- **Project success factors/criteria beyond the event planning process frame**
  - Good communication
  - Management Skills
- **Further identified success factors/criteria**
  - Volunteers
  - Project team
4.2 Analysis of Interviews

As already mentioned in abstract 3.6 which informed about the data collecting process, all interviewees and companies who are embedded in this research process would be kept anonymous and the following abbreviations and aliases are used in order to make references regarding the conducted interview: A1, A2, B3, C4, D5 and E6 (the letter refers to a company whilst the number describes the interviewee).

4.2.1 Project Success Factors/Criteria from the View of Project Management

Atkinson (1999) and his “golden triangle” was discussed at the beginning of the literature review in terms that a project is perceived as successful when the variables of time cost and quality are fulfilled. All six respondents agreed that this is one of the main criteria when assessing an event but added at the same time that further criteria and factors must be added which are just as important. A1 stated that the needs of the customers are on top of the list and agreed upon Dalcher’s (2008) level of project success II. For company B the criterion of budget is considered as an internal criterion, but the event should furthermore satisfy the spectators and “… we want that they have a good time at our event so they will come back next year …”. The same company stated that for an external criterion the return of investment (ROI) is used for sponsors, because they need to know how much value they have created. Interviewee B2 who is in charge for the multi-sport races, provided the information that for his event it is important to provide the competing athletes a demanding course and a save surrounding where they can perform the sport on a high level.

Respondent E6 who is currently involved with the assessment process of the different stakeholder groups emphasized the importance from whom these success criteria are set up. “For the last Student Winter Games we got the best critique ever and the FISU stated that those were the best games ever held and that we have set up new benchmarks and innovations. The local population on the other hand was kind of disappointed because they games have not fulfilled their expectations and it was a waste of public money”.

To sum up it can be stressed that all six interviewees need to stay within a budget and time when planning an event, but without meeting the stakeholders’ needs (which can vary from event to event) they would not consider the event as successful.

4.2.2 Critical Success Factors/Criteria within the Event Planning Process Frame

In the second part of the literature review scanning through the event planning process frame has identified the critical success factors for international sport events. In this context must be stated when asking the interviewees about the critical factors regarding this event planning process, not all interview partners have been familiar with such an process and it’s
10 stages. Respondent A1, A2 and B3 are aware of the existence of such a process, but do not use it whilst C4 and D5 never heard about such a frame and organize/organized their event following a different procedure. C4 emphasized “... we worked with the balance score card and this tool informed us are we doing the right thing ... have we considered everything in terms of planning ... are we on track – we had no experience working with a plan like that ... this would have made our work a little bit easier using it and working with computers ...”. In this context respondent of company C provided the information, when working for the World Championships in 2008 the organizing team noticed that they have missed a lot of things, which have not been considered during the World Cup Races in 2005.

In the case of E6 it could be identified, that all steps of the event planning process are applied for the current event. This procedure occurs to be important where the planning process of the sport event is aligned with the bid procedure of the future host city.

- **Clear objective of the event**

Working with a clear objective plays/played an important role for all the companies and it could be identified that the objectives varied in terms of the company’s strategic long-term goal and contribute to the long-term direction of the organization (a twist can be made here to chapter 2.4. assessment of project success). Organization A and B which operate in this field since a quite long time see the objective in providing a high quality event to their customers and see the potential in promoting their name. The aim of the events organized by company A is to attract the young and trend-oriented audience in the winter sports and gain this target group as regular user or guest for their clients. B3 “... we know that we are not the cheapest event agency, but our primary objective is it to deliver a high quality event and therefore we need to consider every little small detail ...”.

When asking interviewee D5 about the objective of the events organized by his company he stressed “... we are doing that for the heart of the sport ...”. This has led to the fact that the company name is known as “the” event agency company in the field of adventure races and multi-sports. Through this clear determination what the event should achieve a clear competitive advantage compared to other organisation can be recognized and this makes it possible that company A, B and C have established their name on the market and conduct the company towards future.

The situation for company C and E is a bit different, because these companies were set up for just a temporary time and operate(d) for a specific occasion. The long-term strategies in order to drive the company towards success after the event is over can be neglected in this stage. But nevertheless it is more important to have a clear objective, which guarantees the success of the event emphasized respondent E6. This was also identified by respondent of company C4 who answered “... we wanted to organize the best World Championships ever ...
not only for the biathlon association and athletes, also for the sponsors, medias, employees and people who live in Jämtland ...”.

➢ Clear concept of the event

Four of the six respondents (company B, D and E) stated that the venue used for the event wasn’t particularly build for this occasion. Company A which organizes the annually snowboard event in the ski jump arena mentioned that solely the construction for the jump must be rebuild before the every event and therefore they have assigned a subcontractor. Also the facilities and infrastructure required for the Youth Olympics are already available to the athletes, population and the tourists of the region. Same situation could be found for the Biathlon World Championships. The stadium and tracks were already integrated in the previous World Cup races.

➢ Feasibility of the event

As mentioned in the literature review this is the key stage of the majority of the events and it was perceived that this segment is more important for so-called mega events, which are held at the venue just once in a lifetime. The chance if a potential host city wins the bidding process is depending on the fact if new venues, stadiums and so forth must be constructed in advance.

This was the strength of the candidacy of Innsbruck as host city for the Youth Winter Olympics 2012 because the city has not only a many years experience as host of major sports events but also provides the required venues and a modern infrastructure stated E6 in the interview. The same condition could be found when analysing the interview of C4. Races in the local stadium of Östersund have been held since 1989 and some minor modifications have been made at the trail system in summer 2007 in order to comply the international regulations. Both CEO provided the information that they were/are responsible for the required resources (financial, personnel, marketing, aso.) in accordance with the respective associations and authorities of the city. Therefore a contract was signed. For sport events of this size it is a normal procedure that the host-city/country order an “ex-ante” and “ex-post” analyse, which measure the cost-benefit evaluation before and after the event (information received from interviewee E6).

Respondent B3 who’s event is much smaller in size and takes place every year at the same place emphasized, that after the incident of 1999 where people died after leaving the venue (ski jumping arena), they had to consider the feasibility in terms of new safety criteria. In cooperation with the venue city a new concept was build up and some parts of the arena had to be renewed (broader staircase and entrance).
For company D the feasibility of the event is also aligned with safety standards they must follow. Therefore it is important to get all the permissions needed which guarantee that the course is safe.

- **Event evaluation**

All interviewed person stated that this feedback tool supports the outcome of the current and future event significantly. Company A and B evaluates the event in teamwork with the customer/sponsors to be able to identify gaps which can be filled before the next time the event takes place. To be able to improve the athletic performance, that’s one fact why the spectators come and visit the event, the competitors carry an important role to evaluate the necessary equipment (D5).

Interviewee D6 agreed upon the importance to gain new insight from former events “… best practice and experience data from others events are used … if there happens something important in Singapore¹, we are the first one who will be informed …”.

### 4.2.3 Critical Success Factors/Criteria beyond the Event Planning Process Frame

- **Good communication**

As seen in the abstract about the event evaluation, companies and project managers need to communicate with a various and broad spectrum of stakeholder groups to be able to gain the required information to enhance the event steadily. It was recognized that the communication structure and used tools are dependent on event size and needs. “Therefore we do not use a project plan, we rather meet every day and keep us up to date about the event progress …” stated by B3.

In terms to inform the involved parties, company A stated that they use a variety of tools (press releases, videos, photos) to inform the broad masses about the event and in this context the interviewee stated further that especially new media like blogs and facebook are attractive for the target group.

In case of respondent C4 the number of identified stakeholder groups was approximately 200 and about 700 meeting and seminars were held to talk about the event, why the event is important for the region, to introduce the different sub-projects of the event because everyone should be informed about the current situation of the planning process.

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¹ Singapore is the first host city for the Youth Summer Olympic Games in 2010.
Furthermore all companies emphasized that project owners and sponsors must be up-dated and informed in a regular basis to prove that the event is handled in a professional manner and to make every step taken in the event comprehensible.

- **Management Skills**

Whilst the interviews were conducted it could be identified, that every single respondent was confident in giving the answers and everybody knew exactly what they were talking about. Respondent D5 stated in this context “...I am competing myself and that’s why I know what the spectators and athletes are looking for ...every knowledge I possess, I have gained it through learning by doing ...”. Interview partner C4 provided the information that before he was involved with the Biathlon World Championships (it was his first big sport event ever) he has gained strong leadership and management skills through working in different projects which all required strong interpersonal and good communication abilities “... I was given the opportunity to do the Championships my way...”.

Interviewee E6 has the broadest knowledge in terms of higher education aligned with a long-time working experience in this field.

**4.2.4 Further identified Success Factors**

All interviewees had apart from the question of the theme list the possibility to add further success criteria noted in pervious events. This sub-chapter is going to present the findings in this field.

- **Volunteers**

If small sized or major event all respondents emphasized the importance to have good and highly skilled volunteers working for the event. “Every year we are looking for people who work part time and for free for our events ...” stated A2. In the case of the World Championships in Östersund the volunteers’ manager started already in August 2006 his duties and more than 1000 people have registered to work as one of the 850 officials. It could be identified that 400 of the volunteers had already previous experiences from other Biathlon World Cups and events in this field and around 100 people came from biathlon clubs. “I also wanted to integrate school pupils; because they should gain the feeling I could do something with my work move” (quote of C4).
Project Team

Another success criterion that could be seen was at the case of the World Biathlon Championships in Sweden. The CEO of company C employed people with different experience, age, gender and competences and according to his statement this took the project forward. He wanted to work with feelings in the organisation and everybody working for the event should have the impression “... it is my World Championships ...”. To be able to deal better with occurring issues in the team, he employed a friend of him, a psychologist, who was responsible for the teambuilding processes.
CHAPTER 5: Discussion of Findings

5.1 Introduction

This chapter is going to discuss the findings from the previous analysis with more detail and an alliance to both parts of the literature reviews is made.

5.2 Project Success Factors/Criteria from the view of Project Management

The main criterion for defining project success is staying within a certain budget. The majority of the respondents answered that either the money for the event comes from a private sponsors or as perceived at major events from the public sector and therefore managers must take care and do not underestimate the arising expenses for the event. Once a budget is set up and overrun by additional costs it is difficult to bargain for further funds. It seems that the success criteria of Atkinson (1999) in terms of the “golden triangle” still are criterion number one.

In the literature review was further mentioned that new approaches are applied nowadays to define project success. This could be clearly seen in the five examined companies, which all emphasized the importance to meet the customers need. Dalcher’s (2008) four levels of project success play therefore an important role because companies strive to enhance the outcome the so-called product of an event. This is an important parameter conducting the company towards long-term success. Thereby was recognized that this affects smaller companies/event-agencies (their main aim is to survive on the market) rather than such companies, which are assigned to carry out a one in a lifetime event.

Furthermore it was perceived that companies work with clear objectives and goals (this is going to be discussed with more detail in one of the next paragraphs) to be able to gain advantage beyond their competitors and it is as well a helpful tool measuring the project success.

5.3 Critical Success Factors/Criteria within the Event Planning Process Frame

➢ Clear objective of the event

To have a clear objective about what is going to be achieved with the event enables the companies/agencies to clearly stand out from other competitors. This can be seen as an important fact for those companies, which need to pitch against others to win the right to
stage a major event. Also for small event agencies it is important to set up clear goals and stipulate terms and conditions to fulfil the target. According to Masterman (2004) it is thereby necessary to evaluate each stage of the planning process to ensure that the objectives are met. As identified just the minority follows the planning process shown in the literature review but nevertheless all respondents are aware of using a clear identified objective and as seen events are done in a proper manner and speak for their success.

- **Clear concept of the event**

Most of the sport events have a high entertaining factor and are costly to stage because new infrastructure and equipment is required. As seen during the interviews, companies tend to use already existing venues to reduce further expenses. The literature states here “those ceremonies with pomp and style will always be a cost versus benefit decision” (Masterman, 2004, p. 55). The company needs do define the level of service, which means should the money be spent for the entertaining program or infrastructure.

- **Feasibility of the event**

In both cases (Biathlon and Youth Olympics) previous events have taken place in the host cities and were/are used as a so-called learning curve. This is an important factor when it comes to worth case scenarios, because the venues need to be tested in terms of safety regulations for both spectators and athletes. A safe and modern venue (this implies also innovative equipment through which athletic performance can be enhanced) will picture the event from its best side for the media, which broadcast worldwide. As in the literature review stated most of the stakeholders are interested in economic benefits and if the event pays its way. Therefore, as seen in the previous chapter a cost-benefit evaluation is being done. The findings of Jones (2001) emphasize in this context this analysis might get overshadowed by political objectives because regarding Hall (2001) they tend to push through proposals without economic, social or environmental evaluation procedures. The result is a “fast-track planning” with an insufficient feasibility assessment. Further noted was, that all responsibles need to stay within a certain budget, this leads back to the success criteria of Atkinson and therefore special contracts were/are signed. The principal agent theory mentioned in the first part of the literature review was perceived in terms that all respondents are/were empowered to shape the way how to reach a result, for example in terms of quality of the event or how different tasks are/were be done.

- **Event evaluation**

The evaluation process carried out by the examined companies is done as well at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of an event. A constant consultation with all the parties involved is necessary to be sure the objective of the event is met and if modifications
need to be done to achieve the events target. Getz (1997) suggests therefore the measurability of those objectives, which might be seen in a long-term view for major events difficult. Specific long-term measures need to be applied to evaluate the new opportunities and chances. Going back to Dalcher’s (2008) four level of success, small and major sport events carry the opportunity for future potential and managers working in this are need to pay attention when defining goals.

5.4 Critical Success Factors beyond the Event Planning Process

- Good communication

As seen in the paragraphs before, the event planning process aligns different parties where a constant communication is required. All events need to take this into consideration and use the different tools therefore. A more formal and frequent communication could be recognized when informing people outside the company/agency. Supporting and informing the different stakeholders and project owners with the latest data make sure that objectives are clearly transported and as mentioned a positive publicity of the event leads to competitive advantages where a long-term direction can be conducted.

On the contrary informal communication was identified within a company because everyone engaged in the work was familiar with the different procedures and tasks. This open style leads to the fact that the teamwork is efficiently.

As in the chapter “soft” side of project success (2.5) mentioned a clear communication of objectives directs the effort of the project team.

- Management Skills

When looking back at the different skills of the involved people, it could be perceived that everyone had a different background and experience. Two of the Austrian respondents have a university degree in the field of sports management and it was further recognized that the stages of the event planning process from the literature review are applied for the current organizing process for the Youth Winter Games. Nevertheless it must be stated here that regarding the fact that the majority of the interviewees do not possess such a degree their event was even so successfully.

5.5 Further identified Success Factors

- Volunteers

The different cases have shown that volunteers are needed for every event independently of size. Especially major events become dependent on the support of local community and volunteers where a higher amount is required. Graham et al. (2001) sees this area
confronted with a considerable planning and costing input. Additional expenses must be considered for the recruiting process, uniforms, food, transportation and training.

- **Project Team**

As recognized the project team can exist of people with different background and education, gender, age, different cultures where many languages are spoken. To be able to guide all these diversities and bundle the efficiency the manager need to know how to lead and motivate the team. This might be a result regarding the fact that event managers are working in their home country. As in the literature review already pointed out, customer satisfaction is perceived to be high in these cases.
CHAPTER 6: Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

This final chapter of the master thesis is going to sum up the findings from the previous part and informs as well of the strength and weaknesses of the research. The last paragraph gives further suggestion about future research areas and closes this chapter.

6.2 General Conclusion

To be able to answer the research question towards which factors are perceived to be important for staging an event and if the latest findings from the area of project management in this context are be considered as crucial, a literature review was build up at the beginning of this thesis. The first part was concerned about the common understanding of project success, which strived the importance not only fulfil the project within the “golden triangle” mentioned by Atkinson (1999) furthermore objectives and goals are needed (Baccarini, 2001) to contribute to a long-term success. Numerous authors emphasized therefore to identify the different stakeholders groups to be able to meet the set up goals. This interplay of different groups had led to the fact that that communication is seen as an important factor to achieve the project target.

The second part of the literature review informed about the critical success factors form the view of the event planning process and it’s 10 stages, which is according the relevant literature an important tool. The findings here led to the results that success factors were identified within this process (objectives, concept, feasibility and evaluation) as well at those outside this frame (communication and management skills).

The analysis off the six interviews has shown, that all respondents agreed upon the fact to fulfil the project within a certain budget. Furthermore it was stated that project success is evaluated through achieving the customers’ need and this is important for conducting the company towards future success. To be able to accomplish future targets, clear objectives and goals are used to make the companies more outstanding from other competitors. To address these objectives to the right groups all companies emphasized here the need of stakeholder management and a continuous communication process (internal and external stakeholders).

A further insight was given that the event planning process was not applied properly; in some cases the respondents were not familiar with such a process, when organizing an
event. This might be because of the circumstances, that just major events, a bidding procedure needs to be done at the beginning, are aware of this planning frame.

To sum up, the fact is that through hosting an event (the range varies here from medium sized up to major events) the companies and event agencies build a perfect platform for themselves as well as for their customers to head up for long-term objectives and goals. In the case of major events plays this an important role for the host region or city, because this event type is characterized to be extremely costly. New venues and infrastructure must be set up to be ready when the spotlight goes on pictures and press releases are spread over media to inform about the event.

The main purpose of this research study was to address the critical success factors for international sport events in Austria and Sweden. Especially the region of Tirol with its main capital Innsbruck (western Austria) has shown that the industry around the field of sport event management seems to be handled in a professional way where major events are organized and planned accordingly to the relevant scientific findings. This development has also a positive influence for smaller event agencies and it could be recognized that high service is offered to customers and other stakeholders. Furthermore the local universities in Innsbruck and Kufstein offer special studies for sport and event management where every year the international graduates help to enhance this field.

Whilst studying the Swedish companies it was noted, that the area around sport and event management is less advanced in terms of higher education but all examined events are carried out in the same professional manner. The approaches vary here in terms of leadership style and organizing procedure.

6.3 Strength and Weaknesses

The strength of this thesis can be seen in the fact, that the author used two approaches examine the background of sport events. As already mentioned, the theoretical findings of project management helped firstly to investigate the proposition if the criteria in terms of success are crucial for sport event managers and secondly the build up framework around the event planning process conducted the research towards filling the gap.

Different companies within this operation field contributed with their knowledge and it has been tried to get a broad insight in terms how events of different sizes are planned and which factors are considered to be important.

The author would like to state at this point of the study that it would have been more meaningful examine just one size of event type (either major or hallmark event) in Austria and Sweden, where a better comparison between the two countries could have been made. Also the number of examined companies was uneven (four companies in Austria, whether
just two companies in Sweden were taken into consideration) and a general conclusion cannot be drawn. This might be seen as a drawback of this study but at the other hand leads this fact to further and detailed researches in this area.

Due to the constraints of time, financial resources and geographical situation of the interview partners the data collection process was conducted over telephone interviews. The weakness in this technique lies that reaction from the interviewee could not be observed and through a face-to-face interview the relation between both interview partners could have been enhanced.

### 6.4 Further Research Suggestion

As mentioned previously, the approaches how the different events are planned and designed vary from the event size till the knowledge an event manager possess. It is up to the managers how they look at different things in a project and how much effort they are willing to make. Therefore it is not only important to motivate the project team, which works in this fast paced environment but also the project/event manager.

How such benefit systems could look like would further research studies in this field show.
List of References


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Appendix 1 – Theme List of Questions

First Part (Interviewee’s involvement in the project)

- Could you please give a brief overview of your business background?
- Could you please describe your current position and duties in the organization?
- Could you please give a short overview of your experience you have already gained in previous sport events (project manager)?
- Could you please give a short insight with which responsibilities have you been assigned in the current and previous project / event?

Second Part (Defining success)

- Which criteria do you use in terms of evaluate your project as successful (Dalcher´s 4 stages)?
- Are these success factors designed and defined before the event takes place?
- If yes – who sets up these success criteria?
- How do you assess (measure) the success of your project / event?

Part three (critical success factors)

- What do you think are the critical success factors for your current project / event – within the event planning process and beyond?
- Which critical success factors have you observed in previous projects / events?

Part four (soft-side of project success)

- How „free“ are you as an event manager (project manager) in terms of taking a decision?
- Have you signed a special contract between you and the owner of the project?
- How does the organization and communication structure look like in your current project / event?
• How do you inform the involved stakeholder groups about the event / project progress?

Of course you can (apart from these questions) report important things, which have influenced your current and previous event / project.