Justin Cohen

Intro to Sports Management and Marketing

The world of a sports agent
Introduction

For my project, the interview I conducted was on a man named Kenneth Kitay. Mr. Kitay worked as a sports agent for prospective baseball players out of baseball academies in the Dominican Republic. Mr. Kitay spent his childhood in Gaithersburg Maryland before attending the University of Maryland for college. At the University of Maryland, he graduated with a bachelor’s degree in marketing. After college, he attended law school at Widener University earning his Juris Doctor. Mr. Kitay enjoys the underdog role in life and wanted to represent people who, like him, at one point in his life, are the underdog. That is why he chose the route of representing young baseball players in the Dominican Republic who aspire to one day make it to the major leagues.

Logistics of the interview

My connection to Mr. Kitay was made through one of my close friends at Indiana University. While discussing potential sports professionals for me to interview with my friends, Corey heard about my project and told me he could get me in contact with his Uncle Kenny. He told me about what his uncle had been doing for baseball players out of the Dominican Republic and I was intrigued and got his phone number from Corey to reach out and see if within his busy schedule he could find time for me to interview him and learn more about his work in the sports industry. Thankfully, Mr. Kitay was able to find a time in his day to allow me to interview him over the phone. The interview occurred on Tuesday, December 3rd. The interview lasted roughly thirty minutes and Mr. Kitay provided me with plenty of valuable information and even more valuable advice about the work world. He also spoke to me about some of the really cool experiences he
had in the Dominican Republic at the baseball academies and some really awesome people he
got to meet which he never would have had the opportunity to be introduced to before.

Skills

During the course of the interview, Mr. Kitay blessed me with plenty of skills he uses everyday in the professional world. One of the skills that resonated the most with me, and he also preached above almost anything else was the ability to communicate. Whether it’s with people working for you, or networking with other people in the business world; communication is the key to success and making sure things get done the right way. A quote I found that made the most sense was “Effective communication is a vital tool for any business owner. Your success at getting your point across can be the difference between sealing a deal and missing out on a potential opportunity.” (Employment, S.B. and T. (2019) In the world of sports agency, Mr. Kitay was constantly networking. Whether it was with the heads of the academies in the Dominican Republic, finding out if any of the athletes he was representing needed things such as equipment, cleats, medicine or vitamins to stay healthy and in the best physical shape. He also networked throughout the country with different baseball academies in search of new clients to represent in hopes of bringing them to the major leagues in America. One of the other important skills that Mr. Kitay told me was one of the keys to success was having a burning inner drive. By this, I do not simply mean wanting to get things done effectively and efficiently, rather, by any means necessary attitude. Stopping at nothing to reach your goals and become successful, do not let things that are not relevant to the end goal get in the way. Life is all about choices and depending on if you make the smart choice, or the choice you prefer will determine if you need more or less luck in your mission of becoming successful. Mr. Kitay is a very hard-working agent and will go to all lengths to get himself and the people he is representing recognition and a shot at being seen
by someone who is willing to give his clients a shot. A quote he said during the interview that resonated in me was “Balance personal time with your drive to be successful.” The way I perceived this quote was that work must always come first. When it is time to work, you have to work to your maximum capability and let nothing stand in the way of it. When it is time for extra-curricular things, enjoy them, but always make sure work is your number one priority when on the road to success. As said by Lahey, (208) “Contract negotiation processes are typically highly sensitive and require a deep knowledge of the sport marketplace and a honed skill set.” Mr. Kitay could not stress enough the importance of knowing what you are dealing with when trying to get contracts for his client. He said that his law school degree helps him immensely with contracts and making sure both sides are getting a good side in the deal being made. A different skill Mr. Kitay uses and told me is an absolute must in the world of sports agency is the ability to market. If you can market yourself and the person you are representing than you will be successful in making deals and getting contracts for your players. His degree in marketing taught him how to market effectively and whenever someone shows interest in an athlete he is representing, or even when nobody is interested and to gain interest, he markets his athletes to the best of his ability.

**Getting to where he is today**

At first, being an agent was never in the cards for Mr. Kitay. He started out as a marketing major with his first real job after college as a sales rep for a window and door company named Washington Energy Corp. After realizing that this was not his true calling, Mr. Kitay went to law school at Widener University and decided to make something new of himself. With this law degree, Mr. Kitay founded his own law practice based out of Pennsylvania where he is a defense attorney representing the people. Through his work, he met clients from other countries working
partly as an immigration attorney. With this connection and access to foreign land he made a connection to a baseball academy in the Dominican Republic through one of his clients. During my time interviewing Mr. Kitay, he constantly preached pursuing new opportunities in search of finding something you love doing and avoiding being reeling into work you don’t enjoy that just has financial benefits. Following his own advice, Mr. Kitay decided to represent young athletes in these baseball academies working to try and play Major League Baseball. Using his knowledge in law, he can navigate contracts for players with confidence that he is getting a good deal for both himself and his client.

**My experience/outlook**

At the end of my experience, I left with strong feelings about the world of sports agency and what the job truly entails, as it is not nearly as simple as I had once imagined it would be. When teaching students on sports agency, I would say the most valuable aspect of it to cover is communication. From my personal experience, communication was emphasized as being above all the other skills necessary when representing someone else. This was something I did not expect to learn from my interview, as I pictured other skills and variables as being much more important to success inside the sports world. Although it did not seem to be this way, in hindsight communication has to be of utmost importance in the agency world. The only way to ensure that you and your client are on the same page is by communication. Being a sports agent definitely seems like a very interesting job to have and gives you the ability to meet many awesome people and make plenty of cool experiences. For example, Mr. Kitay, while in the Dominican Republic scouting and visiting the baseball academies got the opportunity to meet Pedro Martinez and Vlad Guerrero, two all-star MLB players and people he never would have spoken to in his life if not for the opportunities granted to him through the sports agency world.
This experience definitely makes me wonder what I could do with my career in the sports agency world. The experiences Mr. Kitay had and overall the way agents go about their work, seems very interesting to me. Overall, this interview has made me really think about what the sports agency world is like and opened up a whole new interest for me in which I never had before.

Appendix
Hello Mr Kitay,
My name is Justin Cohen and I'm one of Corey's pledge brothers. For my Sports Management class I have to conduct an interview on someone in sports who worked in sports management and he told me about your past experiences as an agent. If you are available sometime this week I would love to interview you for my project.
Thanks, Justin

I'm free now or anytime after 5 p.m. or before 9 a.m. just give me a heads up

Okay sounds great. Is 5:30Pm tomorrow good? Thank you so much again.

Try me then please text me first thanks so much

Tuesday 12:16 AM

Text Message

Name: Kenneth Kitay. Email Address: kkitay@kitaylegal.com
Reference list: