



## How can clubs recruit coaches and officials?

A good starting point is the people who are involved with your club whether as players, past players, parents or friends. This is the best pool of coaches and officials you have because they are associated with the club in some way and they will appreciate how important it is for the club to be able to recruit coaches and officials each new season.

### What is it that motivates people to take on these roles?

It helps to understand what motivates people to get involved as a coach or official as this will help in your recruitment strategy.

It might be one of the following reasons:

- They want to support a family member who is involved in the sport
- Their sport has given them so much over the years they want to put something back into the sport
- They have an interest or passion for sport
- To gain personal satisfaction
- They have a community minded spirit and enjoy helping others
- They are looking to do something worthwhile for the young people in the community
- An avenue to make friends, develop social contacts and have fun
- They want to keep fit and active

Your club might be trying to attract younger people to do some coaching or officiating. Have you thought that they might have different motives for getting involved? Younger people may see this as a means of earning some pocket money, a way of learning more about the sport or a means of improving their knowledge of rules for when they are playing.

### Ways to recruit coaches and officials

- **Personal contact** - there is no doubting the power of the personal invitation. Seek out potential people from within the club who have the time and the interest in becoming involved. Generally these might be parents of juniors or senior players who want to put back something into the club.
- **Word of mouth** - if the club looks after and supports its current crop of coaches and officials these people then become the best advertisement for the club. Use these people to speak to others in the club and the community and encourage them to talk about the positive aspects of their role whenever they get a chance.
- **Vocational placement** - for many TAFE, University students or senior school students studying in the fields of sport and recreation, fitness, sports science or physical education there is often a requirement to do work experience/vocational placements in their specialist field with a sporting organisation. This is a great opportunity to satisfy their educational needs and your club's needs by making contact with these institutions and offering their students the chance to do a placement.
- **Career aspirations** - it is now possible to pursue a career in the coaching and officiating fields. Young people in particular within your club may want to consider this.
- **Press/media advertising** - the local papers or community radio and television can be an avenue for recruiting, particularly for people who are not necessarily linked to your club but who are looking to get involved in these opportunities. They may be people



who are new to the district, who have recently retired as players, or who are looking for a fresh start with another club.

- **Local publicity** - as most coaches and officials come from within the local community it might be worth considering the strategic placement of posters around community facilities such as schools, community centres, shopping malls and recreation and swimming centres and transport hubs.
- **Club requirements of players** - the club may want to consider implementing a scheme whereby all senior players are rostered to take on an officiating or coaching role within the junior grades throughout the season (eg. every senior player must umpire at least one junior game each season). Remember to support and recognise these coaches and officials as they may have less motivation when the club places this requirement on its players.
- **Recent retirees** - the ever increasing numbers of baby boomers now retiring present another pool of potential volunteers. These may be grandparents of junior players or past players. The club needs to contact these people to seek out their interest.
- **Community agencies** - there are a number of agencies such as Service Groups (Rotary, Lions), unemployment agencies, church groups who may be worth contacting to see if they have people looking to get involved for the reasons previously highlighted above. As there are great social benefits from coaching and officiating this may have some appeal for people within this environment.
- **State Association** - one of their roles is the development of their sport. They are worth contacting to see how they might be able to assist with any recruitment strategies. They may also have a database of contacts who might have registered their interest in coaching or officiating roles with the Association but who would be more suitable at club level.
- **Referral/recruitment agencies** - often have databases of people who have expressed interest in volunteering and some of these may be interested in coaching or officiating roles. Those worth considering are agencies such as State or regional Volunteer Centres or major Event Management organisations.

**Some good advice** - Clubs need to work hard and be creative in the manner in which they recruit. It is not easy so don't sit back and think you will have new coaches and officials just rolling up. Your task is to go out and find them and then work hard to keep them.

#### **Case studies about how clubs attracted new recruits:**

##### **Case study 1**

A current senior soccer club wanted to introduce junior teams to commence playing in the next season's competition which was 6 months away. The club committee had canvassed the idea at their last committee meeting and decided it was worth a try but only if suitable coaches could be found to work with the team.

The club conducted an information afternoon in the community hall 4 months prior to the new season. A note had been placed in the local school newsletter inviting interested players and parents to attend to find out about the club's plans with regards junior teams for the next season. Each current senior player was also given an invitation to attend, along with a special request for them to consider assisting the club by coaching for just one season for the juniors the club was trying to attract to the club. Included with the invitation sent to the senior players was a poster which the players were asked to display at their various work sites or university or TAFE institutions. The poster was an invitation to community people to join the club as a junior coach and to attend the community meeting.



### **Case study 2**

At the first pre-season netball training for the top division women's team the club Director of Officiating made a visit to watch the team train. She had contacted the team coach several days prior to seek permission to address the players at an appropriate break in training. A further phone call and email confirming this arrangement was sent the evening before the training session so the coach had advised the players of this visit.

At the appropriate time the officiating director was welcomed and invited to address the players. She spoke about the importance of officials, how the players had been able to reach this level through the support of umpires from the club and the significance of role modelling by senior elite players to other members of the club.

The officiating director then introduced the concept of senior players offering their services to umpire junior teams in the upcoming season. They were given the opportunity to work in groups of 4 and would be required to umpire only 3-4 matches each and they were to be responsible within that group for who umpired each week. Each group of 4 was to be allocated a different junior team.