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Concept Map Explanation

System Description:

The system that I chose for this synthesis assignment was an NFL team, which is a social system. I dive into who makes the up the team, makes decisions, and crucial necessities of an NFL team that we see in today's sports. I selected this system because I have been a fan of the NFL for a while, but I have also enjoyed following the process of how the teams that we see playing on the field is made and who controls the inner workings of the organization which I used with the help of analyzing the structure of the Philadelphia Eagles ("Front Office").

Big Ideas:

1. Communication- Essentially every part of an NFL team relies on communication. With NFL organizations being as large as they are today, information needs to be exchanged to keep all members and subsystems updated on what needs to be done and the top priorities of the system. The signals used to communicate this vary and can be through text in emails and text messages or through audible signals such as phone calls. Without this big idea, the general manager could not identify what positional players a coach needs most for their team or know which players scouts see the most potential in.
2. Affordances- Affordances relate to NFL teams in various ways as well. First, the team facilities afford the roster the ability to practice and compete against other teams as well as receive treatment and rehab from injuries. The players roster also affords the coaches the ability to have their game plan executed and the owner the capabilities to bring in fans to make money. All the nodes enable different agents the ability to do their jobs within the organization, benefit themselves whether it is financially or physically, or keep their jobs.
3. Information (DIKW Pyramid)- The DIKW pyramid plays a major role in talent evaluation at the pro and college level. Scouts are given heaps of data and information when looking at game statistics and combine performances and must use this information to develop knowledge about what this information reveals about a player and their abilities as a football player and the wisdom about whether to add the player to the team.
4. Systems (Hierarchy)- Hierarchies can be seen in an NFL team all throughout my concept map. The first subsystems I identified were the front office, team facilities, and the team itself. Within these subsystems are many more subsystems such as the coaching staff, players roster, scouting team, and medical team. These hierarchies help reduce delay and increase efficiency. For example, player evaluations are reported to the general manager to help make team decisions while president reports to the owners on financial performance. This allows different nodes to report to various sources rather than one central figure causing major response delays.

Five Additional Connections:

1. The first connection that I made was between the big ideas of communication and the DIKW pyramid, which rely heavily on each other. There is a plethora of data and information along with the rest of the DIKW pyramid that needs to be transferred to other

parts of the system, for example, information about various college and professional players must be sent to the general manager to decide if that player is a fit for the team. This information is then sent through many written and audible signals in emails, texts, phone calls, etc. Without communication, a majority of makes up the DIKW pyramid would be meaningless to the overall system as information and knowledge cannot be transferred throughout the system to help guide financial, coaching, management, and roster decisions.

2. My second connection was made between the hierarchies/systems and communication big ideas. Within the NFL team system, there are many subsystems and subsystems within those. However, to function efficiently, the different hierarchies of subsystems must use communication to make sure that all parts of the system agree about what actions need to be taken and what the overall priorities of the system are. While hierarchies help reduce feedback delay, there must be communication between all the parts and subsystems of the NFL team or else the team will be dysfunctional as the coaches are not communicating their needs to the general manager and the owner proper information about the team is not being communicated from various parts of the front office to the majority and minority owners.
3. My third connection was made between the team facilities subsystem and the president/CEO of the organization. A relationship exists between these two parts of the system because the CEO is responsible for making financial decisions for the organization and running the business side of the team (Thelen). The CEO/president therefore plays a crucial role in determining how facilities are funded, where they will be built, and how will they be staffed. They also choose how they price tickets to enter the stadium and set pricing to host events to make profit. The CEO works directly under the owners to run the business side of the team and therefore play a crucial role to the organization of the system (“Front Office”). Without the CEO controlling how the facilities are utilized or ran, the financial success of the team would be significantly weaker.
4. My fourth connection was made between the director of college scouting and the head athletic trainer. The connection comes from a scholarly article that looked to identify injuries in college players that can led to shorter careers in the NFL which included “lumbar or cervical spine injury, rotator cuff repair, or navicular injury” (Wang). With the athletic and scouting teams working with each other, the team can take players off their draft board if for example, a player had a history of lumbar spine injuries which was indicated in the research as an injury that led to shorter NFL careers (Wang). This connection helps increase the efficiency of the NFL team’s draft as they can choose to focus on drafting players that can have longer careers with the team.
5. My final connection was made between the players roster and the athletic trainer/medical staff. I chose to connect these two parts of the concept map because players need the medical staff to provide the best services that they can to stay healthy, avoid injury, and recover from injuries as fast as possible. When players are injured and unable to play, NFL teams are obligated to still pay the player and therefore the money is being wasted by the team. Injuries are natural in the NFL and players expect the medical staff to help them recover from these injuries to get back on the field and hopefully avoid a similar injury. Not only is the players health maintained, but the whole system benefits as money wasted on salaries of injured players is being minimized.

Works Cited

“Front Office.” *Philadelphia Eagles*, 2021, www.philadelphiaeagles.com/team/front-office/.

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Wang, Dean, et al. "Athletes with Musculoskeletal Injuries Identified at the NFL Scouting Combine and Prediction of Outcomes in the NFL: A Systematic Review." *Orthopaedic Journal of Sports Medicine*, vol. 6, no. 12, 2018. *ProQuest*, <http://pitt.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.pitt.idm.oclc.org/scholarly-journals/athletes-with-musculoskeletal-injuries-identified/docview/2313785099/section2?accountid=14709>