

Volunteer Management



BASKETBALL
AUSTRALIA

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Introduction

Volunteers are critical to the operations both immediately and in the long term of all Basketball Clubs and Organisations. The effects of the recent Pandemic will have a significant effect on clubs and associations volunteer numbers but unsurprisingly they are now more important than ever. It is estimated the reduction in volunteering post COVID is 12.2 million hours a week across Australia. Growth in volunteering in sport + recreation must be grounded in asking prospective volunteers why, how and how often they'd like to help - not simply listing the jobs to be done.

Volunteering Australia

'Sporting volunteers bring an incredible amount of compassion, selflessness and value to the communities, teams and clubs which they support,' 'Without their tireless efforts, which many Australians rely upon, our mental, physical and social wellbeing would be greatly impacted.'

Clearing House for Sport

"The estimated value of sport volunteers in terms of the labour they provide is 4 billion per year"

Sport Australia's vision for the future of Sport Volunteering

"People from all walks of life see and realise opportunities to contribute to individual, club and community goals in a way that suits them."

Not all volunteers are basketball experts, in fact some of the best volunteers at clubs learn on the job.

The type of volunteering ranges from club administration, coaching, team management, event organising and fundraising. Many volunteers in Basketball are parents or guardians of current or former young players. Others are simply passionate about the game and dedicated to the development of youth in sport.

People gain different rewards from volunteering in sport, here are some of the most common;

- Increased confidence
- Meeting new people and making new friends
- Improved organisational skills
- Boosting your CV
- Giving something back
- Doing something different to the day job
- Improved career options and opportunities
- Opportunity to gain experience in a number of different roles
- Development of transferable skills and knowledge
- Taking on new challenges in a safe environment and the opportunity to move outside your comfort zone
- Being active and improving your health and wellbeing
- Having fun!

Its most important that the role of the volunteer fits with how much they can commit, what they want to achieve and what they need to be successful. Sometimes a person might be best utilized working in a team or having a mentor or supervisor initially to provide them with support and guidance. There should be volunteering roles to suit all levels and ranges of expertise within your organization. While

some specific roles require technical skills, the majority should simply require interest and commitment.

If you have a volunteer currently that is looking to stop or change roles, don't lose them totally, perhaps they could be used in a different way. Could they mentor new volunteers or take a leadership position in a different area given their experience?

The Lifecycle of a Volunteer

You might be reading this thinking we are all sorted for volunteers, all of last years are coming back and we have a couple of new parent's keen to put their hands up. If so that's fantastic but what about in 3 years' time when all your current volunteers, feel they have served their time, or their children have moved out the program into senior teams? Do you have the right procedures in place to still be as confident then? Clubs and associations should always be thinking Recruit and retain. These should happen in partnership and continuously.

This is the generally recognized Volunteer lifecycle and all its stages.



Source – Volunteering Victoria

Basketball Australia are going to break this down into 7 key areas specific to the sport and aim to provide you with some resources to help you ensure your club has a healthy and enthusiastic band of volunteers in various roles for many years to come.

1. Review
2. Recruit
3. Induct
4. Train
5. Supervise
6. Recognise
7. Replace

Review

To do this effectively the clubs/associations need to be able to honestly reflect on their current way of doing things and reflect on where societal needs are and not get stuck on what has been done in the past is the way we should keep doing things. It is also a good time to ensure the culture is welcoming and inclusive.

What kind of volunteer roles do you need or in your current cohort and what skills are you lacking that it would be great to add to the mix? Obviously if you have key/required roles such as President, Secretary etc. this question is quite obvious but if you wish to refresh your volunteer pool or add to it, a good exercise is to survey your existing volunteers and create a strength matrix.

An example of areas you could analyze

TASK / ROLE	KNOWLEDGE OR EXPERIENCE LEVEL		
	A LOT	SOME	NONE
Administration			
First aid			
Internet Banking			
Bookkeeping			
Supervising people			
Organising events/functions			
Knowledge of Basketball rules			
Food preparation			
E-Scoring			
Managing teams of people			
Social media usage			
Knowledge of Basketball equipment			
Communicating with children			
Communicating with adults			
Business development			
Inventories/stock control			
Creative writing			
Coaching children			
Coaching adults			
Coaching females			
Fundraising			
Graphic designing			
Photography			
Database management			
Understanding of government processes			
Organising meetings			
Writing applications			

Map your existing volunteers

Volunteer Role	Area/	Number of Vols	When Required	Tasks	Supervisor

Sport Australia in their research found 7 different types of volunteers within sports in Australia, 4 of these are commonly seen and 3 are areas where opportunities exist. Look at your current volunteer roster and see who fits into what section.

1. The Committed Sport fan

Likes

- Feeling connected to the sport and the club
- "Giving back" to the club
- Getting to know the players and other volunteers
- Connected to 'like minded' people who share the same interest in sport

Pain points

- Insufficient support to do their role
- Administrative hurdles
- They tend to get asked to do jobs like coaching which is time consuming

How to reach them

- Reach out to present players
- Reach out to club alumni
- Identify these motivations and skills in network e.g. parents, grandparents

2. The skill seeker

Likes

- Formal recognition for their work, such as a certificate or statement of hours worked
- The right opportunity that is aligned to their skills and time commitments e.g. project based work
- Formal, structured and recognised training or mentoring and support
- Building networks

Pain points

- Working on tasks that are not aligned with their existing skill set
- Not feeling they are set up for success e.g. training, mentoring
- Not feeling valued or appreciated

How to reach them

- Schools
- Universities
- Current members

3. The obliging helper

Likes

- Spending time with family and friends
- Clear roles and responsibilities
- Flexibility
- Social connection and being part of a community
- Lots of notice so they can plan their time

Pain points

- Feel stretched and obligated
- Not aligned with motivations, skills and circumstances

How to reach them

- Through the clubs existing networks
- Reach out to the parents of players and their networks
- Community members

4. The lifelong volunteer

Likes

- Opportunities to socialise with other volunteers
- Feeling deeply connected to the sport club and members
- Being involved in key decisions
- Feeling needed and valued

Pain points

- Taking on too much work and getting burnt out
- Not having the option to step back but still being involved in the club
- Observing challenges experienced by the club

How to reach them

- They are already there!
- These volunteers may be in roles that have evolved and expanded over time. It may be worth revisiting their roles to see if their tasks can be shared with the new volunteers who want to get involved.

5. The Friendly neighbor

This someone who has no direct connection to the sport or organization. They are motivated by making a difference in the community and developmental goals and aspirations. Often sport does not immediately align with their motivations.

6. The workplace volunteer

Many large businesses have a policy/program in place which encourages staff members to join established volunteer programs. Often these do not immediately align with the time periods that traditional sports programs are looking for volunteers but if an association can think flexibly there could be a large untapped pool of volunteers available.

7. The underutilized talent

These potential volunteers are highly skilled but at this exact moment in time are not fully utilizing these skills, focused on family or newly retired are two common scenarios. They might have an interest in keeping these skills current but may not have any background in sport or thought they could use it there.

You can read more about these last 3 at [Sport-Australia-The-Future-of-Sport-Volunteering-Insights-Report-2021.pdf \(sportaus.gov.au\)](#)

Personal Volunteer Development Plan

This is a resource which is created by the volunteer themselves to display their skills, ambitions and passion to contribute and help the club/association find the most relevant and suitable opportunity for them.

The benefits to the volunteer to completing this are as follows;

1. Confirming the WHY of giving up their time to volunteer
2. The CONTRIBUTION they are able to give, could be knowledge or time
3. The WHAT, that they would like to achieve or learn by volunteering
4. The FIT. By completing a PVDP a volunteer is able to make the best choice of an opportunity that aligns most closely to their current skills, future ambitions and commitment levels.
5. Can help provide STRUCTURE to their volunteering journey and future.

The plans can take different formats and can be created as part of an interview or in an online format but should include the following 7 steps.

- A clear definition of what the volunteer wants to achieve
- SMART goals around the role
- The skills the volunteer has to contribute
- The reason they want to do the role
- The contribution they would make in the role
- The timeline both in terms of starting, during and exiting the role
- The Volunteers long term ambition

This would be a living document that could be updated in consultation with the Volunteer Coordinator.

Micro Volunteering or Activity Helpers

Micro Volunteering is defined by the National Council of Voluntary Organisations as “bite size volunteering with no commitment to repeat and with minimum formality, involving short and specific actions that are quick to start and complete”.

So this is not brand new in content but in concept it has been ignored in the past as volunteers have more and more piled on to them. As people become more time poor though Micro Volunteering might be the way to not only attract more volunteers but also relieve the workload on existing volunteers.

Tasks that could be considered as “Micro” are ones that;

- Involve a short or regular small periods of commitment
- Can be commenced with minimal training and supervision
- Are not long term in nature
- Do not require to be done in a certain location
- Is not an overly forward-facing role

Some examples of possible Micro Volunteering tasks

Volunteering task	Is it suitable for Micro Volunteering & why?	Where does the volunteering take place?
Auditing Club Accounts	Yes – task and finish, no ongoing commitment	Off-Site (At home, limited interaction with Club Treasurer)
Creating a Club Website	Yes – task and finish, no ongoing commitment	Off-Site (At home, no interaction required)
Managing Club Website	No – will need ongoing commitment	Off-Site (At home or other venue)
Painting the Changing Rooms	Yes – task and finish, no ongoing commitment	On-Site (Face to face interaction with other volunteers)
U13s Team Manager	No - will need ongoing commitment	On-Site (Significant face to face interaction with others)
Baking a cake for a club function	Yes – task and finish, no ongoing commitment	Off-Site (At home no interaction required)
Writing a grant application	Yes – task and finish, no ongoing commitment	Off-Site (At home no interaction required)

Recruit

Where can you recruit from?

Look at your current volunteer pool, where did they come from, what age are they and what is their background. Are they representative of the surrounding community and is it as diverse as it could be, in terms of ethnicity, gender and age? If its not its important to ask if they are truly reflective of your members and how you can rectify that. Sport Australia’s studies show that “A lot of recruitment happens through ‘mates’ – they all become the same demographic and thought process. It creates a lot of biases. “

The more diverse of a base clubs and associations attempt to recruit volunteers from the more attractive they will be to similar demographics both in terms of participants and sponsorship.

The Sport Australia research suggests that one of the greatest untapped resources in terms of volunteer recruitment is amongst those who do not see themselves currently reflected in the sport. These could include students (both homegrown and overseas), retirees and people looking for work experience.

The role of Parents as Volunteers

It is important that organisations ensure that parents aren’t “voluntold” and are starting out on the right foot as feeling you are volunteering as an obligation is a massive disincentive. Always remember as well that a parent’s main focus is to watch their kids play and without clear definitions to prevent creep the potential volunteer will nearly always assume there is a perceived long-term commitment.

Figure 2 The Parental Involvement Continuum
(Source: Hellestedt, 1987)

Disinterested parent ↑	Misinformed parent ↑	The comfort zone	Excitable parent ↑	Fanatical parent ↑
UNDERINVOLVEMENT		MODERATE INVOLVEMENT	OVERINVOLVEMENT	

The costs and time demands associated with youth sport were also identified as influencing parents’ involvement. As one mother explained, her involvement is influenced by, “What my schedule can accommodate, the cost of equipment/fees.” Participants indicated that the amount of time they had to commit to work greatly influenced their involvement in their children’s sport. For example, one participant said, “I need to be at work, so it limits me going to "away" events,” and another said, “I work a lot. I quit coaching my son’s baseball because I was too busy.” Other parents also described the influence other family commitments had on the amount of time and money they could commit to their children’s sport. ([Microsoft Word - Influences on Parental Involvement Sept 2015 Sport Exercise and Performance Psychology Accepted Version.docx \(wwpis.co.uk\)](#))

Parents motivational reasons can also differ from traditional volunteers both positively and negatively.

Parents will often put their hand up to be involved because they;

- Want to make a difference
- They believe it's what a parent should do
- They want to earn respect, either of the other parents or sometimes their children
- They believe they could do a better job.

However, parents will also often say

- I've made my contribution already
- I'm not sure I can help in anyway
- I don't have enough time
- I wouldn't get anything out of it

At the core, those parents who volunteer are those who have a love of sport, a wish to be socially connected, a generous mindset and an appreciation for the club/association.

Parents as Volunteer Coaches

If a parent volunteers to coach, then clubs should look to invest in those coaches. That investment can take different forms, it could be supporting them to attain Coaching accreditation or providing a mentor to them to help them grow into the role and have an external sounding board.

Parent coaches make up roughly 75% of the accredited Club and Community Coaches in Australia and many fall into the role, either by being pressured into it or being in the wrong place at the wrong time with nobody else to do it. Parents and volunteers can be absolutely critical to the success of any sporting club or organisation. For any parent, being actively involved in their child's sport or involved in their local sports club can be one of the highlights of their week and a major part of their life. All the challenges of being a coach are further complicated by having one of your children in the team and therefore having to manage your expectations, aspirations and now the perceptions of every other parent in the team! So, a pretty big job!

Asking the Question

Recent analysis of how volunteers have become involved in sporting clubs have suggested that up to 65% started because they were asked too. They didn't seek it out but were encouraged and sought out by existing members within the organisation.

By asking the question of a potential volunteer you remove an initial fear of not wanting to be a show off or seem overly keen that can hold some potential volunteers back. The potential volunteer also immediately feels valued as if they have been recognised as having something to offer and will immediately feel more confident in their abilities.

If a potential volunteer is undecided this show of interest could be enough to prompt them to commit and those already keen to volunteer it will be an excellent positive starting point for their opinion of the volunteering culture.

An important skill set of the "inviter" should be knowing the potential skills of the volunteer and the role that might be best suited to them were they to come on board. This can be done through player registration forms or by striking up a conversation at a welcome event.

It is important that when the question is asked as many barriers to engaging that person are removed to stop the person saying yes, acknowledge the value of their time and be clear on the commitment required for the role and what support the club/organisation would provide them and who will be their point of contact.

Are all your position descriptions completed so people know what they are volunteering for and the minimum expectations?

The minimum that each should have is the following

- Approximate number of hours required and tenure
- Purpose
- Volunteer duties and responsibilities
- Supervision/Management
- Any skills or qualifications required
- What the process will be for recruitment including Working with Children Check etc.

A good way to ensuring that you attract the right type of person for your role is ensure that there is room in each role to grow and develop skills. The greater the opportunity for self-improvement the more likely a volunteer is to remain in the role.

Don't be afraid to focus on tasks not roles as well and make recruitment targeted for a specific task and/or timeframe.

Be realistic though, if you are asking team supporters to put out the chairs on the court or a parent to help wash up after matches, a formal application form and interview may well be over the top. On the other hand, if a volunteer is considering a more substantial role, it would be more relevant to have a more established process.

Advertisement

Where are you going to advertise? There are plenty of options but consider the demographic you want to attract, is there a more student focused space you could use, a multicultural resource, an online space over a noticeboard or print advertisement.

Some examples include;

- GoVolunteer <https://govolunteer.com.au/>
- SEEK <https://www.volunteer.com.au/>
- Good Company <https://www.goodcompany.com.au>
- Be Collective <https://www.becollective.com/>
- Communitier <https://communitier.org/>
- Goodie <https://www.goodie.org.au/>
- Vollie <https://www.vollie.com.au>

The advertisement should include at a minimum

- Title of the role
- Brief description of the club/association
- What you need
- What is the hook for people to volunteer (tickets / community spirit / part of winning)?
- How to get in touch

We also recommend its best practice to include the below in all advertisement material if the person is going to have any interaction with U18's.

Our organisation is committed to protecting children and young people from harm. We require all applicants who are to work with children and young people to undergo an extensive screening process prior to appointment, a process that may include, but is not limited to, comprehensive reference checks, an identity check, a 'working with children' or equivalent check and/or a 'national criminal history record' check."

Abbreviated:

"We are committed to protecting children and young people from harm. All applicants must undergo an extensive screening process prior to appointment."

Other Community Sports Clubs

With all of the above sections an Association/Club should in the first instance look close to home at nearby community clubs who may share facilities or players. Could they also share volunteers? If that is not possible do, they have any suggestions for candidates they were unable to assist, or locations they have found enthusiastic volunteers in the past. Forming relationships in this way could lead to a sharing of resources and potentially volunteers in the future. By building a bigger pool of volunteers as well, training options become easier with greater demand for improvement.

Interview process

If the candidate is not known to you, prior to offering them a role it is essential to meet with them (ideally in person) to get a round impression of the individual but also to ask them some questions to determine their compatibility with the organization and the role. It will also allow them to get to know you better and get a feel for the organization and its relationship with volunteers.

Some example questions it would be beneficial to ask;

1. Why are you interested in this position?
2. What skills do you think will make you successful in this role?
3. How do you deal with difficult situations?
4. What would you need from us to be successful in this role?
5. Do you prefer to work in a team of by yourself?
6. What other volunteer experience have you had?
7. What do you know about our organization?

An important element of any interview is also to ensure potential volunteers are aware of their responsibilities around Child protection and also form an important checkpoint for the organization to ensure there are no concerns with the volunteer prior to them commencing in a role. As part of the interview, you should discuss the following issues relating to the

- applicant's suitability to work with children and young people:
- the applicant's professional experience, qualifications and competence
- the applicant's beliefs and values in relation to the treatment of children and young people
- the applicant's general awareness, professional experience, qualifications and understanding of child protection issues competence
- the applicant's reasons for leaving any previous positions involving work with children and young people
- any potential concerns your organisation may have with the applicant's resume or work history, such as gaps in their work history, frequent job changes, inability to nominate precise start or end dates for previous roles.

Working with Children Check

Under the Working with Children Act 2005, if you are engaged in child-related work and not exempt, you must have a WWCC even if you have undergone a Police Check. The WWCC is an ongoing assessment by the Department of Justice of a person's suitability to work with children, examining relevant serious sexual, physical and drug offences in a person's national criminal history and, where appropriate, their professional history. The equivalent to the Working with Children Check in Queensland is known as a "Blue Card".

In the Australian Capital Territory, the equivalent is known as the Working with Vulnerable People registration.

Induct, Train and Supervise

We will include all three sections together here as although important and unique in their own right they also heavily overlap and support each other with aspects of the induction forming part of the initial training and Supervision being crucial throughout the whole process.

Induction

When you are inducting a volunteer don't just focus on their role, make sure they understand not only where they sit in the big picture but also what the Big Picture is! For example, make sure they have a firm grasp of where the club/association started and its journey to the present day. If you have a strategic plan or long-term goals, make sure they are across them as well because that might be something that fills them with further motivation and increases support for the club overall. Make sure though that there is also a heavily role specific portion, where the volunteer meets key stakeholders, is given a tour of the facilities and a demonstration of any specific equipment they will be expected to use or supervise.

As with any place of work or volunteering there is also a responsibility to ensure a duty of care for health and safety for not only the volunteers but all other stakeholders. Relevant legislation will differ from state to state but ensure it forms an important section of an induction process.

Depending on the volunteer role and the location of their work, insurance might also be something that needs to be covered prior to them commencing in their role. Apart from in very rare circumstances Workers Compensation insurance DOES NOT cover volunteers and Public Liability insurance will usually cover injuries a volunteer may cause to others but may not cover injuries caused to volunteers. It is not compulsory for any community club or organization to take out personal accident insurance for its Volunteers but because of the sheer volume and the critical nature of their contribution it is useful to ensure it is highlighted and discussed during an induction.

Key things to remember when inducting volunteers

1. Make it engaging, understandable and relevant to the volunteer
2. Consider the requirements of the induction, could it be done online for example?
3. Have resources to give the volunteer and be open to receive questions both immediately and after the induction.

Training

For different roles this will look very different. If a volunteer is working with a specific type of athlete or in a role where there continues to be further resources created the need for more regular training and personal development will be higher. If a volunteer is in a role that is more labour intensive or more related to a set of skills, they already have or use in another external capacity that check ins and training offers can be less formal and on a more infrequent basis.

Training can also be to ensure minimum standards and understanding across the whole organization. Examples of this would be first aid refreshers, Child Protection updates and Operational Health and safety.

Some volunteers may be motivated to do their role because they have ambitions of paid employment in that field so it would both encourage and motivate them to be included in all opportunities within the organization as it will also keep them across the bigger picture as previously discussed.

Supervise

When developing the Club's approach and procedures to managing volunteers you should consider the needs of both the Club and the volunteer. Endeavour to ensure that the volunteering role not only benefits the club but matches the volunteer's interests. The club/association should also commit to providing the volunteer with relevant training opportunities to allow them to fulfil the role with confidence.

One way to provide support and mentoring, would be to implement a buddy system with a more experienced volunteer or club member. The buddy should provide support and ensure the new volunteer has all their learning and training requirements met and be an easy point of contact for any issues. The duration of this relationship can be determined between the buddy and the volunteer.

For every role there should be an induction plan that is appropriate to the role. The depth and complexity of this will depend on the ability of the volunteer and their existing relationship with the club/association. An absolute base level would include an overview of the policies, codes of conduct, club structures and key people. The volunteer should also be clear on their roles and responsibilities and take this opportunity to clarify any confusion

The club/organization should have a process in place to recognise the contribution of each and every volunteer – mainly through its social media, at the regular meetings and the AGM.

Who looks after your Volunteers?

If you don't have a specific position on your committee for this, it might be worth creating one and could be the perfect transition role for an existing volunteer with years of experience.

So, what is a Volunteer Coordinator? It can be summarised as someone within the sporting organisation that:

- Recruits and deploys volunteers
- Supports and develops volunteers
- Values and retains volunteers.

What kind of person makes a good Volunteer Coordinator? There's no magic formula but research suggests many successful Volunteer Coordinators:

- are organised
- are approachable
- have strong communication skills, both listening and talking
- have self-confidence
- take the lead to get things done

A sample Position Description is overleaf.

Volunteer Coordinator

The role of the Volunteer Coordinator is to recruit, support and recognise club volunteers

Responsible to: TBC

DESIRED SKILLS

- Leadership skills
- Effective communication skills.
- Good interpersonal skills
- Positive and enthusiastic
- Well organised
- Ability to develop and maintain good working relationships
- Enthusiastic about volunteering

KEY ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- Adhere to the mission, vision and values of the club/Association
- Coordinate the attraction and recruitment of new volunteers to the club/association.
- Coordinate the recruitment of volunteers into all roles
- Ensure the club/association has adequate numbers of volunteers in each area (e.g., coaching, social function organisers, canteen staff etc)
- Ensure that volunteers are reimbursed for their approved out-of-pocket expenses
- Continually promote the efforts of volunteers throughout the year
- Submit regular reports to the committee as required
- Ensure the club is prioritising volunteers in their planning e.g. Including it at every Committee meeting as a check in
- Ensure that each volunteer is recognised and thanked for their contribution throughout the year
- Coordinate nominations for relevant volunteer awards E.g. Club awards, State/National Community Awards
- Develop clear job descriptions for all required tasks.
- Identify ways of training volunteers if they do not have the required skills for the role.
- Supervise volunteers or allocate other members to supervise.
- Identify methods of recognising volunteers.
- Communicate and liaise with committee members on a regular basis.
- Ensure any appropriate screening processes have been performed e.g. WWC, reference checks.
- Create a register of volunteers and maintain up to date records.
- Identify volunteers not returning and develop succession plans as required.

Recognise

If someone feels valued and acknowledged for their work, they are more likely to continue to be involved and most likely for a longer time period.

This is even more important for Volunteers who are regularly doing this on top of other commitments.

Some suggestions of ways you can do this are below. Bear in mind these can be scaled depending on the size of your organization, number of volunteers and finances available. There are multiple ways that you can achieve the same result without breaking the bank.

- Make sure the volunteers are acknowledged at the start and end of every session when announcements are made.
- As part of their induction send every volunteer a welcome letter or email to thank them for being part of the organization and wish them luck.
- Make sure volunteers feel like they are part of the team and can be recognized for acknowledgement. This could be done with name tags and/or uniforms.
- Have a list of active volunteers displayed somewhere to acknowledge their time and contribution. This can be done online or on a noticeboard.
- Keep this as an accurate and updated record to keep a track of years of service and acknowledge landmark contributions internally with certificates, badges etc.
- Engage the volunteers in planning days that they have direct experience in to provide their opinions. This is even more crucial to do if decisions are going to be made that have a direct effect on them.
- If you have a weekly email or regular information resource, consider profiling a volunteer of the week or the month to highlight their important contribution.
- Create an award or a recognition program to acknowledge exceptional volunteer performance at any Presentation events or AGM's
- Be aware of any opportunities to nominate your volunteers for regional, state or national recognition
- If your organization has the financial capability, consider compensating your volunteers for travel expenses or meals.
- If you have volunteers who commit multiple hours to the organisations, then you can look to reward them with an honorarium or suitable gift to acknowledge their contribution.
- Make special recognition of your volunteers on International Volunteers Day (5th December) and National Volunteer Week (16-22 May 2022)

Parent Volunteers

If you are to maintain the motivation and enthusiasm of your parents and maximise their contribution to your club or organisation, it will be important to recognise and reward their commitment.

All too often a volunteer parents' role is taken for granted. Make sure your club or organisation recognises parents' efforts regularly... remember it doesn't cost anything to say thank you. This can be done face to face, by a phone call, a card and so on. This might be from the Chairman, the players, the coach or another Committee member.

Some ideas to reward and recognise your volunteers

Awards and recognition events – These might range from annual end of season awards or recognition events of a relatively formal nature to monthly ‘team helper’ awards where the players or team might determine which volunteer, they wish to recognise each month.

Social events – these can also be used as a good way to recruit if parent volunteers bring friends and family.

Local media – Putting features or articles in the local media about the valuable contribution that volunteer parents make.

Feedback – Providing constructive feedback to your parents and discussing with them opportunities to develop their skills and any additional training opportunities that they may benefit from.

At all times it will be important to try to vary the reward or recognition and ensure that it is appropriate to the individual parent.

Paying Volunteers

If your organization chooses to reimburse volunteers it is important that you have a clear and consistent policy for when and for what it is applicable. You and any affected volunteers should be aware of possible tax implications of some payment types and effects they could have on individuals.

A basic reimbursement policy should include variants of the following.

- Reimbursement will occur for any out-of-pocket expense incurred when completing authorized activities on behalf of the organization to an agreed maximum amount.
- Any transport requirements that have been previously agreed too in order to be able to attend meetings or trainings
- If reimbursement is to a private vehicle, it will be at an agreed rate per kilometre
- In all instances reimbursement will require receipts to be submitted prior to reimbursement occurring.

Expectations

All volunteers have a right to expect that an organization would have a policy in place to be able to reimburse them for agreed out of pocket expenses. Issues arise when the policy is not clear or has not been communicated. To avoid this, ensure the policy is kept up to date, reviewed annually and covered in all volunteer induction sessions.

Some organisations wish to recognise the efforts of their volunteers with an allowance or honorarium. The most universally accepted definition of volunteering that sees it attracting no financial payment; in other words, volunteering is an unpaid activity.

Organisations that offer allowances or honorariums should ensure volunteers understand the possible implications for their personal tax – include this information in your policy on payments.

Such payments may be assessed as taxable income, particularly if the services rendered by the volunteer are the same as their usual paid work, e.g., someone working for a basketball association is given an honorarium to coach a basketball side.

If you want the most up to date information visit <https://www.ato.gov.au/non-profit/your-workers/your-volunteers/paying-volunteers/>

Replace

Volunteers will ultimately move on from their role, either due to another opportunity, their reason for volunteering has left or enthusiasm diminished or in some cases the organization will have to replace them.

If you have a volunteer manager in place, they can often ensure more ongoing reviews and support of the volunteer in their role before it has to reach that stage.

If you do have to have a difficult conversation with a volunteer, make sure you have a process in place prior to it and the overarching recommendation is to follow the Principles of Natural Justice and treat it the same as you would a paid staff member.

- All parties have the right to a fair hearing regardless of the behaviour
- The person who conducts the investigation, mediation etc. should have no bias.
- Performance management should be based on evidence, not hearsay

The hope will always be that a conversation can be had with a volunteer prior to any official proceedings having to be undertaken. If a proper induction was undertaken a code of conduct can form the key framework for the basis of this discussion. The following tips might be useful to consider prior to sitting down with the volunteer.

- Be clear on the problem and allow the volunteer the opportunity to answer how they will solve it.
- Give the volunteer the opportunity to speak by asking open questions
- Listen to their answers fully and be equal in the conversation time.
- Leave the meeting with specific details and changes that will be adopted by all required stakeholders.
- Keep clear boundaries. Only discuss what is happening in their volunteering role.

When a volunteer does leave it is important that they are not just allowed to leave without recognition and most importantly making sure they have been given the opportunity to give some feedback.

Recognizing their contribution could be as simple as an email across the organization or an announcement at a gathering.

Documenting a volunteer's experience with the club/Association do not have to be as formal as an exit interview but you do want to achieve similar objectives.

1. Return of all property owned by the club/association
2. Documented process confirming the volunteer's involvement has ended.
3. If volunteer has any access codes or passwords, changing these.
4. Seeking any feedback, final comments, handover from the departing volunteer

The final point can be achieved in a variety of ways. Some examples include a survey or a written report. The feedback from this can help a club/association identify any issues with their volunteer process, modify recruitment to replace the outgoing volunteer and put further support mechanisms in place.

Appendix 1 - Template Volunteer Guide Framework

- History/Direction
- Culture
- Safety + Compliance
- Venue + Competitions
- Code of Conduct
- Volunteering
 - Guiding Principles
 - Volunteer for the love of it
 - Treat everyone as a friend
 - Be kind and respectful
 - Unite as a team
 - Be reliable, responsible and attentive
 - Be helpful and enthusiastic
 - Do your best
 - Gains
 - Knowledge
 - Social connections
 - Improved physical and mental health
 - Skills
 - Confidence
 - Motivation
 - A sense of belonging
 - What volunteers do
 - Volunteers are fundamental to the delivery of all events and carry out a variety of roles.
 - We encourage each event to have as many volunteers as they can and to never turn down an offer from someone to volunteer.
 - However, there should be no pressure for people to volunteer at events. While the roster does need to be filled each week, you should encourage people to volunteer when they would like to, and to create an environment where people feel welcomed, included and supported.
 - We know from experience that some people will volunteer regularly while others will seldom or never volunteer. Clubs and associations need to remember that volunteering is a choice, and everyone is welcome whether they volunteer or not.
 - Roles
- Child Protection
- First Aid
- Safeguarding
 - What is it
 - Policy statement
 - Key Principles
 - Structure and staff
 - Responding to and reporting safeguarding incidents/concerns of abuse
 - Confidentiality and information sharing
- Incidents
 - Critical incidents

Appendix 2 Volunteer Welcome Booklet Template Content

Welcome

This opening message needs to reflect the local situation. We present some suggestions how this could be approached:

A short opening paragraph from the chair of the sports organisation that welcomes the volunteer to their role and thanks them for their contribution. The importance of volunteering to the on-going existence of the club might be emphasized.

This paragraph might set out the aims of the club, for example, does it aim to produce national or international champions or is it more about encouraging a love of the sport? Perhaps something of the club's history or place in the local community would be helpful also. Again, linking the contribution of volunteers to realising these ambitions would be good. For example, saying the club has been run by volunteers for 50 years or the support of the local community in volunteering has built a strong bond with the community.

Signed by the club chair.

Supporting you

We realise that when you first start volunteering with us, you might not know exactly what to do or who is the best person to help. We have identified:

<Name> <Role> <Contact details>

as the best person to help you. (S)he will provide you with an induction so that you know how to carry out your role, are introduced to colleagues and you know what to do if you encounter a problem. You can also contact this person if you have questions about the role after induction.

The person looking after the wider work of volunteers is:

<Name> <Volunteer Co-ordinator or alternative title> <Contact details>

(S)he will contact you from time to time to hear how things are going and to update you on general matters of interest to volunteers. You can also contact her/him about general matters relating to volunteering.

Just as we seek to support you in your role, it is important to understand that we also rely on you. If you are unable to carry out your volunteering role, for whatever reason, please contact <role holder> by <e-mail or telephone details> as early as possible to enable them to make alternative arrangements to get the work done.

Developing you

Regardless of your role, there are certain policies that you must put into practice. These are important to the well-being of everyone, and we strongly encourage you to read the following as soon as possible:

Code of conduct (or similar) <www.clubwebsite/code-of-conduct>

Health and Safety Policy <www.club website/health-and-safety>

Safeguarding young people and <www.club website/safeguarding>vulnerable adults>

These policies, and others, will be discussed at induction. If you have any questions arising from these policies, please ask the person inducting you.

It may be the case that you will need to undertake some training to help you carry out your role well. This can take the form of someone within the organisation mentoring you, opportunities for training sessions within the organisation or occasionally via external training events. This will be discussed with you at induction and periodically by the <Volunteer Co-ordinator or alternative title>.

Expenses

It is possible that you may incur expenses in carrying out a task requested by <Name of Organisation>. We have an expenses policy and procedures so that you understand up-front how to deal with such circumstances.

Expenses information <www.club website/expenses>

Key dates

Every year there are some key dates in the club calendar for volunteers. In the coming year, it is worth you noting the following:

Insert key dates for the club here. These may include a Christmas or end of season get-together, occasional volunteer briefings or training sessions, a club annual meeting plus key sports events where volunteers might be needed.

How does <Name of Organisation> work?

It may be that you develop an interest in the wider working of the organisation.

<Name of Organisation> is established as <insert legal structure >. This means that decisions about the running of the club are carried out by <insert decision making body e.g., the club committee or the board of directors>. If you are interested in learning more about decision-making in the organisation, or would like to contribute to that process, the following contacts would be pleased to hear from you:

Chair <Name> <Contact details>

Secretary <Name> <Contact details>

Credit to Club Solutions. Wales for the template

Appendix 3 - Club Committee/Board Information Sheet

The overwhelming majority of club committee members in basketball are volunteers and often ones who are doing other volunteering roles on top of their committee position. These people are the supermen and women of volunteers in many cases!

In this resource we will provide some information to help you make sure the people who put their hands up for these roles go in fully informed about the roles, their obligations and the organization as whole.

As committee or board members, you are part of the major decision-making body for your club or association. That means regardless of if you are a board or a committee you have stakeholders whose opinions you have to consider and obligations to adhere to good governance.

What does a Committee / Board actually do?

At any level of basketball, you may have members, employees, volunteers, clients, customers and participants. These are all stakeholders who more often than not at some time will have a decision made by a committee that affects them.

Generally, a Committee / Board will have a say in the following matters.

- Where is the organization going, how is it getting there, what does it need to get there and how will it know it is moving towards it?
- Is the organization behaving in a legal way at all times?
- Is the organization behaving in a risk free or mitigated way at all times?
- Are any staff or volunteers in place and being supported to achieve the best outcomes for the organization
- Is the organization behaving in a financially sound way at all times?
- Discipline of members or need to intervene in disputes
- Accountability to members and stakeholders and
- Maintaining Charitable status if relevant

All of the above are not solely the responsibility of one person but a collective responsibility across all members of the committee/board.

Each member will most likely have defined roles, but they will also operate as part of the collective and have to make decisions in together.

Responsibilities that are consistent across all board and committee members are;

- Understanding the business of the organization and being aware of key developments
- Being present and engaged in all required meetings
- Visible and involved in the activities of the organisations and acting as a representative.
- Attending the AGM or any other events that stakeholders expect to be able to interact with Board/Committee members
- Be comfortable sharing their opinions and independent judgement to inform group decisions
- Be upfront and aware of any actual or perceived conflicts of interest

- Have comfort in governance and oversight of organizational operation and performance

Boards will have some specific roles that we will provide some further guidance on later on, these are likely to include.

- Chair/Chairperson or President – The figurehead of the Group who represents the Board/committee at public events and chairs meetings.
- Deputy chair / Vice Chair or Vice President – The second in charge who steps up during periods of unavailability of the chair etc.
- Treasurer / Finance Officer – Main responsibility for financial affairs of organization
- Secretary / Admin Officer - Will usually maintain all records including minutes and deal with correspondence and paperwork from meetings.

These traditional generic roles are commonly known as the office bearers and are supported by positions unique to each organization. Some examples include Communications Officer, Inclusion Officer, Equipment Officer and General Committee member.

Replacing or Expanding Board/Committee Membership

Like any good group a board/committee should have a diverse range of skills that are reflective of the operations of the organization and will best assist the efficient and effective operation.

Traits of a good member include

- A strategic thinker
- Sound understanding of structures and systems of a sports club/association
- Knowledge of the club operations
- Strong communication skills
- Inclusive and relatable to whole membership spectrum
- Works well in a team
- Open minded and flexible thinker
- Ethical, Honest and trustworthy
- Believes in values and goals of the organization
- Involved for the greater good

Across all the positions on the board/committee it is good to have a mix of the following skill sets/ professional backgrounds in at least one member if not more.

- Marketing
- Qualified Financial
- IT
- Legal
- Personnel
- Health and Safety
- Sport Development

If there is a lack of skills in a certain areas Boards should feel comfortable co-opting people with those skill sets onto working groups focusing on those areas. This enables both the board/committee and the potential candidate to 'test- drive' their potential future involvement.

Succession Planning Key Points

1. Don't make this one person's responsibility, empower everyone to be conscious of potential future members
2. Don't leave it to the last moment, if terms end or elections happy around a meeting start planning for it months in advance.
3. As a board/committee be aware who is required to be re-elected and who is coming to the end of their term of office.
4. Keep position descriptions up to date and have them as a standing item to be reviewed annually.
5. As a board carry out regular reviews of the expertise you have and identify any gaps related to the organisations strategy that could be filled by new members. Remember some of those specific skill sets such as lawyers might not have the time to commit to a full role but could take a honorary position.
6. Ensure that you are looking for candidates who are diverse in gender and age and reflective of the membership.
7. Agree on a process to reach out to any potential candidates, have an agreed process to outline the roles and responsibilities and timeline to report back to the board/committee on the success of the discussions.