

## Member Experience Tips & Tricks

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Everyone who joins a sporting club wants that experience to be enjoyable and memorable. People join your club as players, coaches, referees, volunteers, and committee members. Your club committee is responsible for the experience these people have; it is in your interest to make their experience a positive one. Understanding why people join and stay members of your club gives your club a set of expectations to meet. Meeting people's expectations is critical to providing a positive experience.

### How to create a positive member experience

1. Understand your members – ask them why they joined your club and what keeps them coming back.
2. Make your members feel welcome – people who join a club want to feel part of that club.
3. Stand out from the crowd – understand what your club's point of difference is and leverage this.
4. Engage your members – offer an active/involved membership experience.
5. Create some anticipation – people love the feeling of excitement, what is your club offering that members can look forward to?
6. Stay in touch – see our communication plan tips and tricks for ideas on how to stay connected with your members.
7. Make it easy to join and then re-join.

### New members

- Offering free trials prior to the start of the season is an effective way to encourage people to join your club. For example, a free day or weekly pass can be offered to allow people to experience your club without having to pay upfront.
- Provide an introductory evening information session for potential new members. Have some giveaways like club-branded drink bottles.
- Host an open day at your home ground. The local radio station might be interested in broadcasting live from the event. Have membership and merchandise giveaways.
- Buddy-up new members with existing members so they are looked after and become familiar with the club's fixtures and facilities.
- Provide incentives to join by utilising cross-promotional opportunities with other local businesses. For example, 'join the club and receive a discount on your gym membership' or 'join the club and receive a voucher to the local health food store'.

## Existing members

- Survey members to gain useful data and insights into their opinion of the club and suggestions for improvements.
- Host specific activities and programs which appeals to different segments within the club, such as beginners, women, and veterans.
- Create a leader board to tally goals and other player achievements – create some positive competition and reward the winners.
- Have a 'Grandparents Round' in the fixtures which encourages players to bring their grandparents to that week's games.
- Provide club-branded merchandise with memberships.
- Conduct free coaching clinics.
- Celebrate special occasion days such as International Women's Day, Mother's Day and Father's Day to honour players and parents who attend and contribute at games on those days. For example, provide some special-coloured socks or arm bands that reflect the day's purpose and offer a lucky gate prize.
- Organise a sporting personality or leader to speak at a club event such as the end of season presentations.

## INCREASING MEMBERSHIP

### Let the community know about your sport

- Keep social media pages and websites up to date. This is often the first experience people will have of your club.
- Create your own branded club newsletter which is sent to members regularly by email. Even though social media is an increasingly popular way to communicate with members, emails can be highly effective for getting members to act. Use your newsletter to welcome new members, advise of any fixture changes, communicate special events and programs, showcase sponsors, remind members of surveys and merchandise offers.
- Collaborate with your association and peak body to provide pre-season 'come and try' events. State sporting organisations often have resources which clubs can utilise – their job is to make your sport grow.
- Provide information to local schools for their newsletters. Schools are usually very supportive of club sport and can include an A4-size poster at the end of their newsletter which is distributed to every family each week. Check with school offices to find out how they would like the information presented.
- Connect with after school programs and hold a mini clinic to get those children and their parents/carers familiar with the sport and club.
- Run school holiday programs and clinics.
- Promote your sport and club through community news channels such as Power FM radio's community guide on their website. Send event information and club updates to [admin@eastcoastradio.com.au](mailto:admin@eastcoastradio.com.au)
- Ask your members to help support the club by promoting it through their personal social media pages. A recruitment message with an image could be easily designed and sent to all members making it an effective way to generate interest.

- Organise an event targeting referrals such as “Bring a Friend Open Day.” An example of an offer could be ‘sign up a new member and get your membership for free’.
- Become active in highlighting your club’s strengths and success stories. Post regularly on social media and be sure to include a photograph. Draw from the skills of committee and club members who have media or public relations experience. Distribute a media release with a photograph every time there is a good news story.
- Have a trivia night or auction to raise money and generate awareness for the club.
- Work together with other clubs to create reciprocal membership arrangements. For example, a summer sporting club might offer a membership if players continue with an affiliated winter sporting club.
- Ask for testimonials from club members and use in newsletters, on websites, and social media pages. Provide a list of places where members can leave reviews to make the process easy.