

A GUIDE FOR CLUB PRESIDENTS

This resource is designed to help incoming Club Presidents understand their responsibilities.

The president is the principal leader of the club and has overall responsibility for the club's administration. The president should set the overall annual committee agenda (consistent with the views of members), help the committee priorities its goals and then try to keep the committee on track by working within that overall framework.

The committee members should have a sense of what they are trying to achieve throughout the year rather than just "muddling through" from one committee meeting to the next.

This could be achieved by holding a brief planning session at the first meeting of a new committee and then reviewing key elements of the strategic plan at the start of each committee meeting.

At the operational level, a major function of the president is to facilitate effective management of committee meetings.

The president/chairperson should:

- Be well informed of all club activities;
- Be aware of the future directions and plans of members;
- Have a good working knowledge of the constitution, rules and the duties of all office bearers and subcommittees;
- Manage committee and/or executive meetings;
- Manage the annual general meeting;
- Represent the club at local, regional, state and national levels;
- Be a supportive leader for all club members;
- Act as a facilitator for club activities; and
- Ensure the planning and budgeting for the future is carried out in accordance with the wishes of the members.

HOW DECISIONS ARE MADE

The president has the responsibility to determine what particular decision making process should be used.

Because of the nature of the position, there is often the need for the chairperson to make informed decisions.

The most difficult part of making a decision is the possibility of making the wrong one.

To avoid making a wrong decision or not making one at all, the president must.....

...BE DECISIVE

- Decide on small matters promptly;
- Make decisions with firmness;
- Explore all alternatives and encourage input from all committee members; and
- Act upon the chosen decision.

To be an effective president, always remember to be fair and decisive. All the skills necessary to be a good president, to enable fair decision making and to exercise sound management, come with practice and regular self-appraisal.

Assess yourself regularly.

Are you able to:

- **L**ead without controlling ?
- **I**nvolve club or group members in decisions that affect them ?
- **S**timulate balanced discussion ?
- **T**ime meetings to finish on time ?
- **E**ncourage focused discussion and keep meetings on track ?
- **N**egotiate and arbitrate successfully between members ?

And.....

LISTEN ?

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

The future development of a club must be led and driven by the president.

Every regular committee meeting should be opened with an item from the development or strategic plan and the committee should be encouraged to discuss the plan as much as possible.

As overall club development can be a mammoth task, Clubs need to appoint a development coordinator to ease the burden from the president of the ongoing week-to-week management and supervision of the club's development plan. The president and development co-ordinator are not responsible for the actual implementation of every aspect of the plan, but must be able to identify areas where the plan is not succeeding, analyse why and offer support to rectify the situation.

The development coordinator should act as an assistant to the president with the view to one day taking over the reins of that role without a huge void of knowledge being left to overcome.

Succession planning is critical to the development and stability of any organisation and presidents must make every effort to pass on their knowledge to potential successors without fear of losing authority or their special place in the club.

Every executive position needs a succession plan and every executive committee member should see the education of an assistant not as a threat, but as an opportunity to grow their club's success and prosperity.