



Ok, maybe not THE President, as the White House Office of Public Affairs continues to ignore my requests for a one-on-one interview with Mr. Obama. But we've got the next best thing here on this Lazy Sunday, as the Indians media relations people are much more accommodating than those at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. Indians team president Mark Shapiro was gracious enough to take about 45 minutes out of his extremely busy day on Friday to sit down and talk to me here in beautiful Goodyear, AZ. I really enjoyed our conversation, and he was very open and forthcoming with every question I asked him (as you'll see). The following is the (lightly edited) text of our interview, and I hope you enjoy it as much as I did.

**AI: Pretty exciting offseason for you guys, huh? I've been an Indians fan since I was born, and this is the most active offseason I can ever remember.**

Mark: Yeah, if you define active by spending money. This is my 22<sup>nd</sup> season with the team, and there's never been anything of this magnitude. It's clearly both a statement and effort by ownership. This isn't just a front office effort. We identify players, make recommendations and provide alternative plans and they ultimately make the decisions. With both Swisher and Bourn, Paul Dolan was extremely involved and assertive in our efforts to get those players.

**AI: Talking about the front office, what exactly does the team president do? Half business and half baseball? Or more of an 80/20 ratio?**

Mark: I think that fluctuates by the calendar. I've spent 17, 18 years in baseball ops with the Indians, I'm familiar with every aspect of it and had involvement with it from the farm system, which I ran, and it's largely systematically still the same. Ross Atkins was both a player and a front office guy when I was here, a lot of the staff are the staff that were here, so I've got a comfort level and a familiarity and a confidence with our baseball operations staff that I can get out for 3 or 4 days, and get back in very quickly. My office is right next to Chris', and it's rare that he and I are not talking baseball and I'm still watching the games the same way. But I would say that a greater portion of my energy and time are spent on the business side because I'm still learning that side to an extent. It's all new to me, it all reports to me and I feel responsible and accountable and it's a big challenge. That and the MLB would be a third portion. I'm attending ownership meetings, I'm on a few committees that the Commissioner has put me on which has been an incredible education and learning process for me. So it really is a job that provides a global perspective of the game, from the MLB perspective to a baseball operations perspective to a business operations perspective. I'm in a leadership capacity in all three of those roles and enjoy those roles and after 21 years in the game I'm still learning a ton. I'm still trying to surround myself with smart, talented people who challenge me and make me better. And I'm able to stay in the same place which I clearly have strong roots, strong ties, strong bond with; raising my family there which means a lot to me, it really does.

**AI: Yeah, you've been a Cleveland guy for your whole career. Most guys have to get moved out of an organization to get promoted.**

Mark: Yeah, it's a rare thing. I'd always thought that would happen, but it never happened that way and I feel extremely fortunate to spend my career here.







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