

The Danish model of scholastic chess - now in 20% of all schools

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Danish Scholastic Chess Federation – www.skoleskak.dk/international.

In less than 10 years the Danish Scholastic Chess Federation (Dansk Skoleskak) experienced a total turn-around going from a small organisation with less than 100 schools and an annual budget of EUR 30.000 to a professional organisation with more than 400 schools (more than 20% of all primary schools in Denmark) and with an annual budget of EUR 600,000. The growth still continues while the Ministry of Education supports several projects and 40 pct. of all Danes are familiar with scholastic chess according to an official opinion poll.

This presentation seeks to go behind the story and reveal the key elements in the strategy that transformed the Danish Scholastic Chess Federation into a success. We will touch upon themes such as how to build a solid business model, the organisational identity and focus, differences between club chess and scholastic chess, winning arguments when approaching schools, and others questions such as funding, branding, and partnerships.

The objective is to inspire others to formulate a successful strategy of their own when trying to achieve greater societal recognition of scholastic chess, access to schools, funding from the Ministry, and a sustainable business model that works.

About the authors

Mads Jacobsen is Secretary General of Dansk Skoleskak (Danish Scholastic Chess Federation – DSCF). He is an experienced project leader and chief of staff for Dansk Skoleskak. Mads has played a key role in transforming Dansk Skoleskak into a huge scholastic success during the last few years. Mads has accumulated his expertise through working with and visiting scholastic chess organizations in Greenland, The Faroe Islands, Sweden, Norway, England, Germany, Holland, Syria, Turkey, Ethiopia, Australia, New Zealand, USA and Cuba.

Mads holds a Master's degree in Communication and Organization from Aalborg University and a degree from the Danish Police Academy, and he worked as a police officer for seven years. Mads has been involved in Scholastic Chess for 22 years as teacher, organiser and chairman for scholastic chess organizations at Municipalities, regional and national level. He is the author of several books regarding scholastic chess and chess's relationship with mathematics.

Jakob Rathlev is President of Dansk Skoleskak (Danish Scholastic Chess Federation – DSCF). He has 20-year long track-record as voluntary teacher and leader in Dansk Skoleskak, and he has been elected member of the Executive Committee for the past 9 years, and President for the past 5 years. Together with Mads Jacobsen Jakob had a key role in formulating the strategy that transformed Dansk Skoleskak.

Jakob holds a PhD in political science and sociology, and his dissertation explored how the voluntary sector has different roles in different welfare states. In his professional life Jakob is a director at the Danish Evaluation Institute – a governmental institution responsible for the developing the educational system in Denmark through evaluation, analysis, and studies – and he works closely with the Ministry of Education and the educational institutions in Denmark.