

Encouraging Compliance Without Real Power: Sport Associations Regulating Teams

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Popular and academic discourse typically analyze the strategies used to induce compliance with sport association policies and rules within a framework that shoehorns a diverse array of strategies into two categories: sanctions or compensation. This article proposes a taxonomy that goes beyond the "logic of consequences" inherent in the behavioral models of sanctions and compensation. Sport managers and scholars can encourage compliance through six ideal-type strategies: punitive, remunerative, generative, preventive, cognitive, and normative. These six categories provide the foundation for systematically evaluating the relative effectiveness of different strategies at altering the behavior of league members. This article delineates the different paths by which these different policy strategies influence behavior. Five questions designed to guide managers in the selection of strategies are offered. Although the National Collegiate Athletic Association is used as a case example throughout, the framework has applicability to all sport associations.

At the core of all sport lies a fundamental tension between the desire for rules and the desire to break them. To even have a game, players and teams must recognize, maintain, and comply with rules regarding what players must, can, and cannot do. Yet the desire to win the game often gives players or teams strong incentives to ignore or violate those very rules. In the most casual game of ultimate Frisbee, as well as in the most intense game of professional football, players want the rules of the game enforced but also want to break those rules to earn a point. Whether fouls and other rule violations are called through an informal social process involving other players (often from the cheater's own team) or through a more formal process involving umpires and referees, the ability to play sports requires resolving the conflict between the desire to compete with honor and the desire to win at any cost.

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Sport leagues exhibit this same tension. Most leagues have bylaws and rule books that run into the hundreds, and sometimes thousands, of pages. Although representatives of teams voluntarily come together to articulate a mission, write rules, and enforce procedures, members of those organizations regularly violate these rules. Not unlike nations attempting to prevent an arms race or to protect the global environment, sport teams find themselves torn between their individual short-term interests and their collective long-term interests. Upholding the league's mission and fulfilling its rules helps maintain the fair competition essential to the sport but increases the risk of losing the game. Violating league rules might help win today's game or the league championship but undermines the fair competition from which all teams generally benefit (Leifer, 1995; Wilson, 1994). Similar dynamics in other areas of human behavior, from economics to politics to international relations to sociology, are often analyzed as "prisoners' dilemmas" or "tragedies of the commons" in which individually rational behavior leads to collectively suboptimal outcomes (Axelrod, 1984).

It is easy to understand why sport teams establish collective league rules and bylaws in the first place, because all teams would prefer even perfectly enforced rules to no rules at all. More difficult to understand is how sport leagues succeed in getting teams to follow agreed-on norms and rules. Each team has incentives, often strong ones, to violate particular rules and can usually design methods that provide at least some chance of getting away with it. This article investigates the array of mechanisms leagues use to combat such incentives.

How can league officials promote desirable behavior? How do leagues discourage violations of the rules? What policy options are available to league officials? Obviously, the "stick" of sanctions is often an effective approach. But might the "carrot" of compensation work as well or perhaps better? Do other alternatives exist, and if so, are they more or less effective? More to the point, when are particular compliance strategies likely to work, and what factors influence the relative success of available options? Although the task of inducing compliance with league rules has always faced basic and inherent difficulties, recent changes in the sport industry (e.g., increased financial and legal power of players, weakened league offices, increasing influence of corporate sponsors) have made enforcement of league rules more challenging than ever. In both the professional and the amateur realms, these challenges call into question whether sport associations can effectively regulate behavior. This article examines the strategies available to any sport league for inducing compliance and suggests a series of questions designed to identify the most effective strategies.

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) provides a useful and well-known case from which to draw illustrative examples, but the argument we put forth applies as readily to any other sport league, from the local youth soccer league to the National Football League. The NCAA is the primary association regulating collegiate sport competition in the United States. In Division I, the highest division of competition in collegiate athletics, the NCAA's inconsistency in applying sanctions and other implementation obstacles have hindered its efforts to increase the number of regulations while decreasing the number of violations (Baxter,

Margavio, & Lambert, 1996; Padilla & Baumer, 1994). These very difficulties highlight the value of evaluating the strategies available to NCAA staff for promoting compliance and the conditions that influence when one is likely to be more effective than another.

Although we use the term *compliance* throughout, by that term we intend to capture the much broader notion of positive behavioral change. Leagues adopt strategies to encourage actors to engage in desirable behavior, even when the failure to do so does not constitute a violation of existing league rules. Thus, although NCAA rules do not prohibit member institutions from knowingly recruiting athletes unable to succeed academically, much NCAA policy specifically attempts to discourage such behavior. Likewise, NCAA staff regularly adopt policies targeting schools that, for example, have poor athlete graduation rates, even though those schools meet minimum graduation rate criteria. In short, although we speak of compliance, we are interested in the strategies by which managers encourage behaviors that support the agreed-on mission of the league or association and discourage those that undercut it.

The Nature of Sport Associations

Consider the regulatory problems faced by any sport association. Leagues are voluntary associations. Teams form leagues and other sport associations or join existing leagues in an effort to compete according to shared "rules of engagement." League offices seek to establish procedures for enforcing league rules that do not rely on higher levels of authority such as the courts. Although teams nominally delegate enforcement power to the league, teams retain considerable power over the league and its enforcement procedures. Teams can leave one league or association to join a new one, dismantle and reform leagues, or weaken the power of league offices if they so choose. Robert Stern (1979), for example, details the process by which NCAA member institutions increased the power of the NCAA from 1906–1952.

As noted, each team has a long-term interest in having others accept the overall mission of the league and having others comply with league rules and a short-term interest in violating those norms and rules whenever doing so would help it win a game. All teams want good and balanced competition—no team wants to so dominate its league that unbalanced scores show up in every game (Leifer, 1995). Maintaining such competition often requires teams, *inter alia*, to limit roster size, agree on eligibility requirements, establish rules limiting drug use, and agree on minimum and maximum lengths of schedule. Yet the need for these rules arises precisely because although each team could often gain a competitive advantage if it could violate these standards without getting caught, an escalating spiral of such violations could lead to the unraveling of the league itself. The short-term interest in winning can undermine compliance and hence threaten the long-term interest in fair competition. Getting away with violating a rule if it would allow a team to win is always in a team's interest; if other teams are complying, then violating helps that team win, and if other teams are violating, then violating protects that team from losing.

Because teams always have the option to leave a league, league rules and enforcement policies must be strong enough to maintain adequate fair play and public trust, without being so restrictive that they cause the teams to rebel and reclaim the powers given to the league. For example, since the death of the strong-handed Judge Landis in 1944, Major League Baseball owners have systematically weakened the power of the commissioner (Jennings, 1990). Thus, the question becomes, How do teams solve (or at least manage) this problem of "cooperation" without resorting to an outside enforcer?

The case of the NCAA is particularly interesting because of its regulatory constraints. The coaches and athletes who compete in the NCAA are not members of the NCAA; only institutions of higher education are members. As such, the NCAA does not have direct regulatory powers over coaches or athletes. For example, the NCAA cannot fine an overzealous alumnus who breaks association rules nor bar a coach from coaching at the collegiate level. Encouraging compliance with the NCAA's rules and mission therefore poses a unique challenge for sport managers.

Theoretical Background

Popular and academic discourse typically analyze compliance policies within a framework that shoehorns an empirically diverse array of policies into the simple categories of sanctions (sticks) and compensation (carrots; see, for example, DeSchrive & Stotlar, 1996; Padilla & Baumer, 1994). Using such a dichotomous theoretical lens to describe, analyze, and prescribe a much more varied array of policy options creates fundamental problems. First, focusing on the consequence-altering mechanisms involved with carrots and sticks causes analytic neglect or misinterpretation of other mechanisms by which policy influences behavior, such as altering opportunities or perceptions. Second, recent theoretical work has clearly demonstrated how not only consequences but also capacities and opportunities, information and ideas, and perceptions and norms play important roles in social institutions of all types (Finnemore, 1993; Goldstein & Keohane, 1993; Katzenstein, 1996). Finally, even if leagues only used carrots and sticks (which they do not), an overly simple, dichotomous framework constrains creative but systematic design of untried but potentially effective compliance strategies.

This article adapts a six-category taxonomic model of compliance strategies, developed in the realm of international relations, to the realm of sport leagues (Mitchell, 1996, 1997). Although there are significant differences between nation states and sport teams (nations, for example, can go to war) there are surprising similarities between efforts by intergovernmental organizations to induce conformance with international treaty rules and efforts by sport associations to induce conformance with league rules. Sport associations and intergovernmental organizations are both empowered by the very member organizations (teams and nations) they are charged with regulating. This article seeks to go beyond the logic of consequences inherent in behavioral models of carrots and sticks (Finnemore, 1996), which too often frame our thinking in international relations and sport management. Rather than taking the opportunities, information, ideas, and norms that influence

a team, coach, or athlete as givens, this taxonomy examines how sport leagues influence "bad actors" by consciously manipulating the opportunities that potential violators face, the information that teams and athletes have, and even the goals that teams seek.

Six Strategies for Encouraging Compliance

No standard taxonomy of compliance strategies exists in the sport management literature, so we have adapted one from international relations (Mitchell, 1997). This taxonomy (see Table 1) draws on and goes beyond existing sociology and public policy literatures that examine the strategies that organizations employ to alter behavior (Ayres & Braithwaite, 1992; Bemelmans-Videc, Rist, & Vedung, 1998; Braithwaite, 1985; Etzioni, 1961; Makkai & Braithwaite, 1994; Mitchell, 1996; Reiss, 1984b; Weiss & Tschirhart, 1994). The first pair of strategies, punitive and remunerative strategies (sticks and carrots), manipulates the consequences a potential violator faces, making compliance and other desirable behaviors more attractive or violation and other undesirable behaviors less attractive. The second pair of strategies, preventive and generative strategies, alters a potential violator's opportunities, reducing opportunities for undesirable behavior or creating opportunities for desirable behavior. The final pair, cognitive and normative strategies, alters the potential violator's perceptions of a given context, either providing information to convince potential violators that undesirable behaviors are not in their interests or normatively educating them to increase the value they attach to desirable behaviors.

Table 1 Six Strategies to Encourage Compliance
(adapted from Mitchell, 1997)

Strategy	Motto	Mechanism
Punitive	"Punish them."	Increase negative consequences of undesirable behavior.
Remunerative	"Reward them."	Increase positive consequences of desirable behavior.
Preventive	"Lock them out."	Decrease opportunities for undesirable behavior.
Generative	"If you build it, they will come."	Increase opportunities for desirable behavior.
Cognitive	"Show them it's in their interests."	Increase information about desirable and undesirable behaviors.
Normative	"Teach them to do the right thing."	Increase valuation of desirable vs. undesirable behaviors

Punitive Strategies

Sport associations often invoke various forms of threats and sanctions designed to deter undesirable behavior by increasing its costs. Calls for "rules with teeth" and for better monitoring and enforcement highlight the intuitive appeal of punitive strategies and the common view that violations would be less frequent if only the NCAA properly caught and punished violators. Punitive strategies usually (a) clearly delineate proscribed behavior, (b) establish mechanisms to identify such behavior as or after it occurs, and (c) establish mechanisms to impose costs on violators. Punishments can vary in the type of cost imposed (e.g., disqualification, penalty points, fines), the actor imposing them (e.g., the league, the conference, the institution, the coach), and the willingness and capacity of relevant actors to identify and sanction the proscribed behaviors.

Despite variation in the types of sanctions imposed or threatened, all punitive strategies assume a behavioral model in which violations arise from teams or players intentionally choosing to violate rules because they value the benefits of doing so more than they value the benefits of available alternatives, and because they lack an adequate commitment to league norms. The model also assumes that potential violators could have complied and that they will be deterred from violating if they are convinced that they will be caught and that the costs imposed, once they are caught, will outweigh the benefits of having violated. Thus, the success of punitive strategies depends both on "transparency," which allows league officials or others to observe violations in process (or evidence of violations after the fact), and on league officials being able and willing to respond with sanctions sufficiently severe that they will deter deviant actors.

The NCAA has frequently employed punitive strategies. In 1993, the NCAA banned the University of Washington Huskies from bowl appearances and stripped them of 20 of their 50 allotted scholarships after 15 different rule violations came to light. In 1995, the NCAA banned the University of Alabama football team from postseason competition and cut 12 of their scholarships after NCAA investigators discovered that a player had signed with an agent, the department had made improper loans to a former player, and the administration had failed to adequately investigate complaints (Alabama Placed, 1995). That same year, the University of Miami forfeited 31 scholarships because an academic advisor had submitted fraudulent government forms to obtain Pell Grants for 57 football players (Chronological Listing, 1995). In 1996, the NCAA fined both the University of Massachusetts and the University of Connecticut 45% of their take from the NCAA basketball championship when their basketball players were found to have entered into agreements with professional agents (Carey, 1997). At the individual level, required drug testing and corresponding sanctions provide the mechanisms for deterring drug use.

Although punitive strategies clearly work in some instances, they carry their own problems. They can be difficult to implement effectively. Threats induce efforts to conceal deviant behavior, which frustrate the very transparency necessary to the strategy's success. As teams or players get better at avoiding detection of

cheating, the league must make sanctions either more severe or more likely if they are to serve as a deterrent.

Yet a league might not have sanctions costly enough to deter a violator or might be concerned that imposing them will harm other players or teams who were innocent (DeSchriver & Stotlar, 1996). Even when they have effective sanctions available, sport associations might find imposing such sanctions difficult, because they often are politically and economically costly to impose and can be disproportionate to the violation. For example, banning a school from bowl television appearances might be an effective deterrent, but it is unlikely to be levied because it imposes costs on innocent schools slated to play against the sanctioned schools. Paul Dee, athletic director for the University of Miami, a school whose football program lost 31 scholarships over 3 years for violating NCAA rules, is asking the NCAA to review the long-term impact of this type of punishment (Wieberg, 1997b). Indeed, the NCAA recently renounced punitive measures that indirectly affect other institutions and now tends to punish schools by limiting scholarships.

Taken together, these considerations imply that a team can oftentimes count on not being detected or sanctioned or on being able to absorb sanctions if they are imposed; some NCAA evidence suggests that teams profit from rule breaking even after absorbing sanction costs (Padilla & Baumer, 1994). Even when punitive strategies succeed, they prove more effective at leading teams to meet specified minimum standards than at encouraging teams to strive toward higher standards (Bardach & Kagan, 1982; Hawkins, 1984; Makkai & Braithwaite, 1994).

Remunerative Strategies

Leagues can also encourage teams and players to not merely meet but to exceed established rules and standards by making desirable behavior more attractive, either by directly rewarding the behavior or by reducing its costs. As did Etzioni (1961), we refer to these alternatives to deterrence-oriented punishment as remunerative strategies (see also Bardach & Kagan, 1982; Hawkins, 1984; Reiss, 1984a). Remunerative strategies usually (a) create clear standards of desirable behavior, (b) identify those engaging in it, and (c) reward them for doing so. Rewards or side-payments can vary with respect to the type of rewards provided, the type of actors providing those rewards, and the ability and incentives of those actors to provide them.

The NCAA has traditionally used remunerative strategies to promote academic excellence and athletic participation. It promotes academic excellence by awarding postgraduate scholarships to a select number of all-American players and promotes athletic participation through similar mechanisms, offering financial rewards to schools that sponsor more than the required 14 sport teams. Division I and II member institutions offer student-athletes scholarships in exchange for athletic participation. In each case the NCAA and its member institutions are rewarding institutions or individuals for behaviors it is trying to encourage, rather than punishing behaviors it seeks to discourage (Wieberg, 1996).

Rewards can prevent undesirable outcomes when a team or player is not averse to complying but simply sees it as too costly, or when a team or player who

does not value the benefits of compliance does value the rewards being offered. As with sanctions, rewards assume that the target actors are able but reluctant to fulfill league norms. Also as with sanctions, the success of remunerative strategies requires transparency so that league members can reward the deserving but not the undeserving. Unlike punitive strategies, rewards spur actors to volunteer, rather than hide, information. Schools, teams, and players also look more kindly on remunerative strategies, seeing them as less coercive and less of an infringement on institutional control than punitive strategies are. They also foster innovation by establishing a goal toward which actors can strive rather than a floor that they must meet (Ayres & Braithwaite, 1992).

Remunerative strategies are not without problems, either, of course. Schools might be reluctant to pay their share of the revenues needed to fund such efforts, particularly if the teams or individuals involved are suspected of being untrustworthy on other counts. The rewards offered might be insufficient to outweigh the benefits of not adopting the desirable behavior. Indeed, many schools only field 14 teams because the rewards for offering more sports fail to cover the complete costs of adding new programs. Equally important, acceptance of these rewards does not always preclude teams or athletes from violating either the spirit or the letter of NCAA rules. For example, schools might accept NCAA moneys to field additional teams but not provide those teams with adequate support.

Depending on the actors and behaviors being rewarded, remunerative strategies can have the morally distasteful feature of appearing to reward conferences, teams, and individuals for behaviors in which they "should" be engaging anyway. The offer of rewards might even lead previously compliant teams or players to make their behavior contingent on being rewarded first (i.e., the "walk-on" that threatens to quit if he or she does not get a scholarship). This response simultaneously reduces the amount of compliance and increases the costs to the league of achieving it. Many of these dynamics can create resistance to large-scale rewards for schools, even when giving rewards would achieve the desired behavioral result.

Preventive Strategies

Preventive strategies seek to eliminate noncompliance as an option. Sociologists have highlighted the difference between policies that "prevent a harm rather than punish an evil" (Hawkins, 1984, p. 4; see also Reiss, 1984a). Although we often take the alternatives available to a decision maker as givens of the situation, an important tool for leagues is the ability to manipulate the activities in which teams and players can engage. Preventive strategies attempt to reduce undesirable options by (a) clearly proscribing acts that are not themselves undesirable but whose prevention precludes the ultimately undesirable behavior, (b) using "premonitory surveillance" to thwart violations before they occur (Reiss, 1984a), and (c) making efforts to reduce the autonomy of a potential violator to engage in the undesirable behavior.

Preventive strategies make behavioral assumptions similar to those of punitive strategies, assuming that violations occur because violators lack commitment to league norms, rather than because they lack the capacity or opportunities to

fulfill them. Preventive strategies can, however, pay less attention to transparency and monitoring programs than a punitive approach by "locking out" certain behaviors or actors. They can proscribe behaviors that are the most transparent and costly to conceal and that are necessary steps leading up to the undesirable behavior. Successful implementation of such strategies offers the promise of avoiding problems before they happen.

For example, in an effort to reduce the exploitation of athletes who lack the skills to succeed in the classroom, the NCAA prohibits coaches from inviting prospective student-athletes to campus until they have completed the PSAT or SAT test (NCAA, 1997–1998, bylaw 13.7.1.2.3.1). This administrative hurdle prevents coaches from even making an investment in an athlete who might later prove unprepared for college, academically ineligible to play, and therefore a temptation for academic fraud. To discourage alumni from providing athletes with jobs that require little or no work but pay well, for many years the NCAA prohibited student-athletes from working at all. The NCAA also limits the number, places, and time of year at which a coach may have face-to-face contact with a prospective student athlete (NCAA, 1997–1998, bylaws 3.2.4.7 and 11.5). Rather than threatening sanctions for illicit coach–athlete deals that might be hard to detect, these policies create barriers that reduce the chances for such contacts to occur in the first place.

Preventive strategies often founder on the inability or unwillingness of league managers to find ways of effectively preventing the undesirable behavior or its precursors. In many cases, the actors involved have complete autonomy to undertake undesirable behaviors, and neither the league nor others can prevent it. Leagues can, however, gain control in some situations. For example, forbidding schools to require incoming athletes to respond before a single, set response date (and making sure that prospective students know this rule) reduces the ability of schools to take advantage of prospective student-athletes. Nonetheless, strongly motivated teams or players often seek, and might find, creative ways around such policies. Nothing undermines a preventive strategy more than a compliance officer or athletic director willing to cover for coaches or athletes when they violate rules designed to prevent undesirable behavior. Preventive strategies usually require reinforcing strategies to serve as backup when prevention fails.

Generative Strategies

Generative strategies are the complement of preventive ones. They involve providing teams and players with new opportunities, rather than removing existing ones. Such strategies address cases in which undesirable behaviors occur because the team or player could not comply, cases in which threats, rewards, and prevention would fail to alter behavior. For example, for many years athletes were unable to get high school counselors to fill out the NCAA academic forms over the summer in time for athletes to be cleared to play during their freshman year. Threats of athletic ineligibility were ineffective in motivating the guidance counselors. In response to this problem, the NCAA instituted a national clearinghouse that linked college entrance results with NCAA paperwork, thereby sidestepping the involvement of high school counselors altogether.

Generative strategies can address systemic incapacities that affect all players or all teams or specific incapacities that affect only given subsets of players or teams. The former, "Field of Dreams," strategy assumes that "if we create the opportunity, they will use it," whereas the latter assumes that the opportunity exists, but certain potential violators lack the resources to avail themselves of it. Generative strategies (a) target systemic or individual capacity deficits; (b) impose costs on managers, not potential violators; and (c) focus on potential violators who can't, rather than won't, alter their behavior.

Although the transfer of resources common to many generative strategies parallels that in remunerative strategies, the former alters behavior by creating new alternatives and the latter does so by changing the consequences of existing alternatives. As with remunerative strategies, transparency is critical. It helps league officials avoid providing opportunities to untrustworthy teams or players that might appropriate the benefits without fulfilling league rules.

One factor pushing some student-athletes to sign with professional agents is the students' inability to survive financially in college without assistance. Certainly, NCAA scholarships promote athletic excellence by allowing athletically superior but economically disadvantaged students to play college sports. Nonetheless, because full athletic scholarships prohibit athletes from receiving federal grants and do not include living expenses, some "scholarship-rich" athletes are cash poor. The NCAA recently gave financially strapped athletes greater opportunity to retain their amateur standing (and resist lucrative side deals with agents) by establishing a special assistance fund to cover clothing and medical/dental expenses and by allowing student-athletes to borrow against future earnings to purchase insurance against disabling injury or illness (NCAA, 1997-1998, bylaw 12.1.1.4.1). These programs increase the likelihood that poorer athletes will be financially able to play college sports. Unlike athletic scholarships (remunerative), this funding is need based, and it allows athletes to remain amateurs even when they could do better by "turning pro."

A different kind of incapacity problem and generative strategy are illustrated by the increasing number of NCAA rule violations attributed to the "information overload" of dealing with the extensive and complex set of NCAA rules and regulations. Even member institutions seeking advice from the NCAA regarding rules failed to receive responses in a timely fashion. The NCAA has addressed this systemic incapacity by developing compliance software to assist coaches and administrators with NCAA paperwork and rule interpretation.

Generative strategies face implementation problems similar to those of remunerative ones. Such strategies, in essence, require wealthier league members to subsidize poorer ones. The creation of new opportunities for socially desirable behavior does not preclude socially undesirable behavior except when the two happen to be mutually exclusive. The new opportunities that are created must not only be new but also be more attractive than the incentives that previously lead the school or athlete to engage in the undesirable behavior. Obviously, generative strategies will only alter the behavior of those whose noncompliance truly stems from incapacity, not those who were driven by quite intentional efforts to cheat.

Early reviews of the national clearinghouse highlight other weaknesses of generative strategies. For example, they often require considerable investment. Problems have arisen because the NCAA underestimated the managerial investment necessary to review incoming transcripts. The clearinghouse has had to examine curriculum lists from almost 18,500 high schools, and in 1995, nearly 16,000 of the 114,747 student-athletes who applied for eligibility had still not learned of their status months after school began (Blum, 1995). As is often the case with generative strategies, clearinghouse administrators tended to overstate nonconformity—at times declaring exceptional students who took unusually advanced courses in high school ineligible (Blum, 1995; Drew, 1996).

Cognitive Strategies

Opportunities and their consequences clearly influence team and player choices, but so do the information and values that those teams and players hold. As did both Etzioni (1961) and Drijver and Zuiderwijk (1991), we view leagues as being able to influence behavior through communication that involves either cognitive or normative strategies. Cognitive strategies—the equivalent of warning labels—provide potential violators with new, more complete, and more accurate information to facilitate their making more intelligent decisions that favor socially desirable behaviors (Bardach & Kagan, 1982; O'Hare, 1982; Weiss & Tschirhart, 1994). The information can relate to the alternatives available, the relationship between behaviors and consequences, the costs and benefits of different behaviors, or the likely behavior of other actors. The league can generate and disseminate the information itself, encourage league members to do it, or mandate that others provide information in the course of private transactions. Cognitive strategies (a) lack clear behavioral prescriptions or proscriptions and (b) focus on creating and disseminating information.

Cognitive strategies assume that potential violators are generally supportive of league norms and are capable of fulfilling league requirements but fail to do so because they mistakenly believe that violating the rules will benefit them. In such a model, the new information induces teams or players to renounce undesirable behavior because they no longer see it as serving their own interests. Monitoring behavior becomes unnecessary because actors serve as "their own ubiquitous inspectors" (Bardach & Kagan, 1982, p. 248). Better information allows team officials and athletes to make better decisions through a more accurate comparison of the true consequences of complying and violating league rules. Indeed, information can often induce positive behavioral changes that the NCAA desires but does not require of teams or athletes. Thus, cognitive (as well as normative) strategies provide means of inducing desired behavior changes even when compliance is not at issue; being a good student and a good athlete is behavior the NCAA seeks to promote but does not require.

Important examples include NCAA efforts aimed at clarifying the ill effects *to the athlete* of illegal drug use, taking easy classes, or getting poor grades. Rather than informing athletes of the likely sanctions if they get caught using illicit drugs (which is simply the informational component of a punitive strategy), a cognitive

strategy informs the athlete of the medical and personal risks of using criminally illicit or performance-enhancing drugs, even if they don't get caught. Disabusing athletes of their often excessively optimistic estimates regarding athletic departments' concern for their academic welfare could alter the choices and the behavior of college athletes. Indeed, Congress passed the "Student Right-to-Know Act" in 1990, which forced the NCAA to make graduation rates of athletic departments available to the public, in order to reduce exploitation of athletes simply by ensuring that they were aware they might be exploited.

In many cases, sport associations approve cognitive strategies either because such strategies appear effective or simply as least-common-denominator strategies that evoke little opposition during league negotiation. Cognitive strategies often prove cheaper than other strategies—altering information about consequences or opportunities usually costs far less than altering the consequences or opportunities themselves. Of course, cognitive strategies will fail when league members institute them as cheap, nonintrusive ways to be seen to be "doing something," rather than when inadequate information is the true source of undesirable behavior. For example, there is little evidence to suggest that the publication of graduation rates has influenced any program's ability to recruit top athletes.

Normative Strategies

Whereas cognitive strategies seek to alter information, normative strategies seek to alter values. These strategies attempt to get teams and players to adopt goals that are consistent with, if not the same as, the goals of the league. They seek to induce potential violators to comply with rules by convincing them it is not morally acceptable to break them (see Ayres & Braithwaite, 1992; Bardach & Kagan, 1982; Drijver & Zuiderwijk, 1991; Etzioni, 1961). Such approaches involve either collective or hierarchical consciousness raising. NCAA staff and association members might work together to focus attention on a problem, create new collective norms, and increase member commitment to existing norms. Normative strategies (a) establish broad hortatory goals with few specific proscriptions or prescriptions, (b) leave opportunities and consequences unaltered, and (c) establish ongoing dialogues among league members and between league members and potential violators to promote norms. Essentially, normative strategies involve rhetorical attempts to persuade potential violators to not merely adopt different means to their preexisting goals but adopt new goals.

Rather than taking potential violators' values as givens, a normative strategy consciously seeks to manipulate those values. Such a strategy assumes that potential violators could adopt desirable behaviors and will do so once they become more committed to league norms. Getting players to internalize norms can be as simple as a coach clarifying early in each season that the team goal is not winning at any cost but winning fair and square. Although it is tempting to discount such approaches, it would be difficult to explain, for example, the infrequency of thrown games by reference to threatened sanctions alone, without any reference to social norms against cheating. Transparency is relatively unimportant to normative strategies, because they "begin to influence an actor as soon as an act is contemplated

and before it is committed, whereas social disapproval and formal punishment can only be mobilized after the event and only in circumstances where others acquire evidence of who committed the act" (Makkai & Braithwaite, 1994, p. 360).

The strength of the bedrock norm of fair competition probably rests most securely on a diffuse and hard-to-observe, but nonetheless real, social process of normative education and reeducation that occurs in locker rooms, on the playing field, and in conversations among coaches and league officials. The NCAA has used far more explicit normative strategies in promoting the student-athlete concept. In the late 1950s the NCAA, under the direction of Walter Byers, changed the organization's language. For example, it replaced the term *club* (a term employed in the professional leagues) in all its literature with *college team*. The NCAA adopted and insisted on *student-athlete* rather than *player* or *athlete*. It could be argued that these actions were merely window dressing, a way of avoiding legal constraints that apply to commerce, but the changes in language have influenced the values and self-perceptions of two generations of coaches and athletes. For better or for worse, the values implicit in the term *student-athlete* have framed much of the debate surrounding college athletics over the last 20 years (Sack & Staurowsky, 1998).

Normative strategies face an inherent difficulty in attempting to alter beliefs that are commonly deeply held. Such transformations cannot be accomplished overnight and, indeed, might take years to occur. Maintaining and reinforcing existing norms might be a more realistic goal in many cases. Thus, normative strategies are likely to produce little, if any, short-term impact on the behavior of today's athletes, but they might hold the promise of creating wider ranging, deeper, more stable social behavioral changes over a long period of time. Normative strategies aimed at reducing violence or harassment of women by male athletes will show little visible impact next season, but they might contribute to important and fundamental changes in what the culture of sports looks like a decade or two from now. Evaluating the effectiveness of normative strategies poses particularly difficult theoretical problems. Because normative strategies work by leading teams and athletes to redefine their interests, and because interests have theoretical primacy over league policies as determinants of team behavior, compliance often tends to be attributed to a happy coincidence of team and athlete interests and league norms, rather than to the influence of league policies.

Five Guiding Questions

This taxonomy constitutes, we believe, a collectively exhaustive range of strategies sport associations can and do use, singly or in combination, to improve compliance with rules. Whether or not we have identified the right, and right number of, categories, both professional and amateur sport associations would be better served in their efforts to face current and future compliance challenges by this taxonomy than the traditional one of carrots and sticks. None of the six strategies, nor any particular combination of them, is likely to be "the most effective" at forestalling all types of violations in all cases. Rather, a league's success in a given

case will likely depend on the interaction among three components: the strategy the league adopts, the goals the league seeks to accomplish, and the context of other factors within which the strategy must work.

As a first step toward moving beyond the vague claim that “the effectiveness of a strategy depends on the goals and the context,” we develop five guiding questions that help identify when and whether each strategy is likely to induce compliance (see Table 2). We pose these questions to sport managers interested in improving conformance by teams and athletes with league expectations. These questions could also be posed as testable propositions about the conditions that influence a strategy’s effectiveness. The first sentence of each section is an attempt to reframe the guiding question as a proposition.

1. Are the violators truly recalcitrant or merely disinclined to comply?

A strategy’s effectiveness in inducing compliance depends on the extent to which violations reflect merely a disinclination to comply or “true recalcitrance.” It is obvious that the more a team or player opposes league norms, the less likely it will be to comply with its dictates. It is less obvious, however, that the validity of this claim depends on the strategy adopted. The strength of the link between a team’s or player’s opposition to a particular rule and the likelihood that they violate that rule differs depending on the strategy adopted.

If potential violators were placed along a spectrum of disincentives to violate NCAA rules, we can imagine classifying them as being recalcitrant (strong disincentives), disinclined (weak disincentives), or nonviolators (no disincentives). Obviously, league strategies need only address the first two groups, because the last already sees compliance as being in its interests. The distribution of the actors along this spectrum will vary across rules, leagues, and time.

A given strategy is likely to be more effective against one distribution and less effective against others. Generative and cognitive strategies are effective against the disinclined and almost completely ineffective against the recalcitrant. New opportunities and new information will reduce violations only if they actually stem from capacity and information deficits; behaviors of the strongly opposed will be unaffected. In contrast, successfully implemented preventive strategies tend to be equally effective against both the disinclined and the recalcitrant.

Punitive, remunerative, and normative strategies sit between these extremes. Punitive and remunerative strategies are likely to have more influence over the disinclined than over the recalcitrant, especially because both rewards and punishments are usually quite small. Indeed, the truly recalcitrant teams and players might be both undeterrable and unbribeable, willing to absorb sanctions yet unwilling to change behavior in response to rewards. Normative strategies will alter the interests of the disinclined more readily than the recalcitrant, but they might be able to influence even the latter over the long term. The primary point here is that some strategies will influence all actors in common ways, whereas others will influence some actors more than others.

Table 2 Six Strategies and Five Guiding Questions

Strategy	Motto	Mechanism	What are the assumptions & major cause of noncompliance?	What level of factors is assumed to cause noncompliance?	What is the role of transparency in success?	What are the major conditions of success and the likelihood of implementation?
Punitive	"Punish them."	Increase negative consequences of undesirable behavior.	Actors <i>motivated to violate</i> but could comply.	Individual	Prerequisite: must exist or be created	Sanctions must be sufficiently harsh <i>and</i> likely.
Remunerative	"Reward them."	Increase positive consequences of desirable behavior.	Actors <i>motivated to violate</i> but could comply.	Individual	Self-disclosure induced by strategy	Rewards must induce adoption of desirable <i>and</i> renouncing of undesirable behavior.
Preventive	"Lock them out."	Decrease opportunities for undesirable behavior.	Actors motivated to <i>violate and have capacity to violate</i> but could comply.	Individual and systemic	Relatively unimportant	Must be "choke points" at which can prevent violations.
Generative	"If you build it, they will come."	Increase opportunities for desirable behavior.	Actors motivated to <i>comply but lack capacity to comply</i> .	Systemic	Relatively unimportant	New alternatives must be more attractive than existing ones.
Cognitive	"Show them it's in their interests."	Increase information about desirable and undesirable behaviors.	Actors motivated to <i>comply but lack information</i> to motivate compliance.	Individual, systemic, and social	Relatively unimportant	Actor's "real" self-interest must be to comply.
Normative	"Teach them to do the right thing."	Increase valuation of desirable relative to undesirable behaviors.	Actors have <i>capacity to comply but lack values</i> to motivate compliance.	Social	Completely unimportant	Must be able to transform actors' values so compliance becomes self-interest.

Note. Questions 1 and 2 are combined under the heading, What are the assumptions and major cause of noncompliance? The information in this chart is adapted from Mitchell (1997) and Ross and Staines (1973).

2. Are we sure we have maximized the opportunities and capacities to comply and minimized the opportunities to violate?

A strategy's effectiveness at inducing compliance depends on the extent to which violations are driven by the incapacity to comply and the opportunities to violate. The strategies outlined here differ in their responsiveness to the fact that opportunities and capacities, not just incentives, influence whether a team or player complies with or violates league rules. Some strategies take alternatives as givens, whereas others consciously seek to manipulate them. When incapacity to comply is the source of some or all violations, generative strategies are the only ones that address the true source of the problem or have any likelihood of success. Leagues such as the NCAA can identify and provide new ways for teams and players to achieve their goals while remaining compliant with league rules. Making otherwise-unavailable alternatives sufficiently attractive encourages potential violators to comply with association rules.

Although conceptually distinct, remunerative strategies, in practice, might provide rewards sufficient to lead a potential violator to reevaluate a course of action that was previously considered so costly as to not be a real alternative. By reducing or removing opportunities to violate association rules, preventive strategies can alter a team's or player's calculation about compliance. Closing off opportunities for violation is likely to lead the "recalcitrant" to simply become more creative in seeking out ways to violate certain rules, but it might change the behavior of opportunistic violators who cheated because "it was so easy."

In contrast, punitive, cognitive, and normative strategies assume that teams, coaches, and athletes already can comply and just need to be motivated to do so. Whenever such assumptions prove wrong, these strategies fail. Punitive strategies increase the costs of a violation without deterring it if the violators lack alternative ways of achieving their goals. Cognitive strategies provide information about alternatives but not the resources to undertake them. Normative strategies lead potential violators to internalize association goals but leave them on their own to find or develop the resources needed to achieve those goals. By ignoring the role that capacities and opportunities play in compliance, these strategies can miss chances to improve compliance.

3. Are we defining and understanding the sources of the problem in the most effective way?

A strategy's effectiveness at inducing compliance will depend on the extent to which violations are defined as social, systemic, or individual-level problems. Fundamentally, policy making involves responding to a problem, but a social condition only becomes a problem through a process of collective definition (Blumer, 1971). Steroid use, for example, is only problematic if the sporting world collectively decides that taking performance-enhancing drugs is not fair play (Hoberman, 1995). Public concern often presses sport managers to address certain issues in certain ways, even when "objective" social conditions might recommend other priorities or other methods (Blumer, 1971; Chalip, 1995).

The process of identifying problems and their solutions does not result from a wholly rational interaction of detached, calculating individuals. Rather, it results from a highly political and socially embedded process of both direct and indirect contextual interaction between league officials and the teams, coaches, players, and publics they attempt to serve (Chalip, 1995). This interaction makes determining what is a problem, who or what is to blame for it, and how to resolve it a political struggle in which sport policy makers are merely some of the participants, and not always the most powerful ones (Chalip, 1995). Power differentials influence which ideas are included in the debate, which groups have authority, and which problems have priority. The broader social context always guides, and might dictate, the norms underlying sport association policy. For example, Sack and Staurowsky (1998) detail the NCAA's public relations efforts to define college athletes as student-athletes at the same time that member institutions contractually obligated them with scholarships. As such, a practice that arguably professionalizes college athletes was countered by a systematic effort to define college athletes as amateurs. The NCAA, under the direction of Walter Byers, was able to frame the debate and, thus, the strategies for enforcement.

Social contexts influence whether violations are seen as being caused by individuals, the system, or society. This, in turn, influences not only what are considered problems and what strategies are adopted but also how effective a strategy will be. Effective strategy requires sociologic sensitivity in choosing solutions that reflect prevailing social and political concerns and values. Ross and Staines (1973) have shown that powerful actors tend to deflect responsibility for a problem by blaming individual shortcomings. In the case of the NCAA, we would expect Division I member schools to view violations as being caused by individuals rather than by the system. Regardless of the accuracy of such assessments, problems—such as cheating—that society defines as being caused by an individual's weakness are likely to be, and may best be, addressed with punitive and remunerative strategies that focus on changing the behavior of individual actors. Those with limited authority, on the other hand (athletes), are likely to point the finger at systemic shortcomings. Generative and preventive strategies more readily mesh with such definitions of a problem. These strategies redress problems such as exploitation or procedural violations by increasing opportunities for compliance and reducing opportunities for violation for all participants, regardless of their intentions and incentives.

Both outsiders seeking to promote broader social change and insiders seeking to avoid changes in a sport might argue that problems such as drugs and violence in athletics are merely the manifestations of the same problems in the society at large (Ross & Staines, 1973). Normative strategies are likely to resonate with such conceptions of a problem because they involve attempts to manipulate values that athletes, coaches, and teams have internalized from their social context. The broader social context also influences a normative strategy's effectiveness, as is evident in studies showing that strategies that appeal to social responsibility have been far more effective at influencing behavior in Sweden than in the United States, where people place less weight on social responsibility (Whittington, 1993). Fi-

nally, cognitive strategies seem to appeal simultaneously to individual, systemic, and social definitions of a problem, a fact that might account for their popularity as strategies to reduce noncompliance.

4. How important will transparency be?

A strategy's effectiveness at inducing compliance depends on the extent to which violations are readily transparent to league observers. The transparency of player and team behavior is consistently raised as a major obstacle to regulation. Of course, part of this importance derives from the often unquestioned assumption that violations should be deterred through punishment and that such deterrence requires adequate monitoring of behavior. Yet opening up the possibility of alternatives to deterrence quickly highlights the variation in the importance of transparency to the success of different strategies. Punitive, remunerative, and generative strategies have demanding transparency requirements because they are essentially contingent strategies. All three require that a league or coach discriminate between, and respond differently to, different types of actors. Sanctions must be imposed only on those who actually violate, rewards must be given only to those who actually comply, and capacity-enhancing resources must be given only to those truly in need. These strategies can also induce perverse informational dynamics, with punitive strategies leading teams to be more secretive than they might otherwise be and remunerative and generative strategies leading teams to understate their incentives or capacity, respectively, to comply with NCAA rules.

In contrast, preventive, cognitive, and normative strategies do not require such discrimination among actors. Hence, transparency mechanisms are less critical. These strategies generally involve policies that treat all teams or players similarly, requiring certification before *any* coach can recruit off-campus or disseminating information to all colleges on the benefits of finishing college or on nonviolent ways to express anger. Even when these strategies target particular actors, they are less dependent on timely information about behavior because changes in current behavior do not require rapid changes in response. For example, unlike monitoring for cheating, banning athletes who fail to meet minimum academic standards from league play requires verification at most once per academic term. In short, transparency probably enhances the effectiveness of any strategy, but it is not always crucial.

5. How likely is it that a strategy will be implemented effectively?

Finally, a strategy's effectiveness at inducing compliance depends on how likely it is that the strategy can be implemented effectively. Strategies to change behavior can fail because of inherent limitations or implementation limitations. The former arise when a strategy is perfectly implemented but nonetheless fails to induce a team, coach, or athlete to come into compliance. The latter arise when managers do not implement a strategy successfully. For example, the frequent violations of NCAA agent-player contact might be the result of inherent limitations in the deterrent effect of punitive strategies or implementation limitations that leave players and agents unconvinced that they are likely to be caught and stiffly sanctioned.

Choosing among the six strategies requires assessing not how administrators, coaches, and players will respond if each strategy were implemented perfectly but how they will respond to each strategy given the *likely* level and form of implementation. Although no strategy will be implemented perfectly every time, the typical extent and form of imperfection will vary across strategies. Some strategies are simply more difficult to implement than others are. The "implementation gap" between paper and practice is often wider for punitive, remunerative, generative, and normative strategies than for preventive and cognitive strategies. Coaches, for example, consistently fail to impose the stiff sanctions that they agreed to impose on players, because the costs of doing so are so high to the team. NCAA member institutions regularly fail to provide the resources they agreed were necessary to properly implement remunerative, generative, and normative strategies. In contrast, member teams tend to implement preventive and cognitive strategies because they usually require fewer resources and evoke fewer concerns of infringing on institutional control. Sport managers need to understand the conditions that influence the success of each strategy and realistically judge the likelihood of implementation.

Some Caveats

Before concluding, several caveats are in order. First, this article has taken association rules as given. It leaves for others to investigate how and when redefining the rules can be an important and useful response to high violation rates. It has been argued, for example, and perhaps with merit, that the entire enterprise of collegiate athletics lacks legitimacy, and the only appropriate strategy is to change the rules (Sack & Staurowsky, 1998). We employed examples from the NCAA only to illustrate our taxonomy. It is not our intention to either condone or condemn NCAA rules.

Second, although these six strategies are conceptually distinct with respect to the mechanisms by which they influence behavior, leagues and associations usually will (and should) combine strategies to maximize success. For example, linking punitive threats and remunerative promises creates a "tit-for-tat" strategy that rewards desirable behavior and punishes undesirable behavior, most likely proving more effective than either policy alone (Axelrod, 1984; Wieberg, 1997a). Although it would break norms regarding equal treatment, leagues might increase their effectiveness by responding to each violator with the strategy most likely to influence it. Clearly, in devising compliance strategies, one size does not fit all. Broad and long-term success requires policies based on understanding the range of available strategies and their effectiveness under different circumstances. But, and this is the third caveat, even if research could identify the optimal strategy or "cocktail" of strategies to reduce NCAA rule violations, such guidance would be unlikely to dictate policy. Social definitions of a problem's causes and a variety of criteria other than effectiveness at altering behavior can, should, and will determine what strategies leagues adopt.

Conclusion

For researchers, developing a taxonomy of strategies for influencing behavior constitutes only a beginning. The taxonomy and propositions identify available options and focus attention on factors that influence their success. Yet, the questions and propositions we have raised need testing that goes farther than the anecdotal illustrations from the NCAA that we have used here. Will options such as removing opportunities for exploitation of players, increasing opportunities to retain amateur standing, providing information about the value of completing college, or strengthening norms of fair play through words and action actually work? Do they perform better or worse than the usual menu of sanctions and rewards? In what ways do other influential factors—incentives and capacities to comply and violate, behavioral transparency, likely levels of implementation—vary across the available strategies? This article seeks to raise these questions as important and to point to the need to answer them through theoretical, as well as empirical, work.

In the meantime, practitioners might find the six strategies (punitive, remunerative, generative, preventive, cognitive, and normative) useful. They provide the foundation for evaluating which existing compliance policies work and why they work, as well as for developing better policies in the future. Each strategy invokes different mechanisms to influence behavior and is influenced in different ways by important factors that condition their effectiveness. Specifically, the strategies differ in how much their effectiveness depends on the strength of the potential violator's ambitions and capacities, the social definition of the problem and its causes, transparency regarding violations of NCAA rules activity, and implementation difficulties. It is our hope that sport managers will work with this taxonomy and the five guiding questions when developing future compliance policy for sport associations.

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