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**THE PSYCHOLOGY OF INNOVATIVE PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT IN THE CONTEXT OF THE
CHALLENGES OF THE MODERN LABOUR MARKET**

Fourth International Scientific and Practical Conference dedicated to the 110th anniversary of
Lobachevsky State University of Nizhny Novgorod

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The Psychology of Innovative Personnel Management in the Context of the Challenges of the Modern Labour Market: Collection of Articles / Edited by Prof. L.N. Zakharova, Assoc. Prof. L.A. Kabanova, Assoc. Prof. V.V. Kolosova, Assoc. Prof. A.V. Orlov, Assoc. Prof. M.V. Prokhorova, Assoc. Prof. E.V. Saygina, Assoc. Prof. N.Yu. Stoyukhina, Assoc. Prof. T.L. Shabanova // Fourth International Scientific and Practical Conference dedicated to the 110th anniversary of Lobachevsky State University of Nizhny Novgorod, 19–20 November 2025, Nizhny Novgorod. – Nizhny Novgorod: Lobachevsky State University of Nizhny Novgorod, 2026. – 717 pp.

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This volume presents articles prepared on the basis of papers delivered at the plenary session and the thematic sections of the Fourth International Scientific and Practical Conference, dedicated to the 110th anniversary of Lobachevsky State University of Nizhny Novgorod, entitled “The Psychology of Innovative Personnel Management in the Context of the Challenges of the Modern Labour Market”, held on 19–20 November 2025 in Nizhny Novgorod.

The conference proceedings traditionally address issues related to psychological innovation in personnel management. At the same time, the conference continues the work begun in 2023 — for the first time in the recent history of Russia — on the study of the possibilities and limitations of personnel management based on national values. The articles reflect the growing role of psychology in the field of personnel management and present the results of scientific research that make it possible to assess the history of labour and management psychology, as well as the problems, current state and prospects of labour psychology, organisational psychology, personnel management, the application of digital technologies in management, corporate training and mentoring in the context of addressing the tasks of achieving Russia's technological sovereignty and responding to the challenges of the modern labour market.

The authors include both well-known scholars and early-career researchers from 38 Russian cities and 20 foreign countries.

The volume may be of interest to representatives of business, industry and the banking sector, specialists in state and municipal administration, lecturers, postgraduate students and students, as well as practitioners working in educational and social institutions and public organisations.

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Секция 1

ИСТОРИЯ И СОВРЕМЕННОЕ СОСТОЯНИЕ ПСИХОЛОГИИ ТРУДА, УПРАВЛЕНИЯ И ОРГАНИЗАЦИОННОЙ ПСИХОЛОГИИ. УРОКИ ДЛЯ БУДУЩЕГО

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HUMANIZING THE MANAGEMENT OF SPORTS ORGANIZATIONS: FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

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This article argues that a more human-centred management model is necessary – one that begins with an ethical purpose, prioritizes people over profit, and integrates responsibility into all levels of strategic and operational decision-making. Drawing on moral philosophy, organizational ethics, and international sport governance frameworks, the paper provides a roadmap for translating ethical principles into practical management tools, encompassing sponsorship evaluation, whistleblowing systems, leadership development, and the effective use of technology. The aim is to reconnect sport management with the values that make sport a space of education, inclusion, and shared meaning.

Keywords: ethics, sport, human-centered management, innovation, inclusion

ГУМАНИЗАЦИЯ УПРАВЛЕНИЯ СПОРТИВНЫМИ ОРГАНИЗАЦИЯМИ: ОТ ТЕОРИИ К ПРАКТИКЕ

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В данной статье утверждается, что необходима более ориентированная на человека модель управления, которая исходит из этических целей, ставит людей выше прибыли и интегрирует ответственность во все уровни стратегического и оперативного принятия решений. Опираясь на моральную философию, организационную этику и международные рамки управления спортом, в статье представлена дорожная карта для преобразования этических принципов в практические инструменты управления, включая оценку спонсорства, системы информирования о нарушениях, развитие лидерских качеств и эффективное использование технологий. Цель состоит в том, чтобы воссоединить управление спортом с ценностями, которые делают спорт пространством образования, инклюзивности и общего смысла.

Ключевые слова: этика; спорт; управление, ориентированное на человека; инновации; инклюзивность

The contemporary sport industry has experienced a remarkable evolution. Once a primarily social and cultural institution, sport has become a global economic sector with complex financial, legal, and media structures [1]. This transformation has led many sport organizations to adopt management models derived from the corporate world [2]. As a result, terms such as "performance indicators," "stakeholder engagement," and "return on investment" have become central to decision-making [3].

Nevertheless, something essential risks being lost in this process. When athletes are treated as assets, fans are viewed as target markets, and sport is used as a platform for brand visibility, the human and moral dimensions of sport become secondary. Ethical concerns – such as safeguarding, inclusion, health, or fairness – are often addressed only in times of crisis, rather than being embedded in everyday practice. Humanizing sport management means reversing this logic. It means starting from purpose, designing systems that promote dignity and justice, and measuring success in terms of both performance and ethical integrity [1, 4].

Ethical sport management begins with a fundamental reordering of priorities. Instead of focusing first on performance and results, managers must start with purpose. Purpose answers the question: why does this organization exist beyond profit and competition? It may include promoting education, community development, health, inclusion, or ethical excellence. From purpose follows a commitment to people—to the well-being, rights, and participation of all those involved: athletes, coaches, staff, volunteers, and supporters. Only then should performance be considered—not as an isolated goal, but as the natural consequence of a system aligned with values [5].

This perspective aligns with the philosophical insights of MacIntyre, who distinguishes between internal goods (such as fair play, excellence, and growth) and external goods (including fame, money, and trophies). A sport organization that loses sight of its internal goods becomes vulnerable to corruption, exploitation, and short-termism. Managers play a crucial role in protecting these goods by embedding purpose into structures, procedures, and evaluation criteria [6].

Ethical management is not just about policies. It is also about culture – the set of shared norms, beliefs, and practices that shape how people behave within an organisation. Culture determines whether ethical codes are followed or ignored, whether risks are reported or concealed, and whether integrity is valued or disregarded. In sport, culture can either support an athlete's well-being and moral development—or create environments of pressure, silence, and fear [7].

Managers have a key responsibility in shaping culture. This includes the tone set by leadership, the alignment between stated values and actual behavior, the design of incentive systems, and the openness to ethical dialogue. Research indicates that ethics programs are most effective when they are comprehensive, well-sequenced, and integrated across departments [8]. Training sessions, safe discussion spaces, and systems for feedback and reflection are crucial elements of an ethical infrastructure.

Humanizing management means applying ethical principles in day-to-day operations. This includes areas such as scheduling, selection, medical care, contracts, and career development [9]. Athletes must not be overloaded or pushed beyond safe physical and psychological limits. They must have access to fair contracts, education programs, and mental health support [10].

Justice is not only about outcomes but also about procedures. Selection criteria must be transparent and contestable. Appeals processes must be accessible and timely. Managers must ensure that no decision appears arbitrary or discriminatory

in nature. A justice-based management model enhances trust and reduces conflict [4].

Moreover, management should adopt indicators that reflect not only success (e.g., wins or revenue) but also well-being, retention, inclusion, and capability development [10]. In this way, evaluation becomes a tool for ethical learning – not just a means of performance measurement.

Sport organisations require financial sustainability, but the way they generate revenue must align with their values and principles. Accepting sponsors without ethical screening can damage reputation and create value conflicts. Managers should adopt a sponsorship ethics grid to assess each partnership based on legality, alignment with mission, environmental and social impact, and reputational risk [7]. Decisions should be documented and, where appropriate, publicly justified.

Commercial policies should also include ticket affordability, ethical merchandising, and community reciprocity. This means reserving a portion of seats for young people or local groups, ensuring fair labor conditions in merchandise production, and investing in local programs that benefit the community. These actions express the idea that sport is not only a business but also a form of public service [13].

To support ethical management, organizations must build robust integrity systems. These include independent ethics committees, protected whistleblowing channels, conflict-of-interest registers, and external audits. Whistleblowing systems must allow for anonymous reporting (where lawful), offer legal and psychological support, and guarantee non-retaliation. Managers should regularly monitor these systems and report on key metrics, including case resolution times, types of violations, and outcomes [8,11].

Training programs should be tailored to the various roles within the organisation, including executives, coaches, athletes, and administrators. Case-based simulations and dilemma discussions make ethics concrete and applicable to everyday decisions [9].

Digitalization offers powerful tools for sport management: performance analytics, biometric tracking, talent identification, dynamic pricing. However, these technologies also raise significant ethical concerns, including data privacy, consent, algorithmic bias, and the risk of dehumanisation. Managers must ensure that all digital tools are governed by principles of transparency, accountability, and proportionality [12].

Automated systems must never fully replace human judgment in decisions that affect people's futures—such as athlete selection or disciplinary action. A qualified human should always review, explain, and take responsibility for outcomes. Technology should support human dignity, not undermine it.

Leadership is the key to humanizing management. Ethical leadership involves coherence between values and actions, the courage to act transparently, and the humility to admit mistakes. Leaders should be role models who guide through example, especially in high-stakes or high-pressure situations.

A helpful tool for decision-making is the triple ethical test:

1. Dignity: Does this decision respect the person as an end, not a means?
2. Fairness: Would a reasonable person see the process as just?
3. Future: Will we be proud of this decision in five years?

If any answer is no, the decision should be reviewed, redesigned, or delayed [4, 6]. No doubt that “measuring” ethics is not easy, but it is possible and necessary. Managers can develop a People & Integrity Dashboard to track key indicators: safeguarding performance, whistleblowing activity, gender balance, diversity, inclusion, ethical training participation, and community engagement.

Transparent reporting builds trust and facilitates continuous improvement. Communicating openly about ethical challenges – especially failures – can enhance legitimacy. Fans, partners, and stakeholders are more likely to trust organizations that are honest than those that hide problems [13].

Humanizing the management of sport organizations is not an idealistic vision. It is a practical and necessary response to a complex environment. By anchoring management in purpose, protecting people, and aligning every process with ethical standards, sport organizations can achieve both success and legitimacy. In an era when sport is increasingly viewed as an industry, ethical management reminds us that sport, above all, is a human practice – a space for character, community, and the common good. Managers are not just problem solvers; they are meaning makers. Their decisions shape not only the performance of teams and institutions, but also the kind of society we build through sport.

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