

■ A SHORT GUIDE FOR OPERATORS AND INVESTORS IN THE SPORTS MID-MARKET

THE **10 RULES** OF SPORTS INNOVATION



Ten Rules, each with one test you can run. Written for spectator sports, for clubs, leagues and events between five and one hundred fifty million euros in revenue, and for the investors entering that segment.

ELITE PATTERNS.
MID-MARKET
REALITY.

NILS STERENBORG
AUTHOR, THE 10 RULES OF SPORTS INNOVATION
POWERPLAY ONE

■ WHY RULES

IN SPORT, THE MID-MARKET DOES THE ELITE'S JOB WITH A FRACTION OF THE PEOPLE. THE GAP IS STRUCTURE.

NILS STERENBORG

AUTHOR, POWER PLAY AND THE 10 RULES

About a hundred organisations worldwide have the strategy teams and the reference data to run the value loop of sport properly. Everyone else runs the same loop with a fraction of the staff.

We take the patterns from the top of the game and turn them into Rules a mid-market organisation can apply. Each Rule has one test. If you can answer yes, the Rule is in place. If not, you know what to do next.

01

ATTENTION

You earn attention.

FAN
CULTURAL

02

COMMERCIALS

Attention pays.

COMMERCIAL
MEDIA

03

SPORTING PERFORMANCE

You reinvest, and the next turn gets easier.

TALENT
COMPETITIVE

THREE NUMBERS YOU STEER BY. EACH SPLITS INTO TWO, SIX SUB-DIMENSIONS IN TOTAL. WHEN THE LOOP IS INTACT, EACH TURN MAKES THE NEXT ONE EASIER.

01 Read the patterns and the chain, pages 3 and 4.

02 Check the ten Rules, pages 5 and 6.

03 Run PowerSCOAR to score the result, page 7.

■ THE VALUE CREATION CHAPTER, IN SHORT

FIVE PATTERNS THAT KEEP ORGANISATIONS STUCK

- | | | |
|----|---------------------------------------|--|
| 01 | THE TALENT DEPENDENCY PATTERN | The capability lives inside two or three people. When they leave, it leaves with them. Nothing has been institutionalised. |
| 02 | THE IDEA ABUNDANCE PATTERN | Ideas are plentiful. What is missing is a method to select and sequence them, so more ideas produce more noise. |
| 03 | THE SHORT-TERM SUCCESS PATTERN | The seasonal clock sets the pace of every decision. Nobody has installed a longer planning horizon next to it. |
| 04 | THE MEASUREMENT VACUUM | Attendance, followers, shirt sales and league position are tracked. The attractiveness of the organisation as an asset is not, so every investment is a guess. |
| 05 | THE DIGITAL FACADE | Tools are acquired and mistaken for change. The decision-making underneath stays the same. |

EFFICIENCY ASKS

HOW DO WE DO THE SAME THINGS BETTER?

Faster ticketing, leaner operations, more automation. It pays, and it has a ceiling.

EFFECTIVENESS ASKS

WHAT DIFFERENT THINGS COULD WE DO, FOR WHOM, AND WITH WHAT COMPOUNDING RETURN?

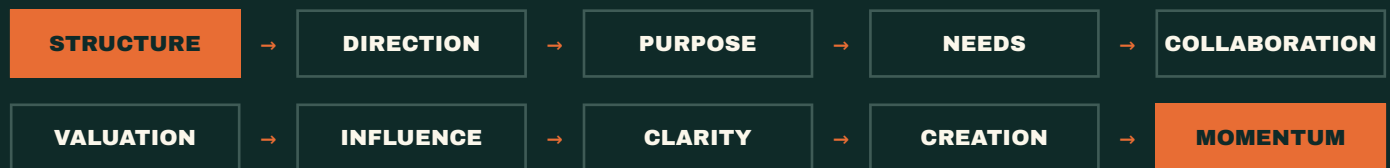
An organisation that grows stronger every season, wherever the team finishes.

Five symptoms, one root cause. Long-term value in spectator sport comes from good systems. The ten Rules are that system.

■ THE SEQUENCE

ONE CHAIN. NOT TEN TIPS.

The rules are sequential and interdependent. Apply them in order and something genuinely compound begins to happen.



01 **STRUCTURE** creates the container in which **DIRECTION** can operate.

02 **DIRECTION** gives **PURPOSE** its compass.

03 **PURPOSE** gives **NEEDS** its priorities.

04 **NEEDS** gives **COLLABORATION** its agenda.

05 **COLLABORATION** gives **VALUATION** its options.

06 **VALUATION** gives **INFLUENCE** its material.

07 **INFLUENCE** gives **CLARITY** its audience.

08 **CLARITY** gives **CREATION** its brief.

09 **CREATION** gives **MOMENTUM** its fuel.

■ THE RULES 1 TO 5

STRUCTURE TO COLLABORATION**01****STRUCTURE**

RUN INNOVATION LIKE A
SYSTEM

Innovation flourishes in a clear structure. Work in three connected phases: Inspire & Assess, Plan & Design, Execute & Evolve.

IN PLACE WHEN

A named Innovation Owner exists, an Innovation Log is maintained and reviewed monthly, and decisions are recorded.

IN THE CHAIN

Structure creates the container in which Direction can operate.

02**DIRECTION**

START FROM YOUR CORE

Your mission, goals, and values are not just slogans, they are the compass. Translate them directly into innovation objectives using a ‘from-the-core outward’ approach.

IN PLACE WHEN

Three core values are written and agreed, and one specific twelve-month innovation goal is defined and being tracked in the Innovation Log.

IN THE CHAIN

Direction gives Purpose its compass.

03**PURPOSE**

KNOW YOUR WHY

Define why you innovate by understanding three perspectives: Internal goals, Fan needs, and Partner expectations. Purpose anchors innovation in tangible value, for people, not just processes.

IN PLACE WHEN

You have spoken directly to at least five fans, documented what you heard, and used those insights to confirm or adjust your twelve-month innovation goal.

IN THE CHAIN

Purpose gives Needs its priorities.

04**NEEDS**

FIX THE FOUNDATIONS
FIRST

Before chasing big ideas, know if you have the capability to deliver. Assess your digital readiness and close critical gaps first.

IN PLACE WHEN

You have a written inventory of every digital tool your organization uses and a clear-eyed identification of the single most critical gap standing between your current capability and your twelve-month innovation goal.

IN THE CHAIN

Needs gives Collaboration its agenda.

05**COLLABORATION**

MAKE THE WHOLE GREATER
THAN THE PARTS

Think of your club as a platform. Invite fans, athletes, partners, media, and stakeholders to create solutions with you under clear rules for data and decision-making.

IN PLACE WHEN

You have mapped your three most valuable external relationships, understand what each contributes, and have made at least one specific ask of one partner in service of your current innovation goal.

IN THE CHAIN

Collaboration gives Valuation its options.

■ THE RULES 6 TO 10

VALUATION TO MOMENTUM

06

VALUATION

LET VALUE DECIDE

Measure innovation by its ability to create lifetime value with fans and stakeholders. Use transparent scoring to decide which projects earn investment.

IN PLACE WHEN

A written decision filter exists, one or two questions that you ask of every idea before committing time or money, and you are actually applying it before ideas enter the Innovation Log as active.

IN THE CHAIN

Valuation gives Influence its material.

07

INFLUENCE

ENGINEER ATTENTION

In sport, attention is the fuel of growth. Create initiatives that deliberately attract and hold attention through compelling stories and personalized experiences.

IN PLACE WHEN

You have chosen one primary fan communication channel, committed to a publishing rhythm, and published content in the last thirty days that was about your fans rather than about your organization.

IN THE CHAIN

Influence gives Clarity its audience.

08

CLARITY

MAKE THE PATH VISIBLE

Use simple scoring models, write concise project briefs, and maintain a living roadmap everyone can see. Without clarity, ideas drift. With clarity, they move.

IN PLACE WHEN

Every active innovation initiative has a written brief, one paragraph minimum, that any staff member could read and immediately understand what the initiative is, who it is for, and what done looks like.

IN THE CHAIN

Clarity gives Creation its brief.

09

CREATION

BUILD IN SMALL,
LOVEABLE STEPS

Don't aim for perfection, aim for real use. Start with proof of concept, create minimum loveable products, and decide early whether to build, partner, or buy.

IN PLACE WHEN

You have run at least one test of your current active initiative, however minimal, and documented what you learned from it before deciding whether to continue, adjust, or stop.

IN THE CHAIN

Creation gives Momentum its fuel.

10

MOMENTUM

KEEP THE FLYWHEEL
TURNING

Innovation is not a one-off project; it's a rhythm that spins a flywheel. Build a culture of learn-build-measure in loops and double down on what works.

IN PLACE WHEN

You have written at least one Learning Note from a completed initiative and reviewed it at the start of the next planning cycle.

IN THE CHAIN

Each rotation of the cycle builds on the last.

RUN POWERSCOAR.

PowerSCOAR scores how attractive your club, league, event or promotion really is and ranks what to fix first. The Fast Lane takes about twenty minutes and returns a tier-calibrated score, a heat map and your top-ranked initiatives. The Full Diagnostic is a guided workshop under NDA.

● SEE WHERE YOU STAND

CLUBS

powerscoar.powerplay-one.com/clubs.html

LEAGUES

powerscoar.powerplay-one.com/leagues.html

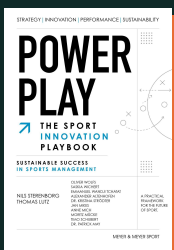
EVENTS

powerscoar.powerplay-one.com/events.html

PROMOTIONS

powerscoar.powerplay-one.com/promotion.html

READ THE METHOD



Power Play: The Sport Innovation Playbook

English edition, Meyer & Meyer Sport, with ten contributing experts. Nils Sterenborg and Thomas Lutz.

[Barnes & Noble](#) | [Amazon](#) | [Publisher](#)



The 10 Rules of Sports Innovation

The full book behind this guide. Nils Sterenborg.

[Amazon \(Kindle\)](#)

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RULE WORDING AND TESTS: THE 10 RULES OF SPORTS INNOVATION, NILS STERENBORG.