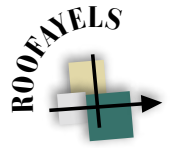


**MODERN CLUB
MANAGEMENT**



Modern Committee Management – Manual

7

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SECTION 7- COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS

Introduction - Committee Functions

This section outlines the modern requirements of a community board/committee to improve the day to day functions of the committee/board. Read this section in conjunction with section 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8 to fully understand the legal responsibilities of your organisation.

Don't Set Your Club Up For Failure or Legal Exposure

Before you recruit your committee members it is critical that the organisation are clear on what positions are needed and what legal requirements are needed to deliver your organisations services. The most **common mistakes**, which exposes organisations to physical, legal, financial and ethical risks, is the manner in which the organisation recruits its committee and what processes it has in place to manage recruitment procedure. By electing round pegs to fit into square holes the organisation and the individual are clearly exposed to failure.

Your responsibility as an organisation is to adapt your key positions to best suit the capacity of the volunteer. If they don't have the specific skills or the time to complete all the tasks currently allocated to the specific position, adjust the position so it best reflects their capacity to be successful.

Why People Don't Volunteer for Committee

In *many cases the benefits clearly are out weighed by the reality* (the negatives). The reality is that most of the population have had a negative experience when they have volunteered. The following are a sample of the negatives experienced by those currently volunteering:

Individual cost of volunteering (as determined by those who are currently volunteering)

Costs \$ dollars and time

It places stress on relationships with partners and children

Requires much more time than they were told to expect

Volunteers can be expected to be on duty 24/7

Made to feel guilty if they are not available 24/7

As individuals they can be disrespected and treated poorly by the members

They are often exposed to personal criticism

They are over worked and often feel used and abused

They feel betrayed because there is no recognition, reward or support

They can be made to feel incompetent because they are thrown in the deep end

They worry constantly about not completing their tasks in time or well

They worry about the money available to do what they have to do

They are concerned about their legal exposure

They see the current volunteers being badly treated, working far too hard, stressed most of the time, rarely happy and being exposed to personal criticism. They also know if they put their hand up to help they would be in for life just like the current volunteers. Never can they just volunteer once, the organisation will always find another task for them to do.

Changes Needed & Steps to Success

1. Modernise the governance structure and constitution of the organisation
2. Improve equity across all positions (share responsibility)
3. Greatly improve the benefits and recognition for committee members
4. Clarify what is expected from the individuals
5. Improve the level of support and training provided
6. Improve the level of respect by members and by the organisation

Modernising Governance - Step 1

Step One is to develop a modern governance system that encourages and supports the organisation's committee management structure so that it can successfully deliver its product or service.

Modern governance practices need to support structures that ensure volunteer burn-out does not occur. Most community organisations continue to operate on archaic structures and constitutions that were developed twenty years ago. Unfortunately these types of structures are the key reasons for community organisations continuing to mark time when it comes to developing. Let's take a glimpse at the impact poor governance structures currently have on community organisation's development.

Poor Governance Structures

Scenario one: - Your governance structure and constitution require that all positions are for a 12 month period and when the period is complete all positions need to be vacated.

Impact and risks:-

How successful can anybody really be in a twelve months? (one season - most new positions are still trying to understand their role in the 1st year)

When all positions are up for re-election if all were to be replaced how do you ensure the transfer of knowledge?

Scenario two: - Your governance structure enables personnel to hold a position (if elected) year after year after year.

Impact and risks:-

People don't relinquish their positions (usually because nobody else will stand) and they end up on the committee year after year after year.

Once a person has been on the committee for many years it becomes almost impossible to replace them because of the knowledge and experience they have gained over such a long time. Nobody else will think they can do as good a job; causing volunteer burn out .

When we lose these long term committee members (again because of volunteer burn out) the organisation stops developing while the new volunteer/s try to catch up.

When asked how long most committee volunteers have been volunteering the usual response is 10 to 20 years. When asked why they have volunteered for so long their response is almost always "**nobody else will stand**".

The key risk is that once somebody had been in a position for 10 years it is very difficult to replace them. Nobody is prepared to put their hand up because they don't have the skills or knowledge of the person with the 10 years experience, therefore, it is critical that you avoid this situation.

Modern Governance & Risks Reduction Strategies

Modern Governance strategies

Rolling governance structures -consider implementing a structure that ensures continuity – with a rolling structure, only half of the committee is up for re-election each year. This structure also requires that positions are held for a 2 year period (enough time to achieve).

Number required on your committee- consider reducing the number of positions, it is often difficult to find a lot of multi-skilled personnel.

Equity - Improve the inequities of committee positions by modifying and sharing the load across all positions, not just the committee executive. The outcomes of the organisation are the responsibility of all committee members (eg- secretaries role will need to be seriously reduced). This may require a constitutional change. We suggest that rather than indicating who does what specifically within the constitution, just reference to position descriptions documents

Set timeframes for holding positions -Consider implementing constitutional change that ensures that no individual can hold a position on the committee or any key volunteer position within the organisation for more than 3 to 5 years.

Compulsory retirement -When a persons initial term of appointment has expired they will be required to retire for a period of no less than 1 year. This will ensure they do not burn out and ensure that the development of the organisation is shared amongst many and not just a few.

Buy in – Ensure that the constitution enables the organisation to buy in services that support key committee roles in case your organisation cannot encourage enough volunteers with the relevant skills to stand.

In summary, governance is defined as the overall guidance, direction and supervision of the organisation. Therefore, it is clear to say that the committee is the **KEY AGENT** of strategic management and is responsible for steering the organisation through changing environments but **not doing every thing**. The role of the collective members of an organisation's committee is more than just advisory. Its role is to ensure that it manages a mechanism that project manages outcomes, while guiding and controlling the strategic and operational outcomes of the organisation.

Warning Signs – Poor Committee Governance

If you want to **determine if your organisation has poor governance behaviours** see if any of the following warning signs apply to your governing or subsidiary committees. If you have any of the below behaviours as a collective or as individuals, bells should be ringing and changes will need to be made immediately.

Part-timers attitude

“We have staff - let them do it”, I’m a volunteer. (Legally the members elected to the board/management committee are deemed responsible even when they employ staff).

Always somebody else's responsibility such as the state body, local government etc

Always somebody else's fault.

Weak governance

Don't implement and/or follow procedures. “Do it my way it's easier/quicker”.

Rules change and are not linked to the long-term focus/plan.

Confusion about what the purpose is - one thinks the focus is this, whilst others think it's something completely different.

Continually shift the goal posts to suit a given situation.

Fraud – misuse of resources

The money isn't coming out of our pocket so lets do it anyway.

They are great people.... they will do it for us ...“they always do”...

Utilise the resources for something other than its purpose “ nobody need know

The rules apply to others not us –“I'm the president therefore its okay”

Ensuring Equity within the Committee- Step 2

If your organisation implements the four steps below, you will be well on the way to decreasing your organisation's and your individual's exposure to risk. See Section 2 for more detail on the steps below

- Step 1** - Share the workload, positions need to be more equitable. Why is it that a secretary has much more to do than any other position? This may be a key reason you cannot recruit people to this position.
- Step 2** - Develop clear equitable position overviews, job descriptions, position tasks, roles and responsibilities for key positions using the samples available as a starting point.
- Step 3** - Once you have developed these they can be used as a base to adjust the position based on the ability of the *specific individual/s* you are recruiting.
- Step 4** - Ensure you have defined the volunteer benefits and/or rewards to be offered based on their contribution **Section 5 –Volunteer Recognition and Reward** for further information on how to achieve this.

Quick Tips- Modern Community Committees

Unless you want your volunteer committee/board to burn out, modify your governance to prevent them trying to be everything to everyone.

If your management committee/board is busy delivering only the day-to-day organisational needs, who is looking after the future needs and long term stability? The management committee's role is to GOVERN and to PROJECT MANAGE the tasks that are required.

The committee should use *volunteer consultants* for short-term projects to bring expertise to your organisation and/or alleviate the workload of your long term committee volunteers. **Section 1- General Information sub section Volunteer Consultant.**

If the organisation cannot encourage enough skilled personnel to volunteer they will be required to buy in the services.

Rewarding Committee Contribution – Step 3

No matter how well you implement the other steps in **Section 2 - Recruitment, Selection and Placement** and **Section 3 - Training**, a lack of, appropriate recognition and reward will result in strong negativity within your organisation and ultimately volunteers will resign. **See Section 2 Why People Don't Volunteer** - for a look at how a non volunteer describes why it is that he would never volunteer. Unfortunately, most volunteers are familiar with the feelings associated with lack of thanks, or worse, criticism when they're doing a good job under difficult circumstances.

Recognition may be in the form of free or reduced memberships, a shirt or clothing, gifts ranging in value according to the level of contribution the committee member has made. The processes to ensure your strategies encourage volunteer participation are as follows:

1. Consider the contribution committee members make
2. Establish what recognition and reward is appropriate considering their contribution
3. Establish criteria that must be met to receive the recognition (attend and contribute to meetings and responsibilities)
4. Promote the various recognition and rewards that are awarded within the organisation so that it becomes general knowledge to the membership
5. Present recognition items to the recipients in an appropriate manner

As with any selections, you can't please all the people all the time, however applying a planned and transparent process, as discussed above, will minimise your critics. Throw in a sense of humour to your program and you'll have a team that is highly motivated and proud of their personal successes, their team's successes and consequently those of the organisation overall.

Clarifying Committee Responsibilities- Step 4

With the myriad of issues and mounting legal pressures surrounding community clubs it is critical that community boards/committees recognise their responsibility to **manage and oversee** the day-to-day needs of the organisation, while still considering the future. A successful committee is one who remains focused on developing **the framework and infrastructure of its organisation**.

This process secures the future long-term development of that organisation.

Some of these responsibilities of a successful committee include the following:

- Long-term planning
- Developing and implementing policy and procedures
- Managing resources and legal issues
- Managing external relations
- Carrying out member recommendations
- Managing internal communication
- Evaluating and monitoring product and service delivery
- Overseeing committee transition
- Providing role models

Quick Tip- Who Can Do What With In the Committee

Management committee members must understand they do not have individual authority. A committee is a collective and individuals must represent the view of the collective group.

The collective responsibility is to focus on today while delivering the framework for the future.

Encourage the undertaking of annual operational planning days and the process of Plan, Do, Review and Implement.

Before You Appoint Committee Members

Due to the significance and legal responsibility of committee/board volunteers, it is critical to consider the skills, attributes and attitude of each nominee that during the selection process before any appointments are ratified. No matter how desperate things may seem appoint somebody that lacks the skills and/or attributes can affect the overall performance of an organisations development.

Therefore before you appoint any individual to any committee ensure they have:

The attributes/commitment and behaviours expected of a position of responsibility

The skills to complete the specific task/s as well as the skills to oversee the other tasks successfully. You have no right to set an individual or the organisation up for failure

A clear understanding of **all individual committee position roles**

An agreement that clarifies everybody's (individual/organisations) responsibilities

[See Hot Tips "Modern Committee Management"](#) for the tools and supporting documents available to ensure that modern committee management can be achieved. Also Section 2- Recruitment Selection & Placement, Section 3 - Training, Section 4 - Management & Support and Section 5 - Recognition provides the reader with all the processes required to ensure the longevity of your long term volunteers.

Committee - Attributes/Behaviours

Attributes that ensure effective management of a modern organisation are:

Commitment to the organisational mission, not selected individuals or special interest groups.

Sufficient time to devote to tasks- active participant in the delivering tasks.

A clear understanding of the role/tasks required of the collective, their individual committee position and/or the willingness to learn the role and tasks.

Enthusiasm and an interest in people and the organisation.

Leadership and skills to deliver the expected outcomes of the organisations plans.

Willingness to accept responsibility for the decisions and task, conducted by the committee as a collective as well as an individual.

Tact and good judgment as an individual and as a group.

Discretion. Effective committees utilise discretion to protect the organisations human and physical assets.

Communication and listening skills - Ask questions, give clear answers, research ideas and most importantly, listen.

Strategic vision -ensuring the collective is clear on the strategic vision and direction of the organisation.

All these behaviours can be managed if the appropriate procedures are in place. A successful committee need a system that is bigger than any specific individual. If every committee member understands their role, responsibilities and legal duties clearly and is made to sign off how committed they are, the group will perform much better together.

Quick Tips- Committee Attributes

Add these attributes to the code of conduct for your committee and ensure that it forms part of your committee induction and training.

Get all committee members to sign off on these above behaviours.

Committee Skills

To be an effective committee volunteer requires the individual be *multi-skilled*. They must have knowledge across a variety of areas.

- Communications
- Deciphering financial reports
- Management skills
- Administration processes
- Risk management and legal procedures

Quick Tips- Committee Skills

Don't reinvent the wheel. Access the samples of *the skills required* to hold a management committee position &/or a key committee position found in- [Hot tips "Modern Committee Management"](#)

Committee Roles

The role of all committee members is to understand his or her own specific responsibility as well as all other positions. The role of the Treasurer is to track and report the financial matters of the organisation however it is every member's role to ensure that the information gathered is correct. *Ignorance is not a legal defence*.

Many organisational that failure directly attributed their problems to the general committee members being complacent about the reports and information provided by staff and key executive committee members. It is every committee member's duty to be vigilant and ensure the processes are not just followed but implemented. Samples of the *key role/s* of all committee positions are as follows: -

Role: President /Chairperson

- Be well informed of all organisation activities
- Be aware of the future directions and plans of members
- Ensure that planning and budgeting for the future is carried out in accordance with the wishes of the members
- Have a good working knowledge of the constitution, rules and the duties of all office holders and subcommittees
- Manage and chair committee and/or executive meetings
- Manage the chair annual general meeting (AGM)
- Represent the organisation where required
- Be a supportive leader for all organisation members
- Act as a facilitator for organisation activities

'Must Not Do' List – President/Chairperson

Do not withhold information, either from particular members of the board or specific groups within the organisation. (Unless meeting privacy legislation requirements)

Do not make decisions on your own. A collective of a minimum of 3 members should make all decisions, unless extreme circumstances make this impossible. This is to protect the individual and the organisation.

Do not operate as a law unto yourself. It is not your organisation

Do not abuse your position or dictate that "I am the president" so that is how it will be.

Role: Secretary

- Be well informed of all organisation 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 holders and subcommittees
- Organise and delegate tasks
- Manage the internal communication needs
- Maintain all records efficiently and effectively
- Manage and supervise others where required
- Manage all meeting needs and outcome requirements
- Maintain confidentiality on relevant matters
- Write and distribute the minutes of each meeting

'Must Not Do' List - Secretary

- Do not withhold information, from particular members of the board or specific groups within the organisation. The collective group determine who is entitled to what information (Other than privacy legislation requirements)**
- Do not make decisions on your own. A collective of a minimum of 3 members should make all decisions, unless extreme circumstances make this impossible. This is to protect the individual and the organisation.**
- Do not operate as a law unto yourself they are not your files as they belong to the organisation**
- Do not abuse your position or dictate that "I am the secretary" I decided**

Role: Treasurer

- Be well organised
- Allocate regular time periods to maintain the books
- Keep accurate and detailed records
- Be able to work in a logical orderly manner
- Be aware of information needed for the annual audit
- Be aware of the future directions and plans of members
- Have a good working knowledge of the duties of Treasurer and the requirements of the constitution and rules
- Ensure that the budgeting is carried out in accordance with the wishes of the plan and/or members
- Prepare monthly financial reports including profit and loss statements, balance sheets and bank reconciliations etc.

'Must Not Do' List - Treasurer

- Do not withhold information, from particular members of the board or specific groups within the organisation.**
- Do not make decisions on your own. A collective of a minimum of three members should make all decisions, unless extreme circumstances make this impossible. This is to protect the individual and the organisation.**
- Do not operate as a law unto yourself "The collective rules". It is not your money**
- Do not fraudulently alter the financial records**
- Do not operate in the interest of one specific group only.**
- Do not abuse your position or dictate that "I am the treasurer" I decide**

Role: General Committee Members

- Be well informed of all the organisation activities and be aware of the future directions and plans of members
- Be supportive of the organisation's members
- Function as a key player in the delivery and evaluation of the operational plan requirements/outcomes
- Monitor the financial position and its development
- Manage and monitor the effective delivery of all activities
- Have an understanding of the legal, financial, ethical/moral and physical requirements of a committee
- Have a good working knowledge of the constitution, organisation rules and the duties of general office bearers

'Must Not Do' List - Committee Members

- Do not withhold information, from particular members of the board or specific groups within the organisation.**
- Don't allow or accept the Executive committee withholding information from general committee members.**
- Do not make decisions on your own. A collective of a minimum of three members should make all decisions, unless extreme circumstances make this impossible. This is to protect the individual and the organisation.**
- Do not operate as a law unto yourself.**
- Do not operate in the interest of one specific group only.**
- Do not isolate yourself from the decisions made as a collective: eg "It wasn't me, it was the other members of the committee"**
- Don't place the responsibility of the organisation on the executive share the load**
- Do not abuse your position or dictate that I am a committee member so I expect**

Committee Position Agreements

The organisation will be responsible for instigating a signed agreement between the organisation and the committee member &/or volunteer that clarifies the

- Individual's and organisation's need
- Induction and supporting documentation needed
- Expected outcomes and determine when/how they will be measured
- Consequences for non compliance
- Timeframes for each role
- Linkages to their position other positions and stakeholders
- Latitude/parameters for operation. Keep every body in their own box –
- Vision/mission/values –don't assume everybody knows

Quick Tip- Committee Agreements/Position Descriptions

Don't reinvent the wheel. Access samples of *position descriptions* and *position task sheets required* to hold a management committee position &/or a key committee position in- [Hot tips "Modern Committee Management](#)

Committee Support - Step 5

Volunteer Support is critical to the ongoing success of a community board. If the organisations workforce is primarily volunteers it is critical that they have the support require to do their tasks. Modern and successful community organisations recognise that as they do not pay their committee volunteers for the services they provide they are obligated to ensure that the volunteers receive effective supported. To support individual committee members the club are required to provide the following:

Individual Members Support: There are many costs associated with being a volunteer; out of pocket expense should not be one.

Equipment Support: As well as reimbursing volunteers out of pocket costs, clubs are required to equip their volunteers appropriately. If a secretary needs a computer or specific training to be successful the organisation has a duty to provide it.

Management / Administration Support: It is a legal requirement that community organisations provide a safe working environment. Therefore the implement and enforcement of volunteer support policies and protection is a critical.

If your organisation does not have the funds to pay for out of pocket expense and committee equipment then the organisation has an obligation to increase it fees to cover these costs.

Committee Training- Step 6

To ensure organisations success it is essential that the committee receive the necessary training to enable them to effectively perform their duties. Training need to include induction and orientate including the facility they'll be required to manage and training particular to their specific role. It is highly recommended that all committee members receive training in modern volunteer, risk management and client service.

Induction and Orientation Training

The purpose of induction and orientation training is to make sure each individual has a clear understanding of the organisation. Information should include details of its history, traditions, why and how it operates today, as well as its structure, interaction, communication and reporting lines. Training should include details of the organisation's values and philosophy, mission, vision, goals and policies and procedures. It should outline who is in each position and identify parties of significance outside the organisation (eg sponsors). The training should provide an insight into your organisation's culture and encourage committee members to share a sense of ownership and commitment to the organisation.

Facility Training

The purpose of facility training is to make sure each individual is aware of the physical structure and layout of the facility. This training should familiarise committee members with operational requirements, workplace health and safety requirements, council leasing obligations and any other legislative requirements relating to the facility.

Job Training

The **purpose of job training** is to ensure that **volunteers are equipped** with the **knowledge and skills** to successfully perform the tasks required of their particular position.

The following hot tips details all the components required of a committee to mange their obligations and increase success.

HOT TIPS- “MODERN COMMITTEE MANAGEMENT”

[CONTACT US](#) to access “Modern Committee Management” CD Rom 7 containing completed samples and templates of documents designed to help organisations better recruit the right people to the right positions. The documents RELEVANT include

- 📁 **GOVERNANCE CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGE**
 - G6 Modern Governance Methods
 - G6 Constitutional Changes –To modernise governance & volunteer recruitment
- 📁 **POSITION DESCRIPTIONS**
 - Chairperson
 - Vice Chairperson
 - Secretary
 - Assist Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - Assist Treasurer
 - General Committee Member
 - Sample Short term & Long term Volunteer
- 📁 **POSITION OVERVIEW**
 - Chairperson
 - Vice Chairperson
 - Secretary
 - Assist Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - Assist Treasurer
 - General Committee Member
- 📁 **POSITION TASK SHEETS**
 - Chairperson
 - Vice Chairperson
 - Secretary
 - Assist Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - Assist Treasurer
 - General Committee Member
- 📁 **COMMITTEE APPLICATION FORMS**
 - All committee positions

[CONTACT US](#) to access CD Rom 2 containing documents that will support improved committee and volunteer recruitment selection and placement and training. The documents RELEVANT include

- 📁 INTERVIEW KIT
- 📁 VOLUNTEER POLICES & PROCEDURES
- 📁 POSITION DESCRIPTIONS - General Volunteer Positions
- 📁 POSITION TASK SHEETS - General Volunteer Positions

[CONTACT US](#) to access CD ROM 3 containing documents designed to help better manage the training needs for your committee. The documents and material available include

- 📁 TRAINING POLICES & PROCEDURES
- 📁 TRAINING MATERIAL
 - Committee Training DVD’s (available 2008)

[CONTACT US](#) to access CD 4 Rom containing of documents designed to help you better manage your volunteer workforce. The documents RELEVANT to management and support are as follows

- 📁 Management and Support POLICES & PROCEDURES

[CONTACT US](#) to access CD ROM 7 containing documents designed to assist you better reduce your organisations exposure to risk. The documents RELEVANT are

- 📁 RISK POLICY & PROCEDURE
 - 📁 ALCOHOL DRUG POLICY & PROCEDURE
 - 📁 RISK REDUCTION & REMOVAL TOOLS
-