

# Planning the year will save so much time

Once you have ensured that your committee and yourself have all the information you need to start, the next step is planning the year. Taking time to consider and plan what tasks need to be complete, by when and who is best to undertake them is a vital task often missed by committees who jump straight into “doing”.

The areas that need to be planned are considerable. At the start, you might feel that it is all you are doing, but trust us – this is the simplest and easiest way to get everything done.

Areas of focus initially should be:

- Scheduling committee meetings and the club AGM
- Financial planning
- Recruitment of volunteers
- Recruitment of coaches and players/athletes
- Training and playing requirements
- Facility access
- Social activities
- Fundraising activities

## Scheduling committee meetings and the club AGM

The more you plan and let people know your expectations the better the outcome will be. There is no reason not to set your committee meetings and AGM for the whole season at once. This means that committee members are able to schedule this time in their diary.

Locking in your AGM date at the start of the season means that you can be continually referring to it throughout the year and setting the expectation that members are to attend. Again, if the AGM is scheduled six months in advance, this means people can keep this date free. Planning the year all the way through also gives you a good framework and consistency to work around.

## Financial planning

One of the most important tasks to complete at the start of each year is the preparation of budgets and cash flow projections. Ensuring these two financial planning tasks are complete will ensure that your committee has the financial information it needs to continue planning the year. Most clubs don't undertake budgeting and financial management to their detriment. It also means for a President that you have no idea how the club is travelling or will travel, financially throughout the year which inevitably creates a huge amount of unnecessary stress and often conflict within the committee.

## Recruitment of volunteers

From the information gathering or induction process, you will get a good idea of the roles that you need to fill. You will also begin to understand the skill sets and time requirements for the roles. Plus, you will know who currently does, or is likely to take on those roles. Together with the committee, following the Club Rules, seek to appoint people to the key roles of the club as early as possible.

Make sure you ensure position descriptions are reviewed and updated and that you have an induction or training session for each volunteer.

## **Recruitment of coaches and players/athletes**

Establish your coaching requirements for the year. If you need to recruit coaches then spend the time to determine exactly the type of coach you want, what their goals for the year are and the process the club will go through to recruit coaches and support them. The earlier you appoint the right coaches, the better it is for the club.

How does the club recruit players/athletes each year? Do you expect to have the numbers required or do we need more? Don't just assume people will return to the club year on year. Make sure you invite them back, continually promoting your club and why they should return, or for new members join.

## **Training and playing requirements**

Establish training programs, especially preseason training, as early as possible so everybody is aware of the program as early as possible. While you may not know the locations or format of the training, if people know as early as possible of dates and times this gives them the best opportunity to be able to prepare and attend.

## **Facility access**

Demand for facilities is getting more fierce each year so it is vital that your club identifies its training, playing and socialising facility requirements and secures this space as early as possible. Be organised so you don't miss out on facilities.

If your club uses Council facilities then contact them as soon as possible to learn their application processes and deadlines.

## **Planning the year so it is full of social and fundraising activities!**

Without realising it, clubs generally undertake the same fundraising and social activities each year. Incorporate this into your club's preseason planning and schedule as early as possible before the season. Include key dates such as:

- Date membership subscriptions are due
- Club's season launch date
- dates for the major social events for the year (even though you may not know the event format)
- dates for major fundraising activities (even though you may not know the format, eg raffle or chocolate drive)
- Date of presentation night
- Date of the AGM

It looks like a lot of planning, but if you take the time then your season will run smoothly. People will know exactly what is going on when and how they can help. They will understand the expectations there are around what they need to contribute and when need to attend.

Remember the President doesn't have to do everything when planning the year – just ensure the planning is done!