Six propositions as a frame of reference

A frame of reference is usually constituted by a series of established theories. Stating criteria for choices in a frame of reference can eventually lead to the revelation of the research problem. In this case, information has been formulated in order to write for reflective practitioners as well as provide a textbook for masters students. Thus the requirement is greater to create concepts than the need is to identify the research on which the fundamental basis for further analysis is built. Here, the framework resembles a set of ideas, rules or beliefs on which decisions are based. Yet another keyphrase is *modus operandi*, or *the way of doing something that is typical of a particular person or group*.

In this book, we will also identify and describe single business concepts, ‘playing styles’ that can be expressed and translated in the concept module and lead to the lessons learned within the football world that can be applied to other sectors. On the whole, there is a focus on benchmarking, on ideals and prototypes implying learning possibilities and higher achievements.

The frame of reference consists of six Propositions. The first three Propositions refer to the need for and use of systematic work within football (compared with science in biotech) as well as on the management level. ‘Methods’ are assumed to be far superior to ‘fads’ constituting the fourth Proposition, meaning the use of an alternative and situation-specific frame of reference in order to analyze both a football club’s playing style and its administration. The most important Proposition in this book is the fifth, which focuses on good management within sectors other than football that can educate the football industry, summarized as ‘B to F’ (as in Business to Football). Good models within business are referred to here as ‘thought styles’. The sixth Proposition is
the parallel case in which football can teach business (‘F to B’), which is presented in some of the forthcoming chapters.

Two analogies will be specifically based on the discussion in Chapter 1. The first analogy is that within football, the goal is to win a game, which is comparable to business, where the goal is to surpass the weekly budget; to win the league is to outperform your competition. The second analogy referenced is to make money in ‘football’ (F) as an owner of a club which is comparable to a ‘business’ (B) generating value for the shareholders.

One implication from Chapter 1 is that service is not entertainment. Elite sport, however, becomes entertainment due to the need of sponsorship money, and sponsorship money is linked to advertising, media and final consumers. A big difference is that showbusiness, comprising sport/entertainment, is intensively individual-oriented (stars, gossip and money), while health care, cleaning, monitoring, transport and finance administration are entirely nonpersonified services. This is reflected dramatically in the way money is earned. Without star footballers like Rooney, Zlatan, Messi, Ronaldo, Kaka and Beckham, any football team will struggle for its reputation, branding and good results on the field.

A successful playing style requires good football leadership, described through a four-field model

The four-field model (see Table 2.1) is based on two dimensions: the time-related dimension and the spatial dimension was inspired from Söderman 2004. Time-related dimensions are: during the game and between the games. Spatial dimensions are: on the arena field and off the field. The first Proposition is illustrated in a table with four fields describing what occurs during games and between games. The four-field model serves as a frame of reference for analysis and drawing conclusions. The mock-up consists of four fields. In each one of these fields special activities occur:

Square 1. Outside/during the game;
Square 2. Outside/during the game, i.e. which is most often associated with football;
Square 3. Time on the field/between games;
Square 4. Off the field/between games.

For each one of the four squares, various typical activities and issues can be categorized. For example, during the game, on the field playing