

## **PowerPoint Notation: Sport Hazing, Awareness & Action**

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### 1- Title slide

This PowerPoint is a component of a comprehensive training program in Sport Hazing, which includes an instructional video, handouts for a general audience and scholarly research content. It is free to any user for any educational purpose, including community presentations and professional training.

While this program is focused specifically on hazing, many of the same underlying dynamics are found in bullying, sexual harassment and other forms of interpersonal violence within a team or organization. Occasional references to this broader context are found throughout the training program.

### 2- Summary

Those who elect to make a presentation are encouraged to draw on their unique knowledge and experience. Presenters should feel free to modify or revise this PowerPoint to whatever extent deemed necessary to meet their particular objectives. We prefer that the individual slides be preserved intact, and that APA branding be maintained, if possible. If the user feels more extensive revisions are needed, we then ask that the program be recognized by inclusion of the introductory slide and by listing the website where the PowerPoint and related program materials are archived.

### 3-Hazing

Hazing is complex and difficult to define precisely, especially as an operational concept - that is in terms of describing whether a particular behavior is hazing or not. The definition above is a good starting point. More on understanding the nuances of interpersonal behavior and whether a practice is or is not hazing follows.

### 4- University of Maine

The University of Maine study is the most comprehensive and in-depth investigation of hazing practices in higher education, surveying 11,482 undergraduate students enrolled at 53 colleges and universities. It includes

fraternities and sororities, sports teams and other campus organizations. It revealed that hazing is widespread and that a gap exists between student experiences of hazing and their willingness to label it as such.

#### 5- Florida A&M Marching Band

The death of Robert Champion is the worst case scenario of the unwanted, unintended consequences, that are all too frequent in hazing of hazing. It exemplifies how established “traditions” can derail, and demonstrates the false sense of safety that comes when a practice has been done many times before – despite the apparent risk. This. However, events such as this are a predictable consequence of repeated risky behaviors over time, without adequate checks and balances.

#### 6- Sayreville HS

The collective acceptance of criminal sexual assault in a sport setting raises an array of questions: Does sport operate by a different standard from the rest of society? How are such practices maintained over time given their destructive impact? How can a practice like this escape detection by those responsible for the team. The unapologetic response suggests that this type of behavior is acceptable because it done somewhere else, albeit secretly.

#### 7- Jonathan Martin

The imposing physical presence of College All-American and NFL lineman Jonathan Martin, and the extreme and enduring impact of his hazing experience reveals that all are psychologically vulnerable. When hostilities persist in a team environment hazing tips into bullying – exemplifying the “slippery slope” of hazing.

#### 8- Psychology of Hazing

There is a broad array of factors that drive hazing, providing some insight into why hazing exists and why it persists despite efforts to prevent it.

#### 9-Essential

Abraham Maslow is a pioneer in positive psychology. His work, the “Farther reaches of Human Nature” provides insight into the forces that make us human and drive behavior ranging from survival to socialization to self-actualization. His work is well suited to the sport setting, in that self-actualization speaks to the widely held belief that sport can be a path to personal development. Furthermore, his idea of peak performance bears much in common with the concepts of the “zone” and flow.

#### 10-Innocent

There is a false sense of safety that comes when practices go on, year after year, without adverse consequences. However, the numbers tell the story of what is inevitable given repeated risky behaviors over time. This calculus of risk points to the inevitability of fatality as reflected tragically in death of Champion. According to a hazing clearinghouse established by Hank Nuwer, there has been at least one hazing death on a college campus every year since at least 1959.

#### 11-Sinister

There are some behaviors, as seen in lynching and the holocaust, that are so extreme that they are indefensible in the face of rational scrutiny. Yet nonetheless, history teaches us that these behaviors do occur across time and circumstances, suggesting a dark side to human behavior. The question of how otherwise reasonable people may slip into such extremes has caught the attention of social psychologists, whose groundbreaking research is discussed. Because of the adverse impact on the participants in these experiments they are now deemed unethical. Their lessons persist as a cautionary tale.

#### 12-Kitty Genovese

The murder of Kitty Genovese in 1964 shocked the consciousness of the times. That no one called the police for assistance in the face of her dire straits led to a collective soul searching that spanned public and professionals alike. The “good samaritan” research by Darley and Batson explains this as a diffusion of responsibility, which in turn has given rise to more enduring questions regarding our accountability as citizens, neighbors and teammates.

#### 13-Obedience Studies

In the “obedience studies” conducted by Stanley Milgram electric shock is presumably (but not actually) delivered to subjects under the pretense of a study on learning. Although no one was actually injured, the impact on those who believed they were delivering shocks was noteworthy nonetheless. This research story is presented in the 2015 film, the “Experimenter.”

#### 14-Calculus of Obedience

Through a series of experiments, Milgram identified specific factors that drive obedient behavior, and those conditions that enable ethical behavior. In one study approximately 2/3 of subjects shocked “learners” into a presumed state of unconsciousness, despite their vehement vocal protests. It is noteworthy that seeing one person refuse to deliver shock, was sufficient to enable another to act more humanely. The compelling question here is “Why do we need permission to do the right thing?”

#### 15-Stanford Prison Experiment

A mock prison was created in a dorm basement at Stanford University, with volunteer guards and inmates closely observed by experimenters. This turned out to be uncharted territory for subjects and experimenters alike as the prison environment rapidly deteriorated. The transformation was so extreme that it has been likened to events in Franz Kafka’s classic work the “Metamorphosis.” This story is told in the 2015 film, “The Stanford Prison Experiment.”

#### 16-Compliance or Challenge

In a situation reminiscent of the Kitty Genovese murder, not even the family visitors or experimenters stepped forward to call a halt. Then in a compelling demonstration of the ability of one to make a difference, study consultant, Dr. Christina Maslach brought an end to the study. This “power of one” is also reflected in the Milgram study by the subjects who declined shock after watching another do so.

#### 17-Barriers to Change

A series of factors function as barriers to the recognition, reporting and prevention of hazing. These are driven by a diverse array of psychological dynamics and reinforced in the sport setting by subtle cultural messaging.

## 18-Convincing Rationale

The widespread acceptance of hazing begins with a series of convincing rationales which justify behaviors. These explanations function in a manner similar to those used by experimenters in the Milgram Obedience studies.

## 19-Assumption of Consent

There is a widespread assumption that the subjects of hazing routinely give consent, although true consent is not possible. The dilemma of resist and risk exclusion or accept things in silence creates a double bind – a situation in which neither choice offers a positive outcome. This type of “lose-lose” situation has been described as a double bind.

## 20-Laing on the Double Bind

The concept of the double bind resists simple description. The words of psychiatrist and poet, R. D. Laing capture its subtlety. The concept of the double bind is reflected in the title of Joseph Heller’s novel (and movie by the same name), “Catch 22.”

## 21-Diffusion of Responsibility

That diffusion of responsibility is at work in hazing is reflected in the findings of the University of Maine study. Failure to report incidents and to push for change is influenced by the normalization of hazing in campus culture.

## 22-Whistleblowers

Whistleblowers across all levels of society risk retaliation when speaking out. The more offensive the behavior, the greater the ethical imperative to report and the greater the potential negative consequences for doing so – and the greater the bind faced by the whistleblower.

## 23-Whistleblower & Victim

The whistleblower who is also a victim faces the double bind of accepting the events or reporting them. However, in a team environment, the stakes escalate, as the player not only jeopardizes team status but also faces the shame of disclosure. The combination of shame from disclosure and punishing

consequences for seeking a remedy is the prototypical dilemma faced by the sexual assault survivor.

This whistleblower-victim dilemma offers insight into why Bart Starr, NFL Hall of Fame player from the Lombardi era Green Bay Packers remained silent about his college hazing. After a lifetime of carefully crafted public statements, his poignant end-of-life revelation speaks to the power of hazing over its victims and the need for change.

#### 24-Remedies

In recognition of the significant problems posed by hazing and its resistance to remedy, a variety of measures have been taken including educational programming, widespread implementation of legal statutes, and efforts at systematizing accountability by sports organizations. However, this has met with limited success.

#### 25-Hazing Awareness & Education

The STEP UP! Program (whose brochure is displayed above) developed at the University of Arizona in partnership with the NCAA, addresses a wide range of concerns facing the college student, including a hazing. The inclusion of a hazing education program within a broadly based bystander intervention program implicitly addresses the questions of diffusion of responsibility and shared accountability.

While education and training are critical to creating change, the impact of programs such as this appears to be limited for reasons which are not fully clear. This is likely due in part to the complexities of the dynamics that drive hazing, and to the challenge of applying general principles and concepts to specific situations.

#### 26-Anti-Hazing Laws

Most states - but not all - have enacted anti-hazing laws. These can vary significantly from state to state.

#### 27-Pennsylvania Statute

The Pennsylvania statute is explicit in its definition, listing the prototypical examples of hazing. In other states, what constitutes hazing is much less clearly defined. It is noteworthy that this statute includes reference to social exclusion, which although easily overlooked, is the quintessential element at the core of hazing.

Unfortunately, neither legal statutes nor hazing education nor organizational policies appear to have been a sufficiently effective deterrent.

### 28-Organizational Response

Organizations set standards and create culture for its stakeholders. They are the higher authority empowered to monitor and manage behavior and to enforce corrective actions when necessary. When organizations accept accountability and seek a remedy, a solution is in the making. In failing to do so, problems are magnified. In the worst case scenario, the organization may align against the victim in an effort to protect itself from adverse consequences.

### 29-Canadian Policies

Well-intended mandates for policy implementation can easily fall short. Research by Donnelly and colleagues reveals a mix of failure to comply with the national organization mandate, as well as, poorly constructed policies. The lack of a clear pathway to file a complaint or to seek a remedy, as reflected in the absence of a contact person is particularly compelling. When the steps to reporting or otherwise seeking a remedy are unclear, efforts to do so are undermined. This plays into the hands of those who would resist accountability. Policies implemented in a way which inadvertently (or otherwise) undermine the likelihood of finding a solution is an example of an ethical placebo.

A proper procedure would identify those at fault and absolve those that are innocent. In so doing, the organization makes a correction, affirms its mission and continues on its true course.

### 30-The Problem Continues

The combined impact on hazing of education, legal statutes, and organizational policy has been limited. The NCAA recommends a deliberate effort at developing a culture that more effectively supports athletes as a remedy to the broad range

of health and well-being concerns they face. This appears to be a sensible strategy for sport enterprise broadly, as culture change demands involvement of all stakeholders at all levels.

### 31-When Organizations Fail

All too often organizations fail to hold themselves accountable for hazing and other forms of interpersonal violence. Consider the Penn State sex scandal and the racial discord at the University of Missouri. These incidents represent a failure of leadership, here named the Helm's effect. In the Greek myth of Dionysius, the failure of the helmsman to steer the ship on a proper course led to destruction.

Metaphorically, an organization which abandons its mission is akin to a ship adrift with a broken moral compass. This is particularly worrisome in youth, developmental and college athletics where a noble mission of personal development is espoused.

### 32-Tactics of Institutional Betrayal

Failure to recognize problems and seek a proper remedy when an athlete (or other stakeholder) is wronged is a betrayal of the athlete by the organization and a failure of leadership. When challenged, the organizations may resort to a series of tactics designed to protect itself from the adverse consequences of its actions. As the Milgram Obedience studies suggests the power of these tactics is magnified when they come at the hands of a would-be esteemed institution. Of the 4 tactics identified, delay is commonly used, and is notably simple and subtle. It tests the will of the advocate and puts off the moment of reckoning, delaying and sometimes circumventing a solution.

### 33-Denial

Denial encompasses a broad set of behaviors ranging from the benign to the malignant. According to Freud, unconscious psychological defenses, such as denial, are deployed to help cope with the potentially overwhelming emotional impact of distressing events. In time, the defense mechanisms are intended to give way to more effective coping. Moral disbelief is here defined as a form of denial in which an otherwise ethical person fails to comprehend the reality of a truly terrible wrong, despite compelling evidence.

In a worst case scenario of denial in recent history, Raphael Lemkin (who coined the term “genocide”) describes the zeitgeist in Berlin during the Holocaust as a twilight between knowing and not knowing where unethical practices were widely recognized but nonetheless routinely left unaddressed.

#### 34-MisDirection

In “Ethics in Psychotherapy and Counseling”, Ken Pope describes “ethics placebos” as strategies employed by those who wish to “spin” unethical behaviors into legitimate sounding excuses. Because thorough understanding of a situation relies on the big picture view and an awareness of context, use of the ethics placebo begins with the deconstructing of events. Once detached from context tricks of language, cognitive justifications and logical fallacies are more convincing.

#### 35-Double Bind

Given the power that the organization holds over the individual, the double bind is easily implemented. The choice is to accept the transgression or leave the organization, neither of which is a proper remedy. The use of this and similar tactics, sends a powerful message from the organization not only to the victims but also to all who are observers. Such actions define the deep culture of the organization and set the standards for expected behavior. The irony lies in the disconnect between the idealistic mission presented as a public face and the true culture.

#### 36-The “Power of One”

The power of one to make a change is a bright side of society, demonstrated in science and throughout history. This was seen in the Milgram and Stanford experiments. It is also seen in the moment that Brooklyn Dodger captain, Pee Wee Reese stood by Jackie Robinson on the playing field, in what has been described as a tipping point in the racial integration of professional sport.

There is no more compelling example of the power of one than the victim impact statement of sexual assault survivor Emily Doe. With 11 million readings in 4 days, her efforts have given voice to the many sexual assault victims who succumb to

shame and silence for fear of worse consequences, and encouraged others to come forward.

### 37-Hazing Dilemma

The question of “how to engage in team building in an era of hazing” asked by a coach in a training seminar defines the dilemma faced by athletes, coaches and administrators.

For a variety of reasons, ranging from the complexity of group dynamics to the unique culture of sport, it can be quite difficult to engage in team building without slipping into hazing. Given the relative youth and inexperience of many athletes and the psychological sophistication required to implement team building, it would be prudent to teach team building directly. This proactive step would be a welcome complement to established hazing training which focuses more on what not to do.

### 38-Sport Culture

Competitive sport, by definition, is exclusive, creating an in-group and an out-group, with a new team each new season. Given the nature of team function, a group psychological dynamic will unfold, which can range on a continuum from highly constructive to destructive. Given the team’s shared mission and purpose, it is advantageous from both a performance and interpersonal perspective that this process go well.

### 39-As a Team Forms

The phrase “form, storm, norm, conform” captures the process and the challenge of team building. Cohesiveness is likely to pay dividends not only on but also off the playing field, pointing to the need for a constructive group dynamic. As team building move away from matters related to sport and away from the oversight of sport professionals the risk of things going awry increases.

### 40-Team Building vs. Hazing

Most simply put, team building is a positive experience and hazing is negative. That said, the very same practices could be positive or negative depending upon the subtleties of the way things are done. Take a scavenger hunt for example. While it is identified as a hazing practice, arguably it can be done without a

dangerous or demeaning impact. As a fraternity member, I (John Heil) participated in a number of activities typically described as hazing (e.g, doing push-ups). But my fraternity brothers and I found them enjoyable (then and in retrospect), probably because things were done in the spirit of fun and in an atmosphere that was not destructive or demeaning. Which raises the question, if it is not destructive or demeaning, is it hazing?

#### 41-Signs of Hazing

Hazing activities may range from being relatively benign to outright destructive. When clearly destructive, there are typical signs that can be identified at the individual and team level. Although these may not be easy to detect, with careful observation over time the chances for detection are greatly enhanced.

Although these may not be easy to identify, with careful observation over time the chances for detection are greatly enhanced. Hazing thrives in the dark and can be transformed in the light

#### 42-Assessing Hazing

A multidimensional approach which considers action, intention and consequence, is best suited to identifying hazing and distinguishing it from team building.

There may be sensible exceptions to practices typically defined as hazing. In the military, especially in special forces training, practices that could be construed as physical brutality may be deemed necessary. However, these practices are directed by those who are specifically trained and qualified to do so and who operate within the oversight of a command structure. This stands in contrast to how hazing typically operates, without special training and expertise and without oversight.

While the impact of a group activity defines the severity of hazing, the roots of risk lie in the intentions of those directing the practice, a common sense understanding of danger, and a readiness to modify or stop the activities if they appear to be demeaning or damaging. When directed by those who are consuming alcohol and drugs sensible decision making is compromised and a layer of danger is added.

#### 43- Talking About Hazing

An honest and open dialogue is the start to transforming hazing into team building. While it is important for those in a leadership role to set boundaries and point out pitfalls, it is essential this be done in a constructive manner, with reasonable tolerance for error, and reframing of mistakes as an opportunity for learning.

#### 44- Rethinking Hazing

While good intentions may result in a bad outcome, this is far more likely when those involved act as if activities within a sport team operate by a different set of rules than in other group settings in society. If an activity would not stand scrutiny in these other settings, then it is probably not helpful in sport.

Identifying a cause-effect relationship between a given group activity and improved team dynamics is the starting point for defining and teaching team building.

#### 45- Teaching Team Building

Team building is a complex and challenging activity in the best of circumstances, requiring expertise and a well-developed plan. Leaving this to the devices of the team without supervision and guidance is no more effective than allowing the team to train without coaching or sending the team on the playing field without developing a game plan.

#### 46- Sports “End Game”

The “up” side to sport done well is remarkable, with roots that reach deep into the history. Sport is a cornerstone of Western Civilization. Ancient Greek culture gave the world the Olympic Games, a bloodless celebration of warrior skills that is the foundation of modern sport. In the legend of Pheidippides and his Marathon run, there is a view of heroism that champions honor and service in a higher cause. With Greek theatre as a reference point, Aristotle speaks to the transformative power of challenge and trial when played out in a public spectacle. His references to character and catharsis translate well to participant and spectator in contemporary sport.

Keeping sight of the best of what sport can be helps define the mission and illuminate the path to effective team building.

## 47- Sport as Social Institution

At a societal level the reach of sport is extraordinary, with a demonstrated history in social change. Sport is a powerful social institution, prominent in the public eye, reflecting society, providing a forum to examine behavior, setting cultural standards and serving as a force for change. HIV positive NBA star, Magic Johnson's status as a well-respected athlete combined with his ability to bring a popular face and a positive attitude to the disease, coinciding with advances in treatment, created a sense of hope and acceptance.

Reflecting on the impact of both grassroots sports and a South African Rugby World Cup victory in the transition from apartheid, Nelson Mandela suggests: "Sport can create hope where once there was only despair. It is more powerful than governments in breaking down barriers. Sport has the power to change the world."

## 48- Athlete Ethos

British commander (and later Prime Minister), the Duke of Wellington, suggests that the Battle of Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton, a prep school where many of the military officers of the day were educated. Much the same may be said regarding the role of sport in the first battle after 9/11. The names, Beamer, Burnett, Bingham and Glick are not well known although perhaps they should be. These former college athletes teamed up to assault the hijackers of Flight 93, saving lives while hastening their own deaths. They showcased the skills honed through sport: to identify a challenge, work as a team, think pragmatically, convert idea to action, and act with courage and composure.

Not all will be champions, but every athlete can grow in this skill set and in so doing leave the experience enriched and better prepared for life after. These positive models of the games we play and the skills we build speak to the value of sport.

A simple measure of any team building practice is in answer the question "Is what is being done causing athletes to be more or less likely to rise to this type of challenge?"

#### 49-Resources

All are encouraged to examine the website fully for the resources immediately available there. A brief listing of additional resources is provided.