



Department of
Local Government, Sport
and Cultural Industries

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Taking the Lead!

A guide for club presidents



The president or chairperson is the principal leader of the club and has overall responsibility for the club's administration.

The first major role of the president is leading the annual planning of the club (consistent with the views of members), help the committee prioritise its goals and then try to keep the committee on track by working within that overall plan. Club and committee members should have a sense of what they are trying to achieve and a plan developed for this purpose is essential. The president leads this process.

The second major role of the president is to facilitate effective management of club/committee meetings.

To do this effectively the president/chairperson should:

- Be well informed of all the club's activities
- Be knowledgeable of the future directions and plans of members
- Foster a strong working relationship with Local Government Authorities, affiliated associations, the relevant State sporting association, other sporting clubs and the relevant National Sporting Association/Organisation (if applicable)
- Have a good working knowledge of the club rules and the duties of all office bearers and sub-committees
- Manage (chair) committee and/or executive meetings
- Manage (chair) the annual general meeting
- Represent the club at local, regional, and State level
- Be a supportive leader for all club members
- Act as a facilitator for club activities
- Most importantly – 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 decision-making process should be used. Keep these simple and easy to understand is ideal, however they must align with the club's rules. 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, as the president you must adhere to the following:

- Be decisive
- Listen to all involved
- Explore all alternatives and encourage input from all committee members
- Do not become emotive and/or use emotive or inflammatory language when dealing with issues
- Decide on small matters promptly
- Make decisions with firmness
- Act upon the chosen decision
- Is the decision aligned to the club's purpose and long term plan?
- What are the implications of the decision (financial, legal, etc.)

- 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

- Reflect on your role and how you are going
- It is always a good idea to seek others out that play the same role as you and these may provide a very good sounding board for you
- Your State sporting association may well provide resources and support systems for you and your club on matters that the club may need to address (e.g. planning). Access these services by establishing a working relationship with the relevant State sporting association.
- Your local government is an essential partner for you and your club and has resources in many areas. Ensure you get to know the key people in your local government. They are there to ensure the community moves ahead.

Are you able to do the following?

- Lead without controlling
- Involve club or group members in decisions that affect them
- Stimulate balanced discussion
- Time meetings to finish on time
- Encourage focused discussion and keep meetings on track
- Negotiate successfully between members
- And listen!

Other resources

This resource is part of a series which provides assistance to Western Australian sport and recreation clubs and organisations to become better managed, more sustainable and to provide good quality services to members and participants.

Other resources in the series include:

1. Starting a new club
2. Planning for your club – the future is in your hands
3. Taking the lead! A guide for club presidents
4. The club secretary – the key to efficiency
5. Show me the money – a guide for the club treasurer
6. Effective club meetings – a guide for the chairperson
7. Making meetings effective – a short guide
8. Delegation – help for the overworked committee member
9. Problem solving – a guide for clubs

10. Promoting your club
11. Seeking and servicing a sponsor
12. Establishing your club rules
13. Risky business – a club guide to risk management
14. Clubs' guide to volunteer management
15. Member protection for clubs
16. How to be an inclusive club
17. Passport into schools – linking sports with schools
18. Youth sport – junior sport policy
19. Long-term involvement – junior sport policy
20. Physical growth and maturation – junior sport policy
21. Sport pathways – junior sport policy
22. Forming links – junior sport policy
23. People making it happen – junior sport policy
24. Quality coaching – junior sport policy
25. Making sport safe – junior sport policy
26. The law and sport – junior sport policy
27. Top 20 tips for officials
28. Top 20 tips for successful coaching

You will find the full series of the booklets on Sport and Recreation (WA)'s website:

www.dsr.wa.gov.au/clubs