

PAUL DEPODESTA

**SPECIAL ASSISTANT FOR BASEBALL OPERATIONS, SAN DIEGO PADRES;
FORMER GENERAL MANAGER, LOS ANGELES DODGERS**

Paul DePodesta has made a career of evaluating, measuring and assigning value to talent, and is currently Special Assistant for Baseball Operations for the San Diego Padres. "Paul has one of the most insightful and creative minds in baseball," said Sandy Alderson, Padres CEO.

General Manager of the Los Angeles Dodgers during the 2004-05 seasons, DePodesta was the third-youngest person ever to assume the role of Major League GM. Assigned the task of turning around a team that had not won a postseason game since 1988, DePodesta guided Los Angeles to a playoff berth in his first season at the helm. Quoting then-Dodgers owner Frank McCourt: "We wanted to find the best possible person. We found that man in Paul."

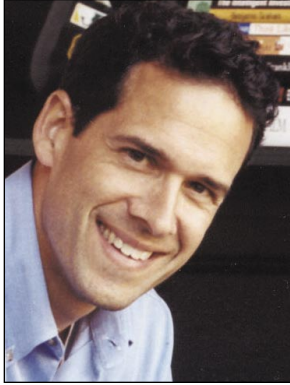
Prior to joining the Dodgers, DePodesta served as Assistant General Manager of the Oakland Athletics from 1999 to 2003—a tenure during which the A's tied for the best winning percentage in baseball (392-255). At the time of his hire, Oakland was one of the worst teams in the league, coming off of six losing seasons while posting one of the lowest payrolls in baseball. Entrenched in ingrained thinking and outdated systems, the stagnant team needed the unique management and creative approach that A's GM Billy Beane and DePodesta brought to the table.

The conventional wisdom in Major League Baseball is that wealthy teams—who spend three times as much on talent as poor teams—will win out. But in DePodesta's four seasons in Oakland, the A's won more regular season games than the New York Yankees, who during the same period spent \$350 million more on player payroll than did the Athletics. In rethinking how the system works by asking what DePodesta calls the *naive question*—"If we weren't already doing it this way, is this the way we would start?"—he and Beane revolutionized the way baseball teams are built.

Michael Lewis documented the A's remarkable success—despite a shoestring budget—under the Beane/DePodesta team in his *New York Times* best-seller *Moneyball: The Art of Winning an Unfair Game*. The book is a hit not just with baseball fans but also with business leaders looking for new approaches to stagnant systems. Overhauling—rather than merely tweaking—the thought processes behind an outdated organization is essential for innovation and success, something DePodesta knows better than most. At the podium, he discusses the innovative strategies he used to create a winning team, as well as the application of these strategies in the corporate world.

AT A GLANCE: After graduating Cum Laude from Harvard College with a degree in economics, DePodesta worked in the Canadian Football League and the American Hockey League. He then joined the Cleveland Indians Baseball Club as an intern in Player Development. Within a year, the Indians made him the advance scout for the Major League team, and two years later he was appointed Special Assistant to the General Manager.

In 1999, DePodesta's first season as Oakland's Assistant G.M., the Athletics enjoyed their first winning season in seven years and began a run of four consecutive playoff appearances, including three American League West Division Titles. Amidst the remarkable run, the Toronto Blue Jays offered to make DePodesta the youngest General Manager in the history of Major League Baseball (an offer he declined). His work has been recognized by various publications, including *Fortune*, who named one of the Top 10 innovators under 40. He is married and lives in southern California.



SUGGESTED SPEECH TOPICS

New Approaches:

- ***If we weren't already doing it this way, is this the way we would start?***

Moneyball:

- **The Art of Winning an Unfair Game**

The Genesis,
Implementation
and
Management of
New Systems

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