

Club Plans, Goals, Competition

In well over a decade I have been asked on numerous occasions to moderate / facilitate a club executive forum on the future of their club. These are some of the guidelines I had to foster the discussion.

To plan, the executive needs goals for the club, the competition teams. You must be specific as to what you want to achieve, a measurable target.

(If you don't have a goal it doesn't matter where you head; you don't score).

(Winning is not a plan, it is an outcome.)

Do all of us as executives know and agree what these are for:

Club,
Selectors,
Coach(es),
Skips,
Each pennant player,

giving accountability and acceptance a life.

Committee/ board

There are an abundance of questions to pose to a gathered group as per:

Why do you think we are having this meeting?

Where are we at present?

What are our strengths and our weaknesses?

What do we want as goals, achievements, objectives?

Which ONE of these objectives would you most want?

How will we go about achieving our goal?

Who is able / capable of doing that?

When will we know how we are progressing or complete?

Performance targets – list some for next year.

Why might we not achieve any / all of our objectives?

What do you want? Describe the CLUB you would like to see next year.

Describe the CLUB you see today.

What needs to change to move from 'today' to the future?

What should the CLUB stop doing?

What should the CLUB start doing?

What should the CLUB continue doing?

What you need - What must change?

Their first priority is to select from the list the top priority questions to answer.

Club Plan Review

Review & auditing the performance of the club / association

What areas of operation might they consider despite the club / association not having undertaken all of these mentioned?

Business operation - measures, targets, revenue sources.

Plans - long term, 3 year, strategy, structure, financial, SWOT
Staffing.

Board members - representation, succession, tenure, roles.

Memberships - target, viable level, range, recruitment, induction, rewards.

Marketing - public relations, club profile, sponsorships, club personalities.

Communications - internal, external, tools, contemporary, current, reporting.

Competition - numbers, performance, goals.

Events - internal, profile, future.

Bowls - services, championships, juniors, coaching, officiating, women, affiliation.

AUDIT The Club in question

1. Where are you?

Membership; pennant levels; coaching; goals; planning; selection.
Skills preparation; game analysis; recruitment; player commitment;
(Wayne Bennett: do what you always do, get what you always get.)

2. What do you do?

This can be an answer either as teams / players.

Supervised coaching; structured training; championship matches schedule clashes.

Selection basis; team / rink training; pennant game rating;

Time training; social / Alcohol priority; specific event entries; training off season.

3. What occurs (barriers, distractions)

Peer pressure / sooks & snipers / keen ones move out / hard workers
disenchanted / passive people / individualistic / energy sappers / prima
donnas/ an early leaver / wailing wall types
accommodate road blocks / elect well intentioned selectors.

4. What you know

A record from last season about the team(s).

 skippers form, ladder positions in pennant;
 player numbers, statistical data on pennant;
 coaching record.

A record last season about the player(s)

 personal form, what you set as goals yourself,
 player skill levels, player numbers,
 BV/Region events, entries, results.

5. What you need

Bowls club goals - operational

- Marketing
- Membership development
- Communication always on the improve
- Greens & environ always a satisfactory standard

Club planning, goals & review
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- Financial viability
- Focus on the Sunday social bowls feature
- New projects to enhance club strength
- Social, catering & bar facilities
- Council initiatives to benefit the club

Continue to capitalize on the progress made previously and be alert to opportunities and change.

Bowls management strategy

- Secure capable people on the board
 - Fill vacancies on board
 - Prioritize communications, social, finances and sponsorship, and volunteers as focal point of effort to remain a strong club
 - Decide on projects that are essential and act on them
 - Local council networking
- Many hands make light work in all areas.

Bowls competition aims / examples

- Division 3 = promotion into division 2
- Division 6 = promotion into division 5
- Division 8 = field a side weekly
- Mid week side = consolidate position
- Events = use to develop our new players

Competition Aims not met

Failure: forerunner to success

Failure

Against what, an expectation, or a measured objective, or unrealistic target.

Failure

& mistakes require review, reasoning, learning the experience;
& mistakes are liable to dent egos of shallow / fragile persons;
is not losing, failure is not learning from that loss
without failures we may well be a failure.

We (can) learn from each and every mistake when we strive to succeed.

Repetition and (deliberate) practice are the ingredients to learn the lessons for success.

Preparedness to experiment, to tweak so that technique and attitude are consequences of the journey.

Experience of losing accompanies increased expertise, even wisdom, in that the experience / journey ensured you now know the pitfalls and the alternate path / choice to success.

Write, simply write and document your experiences knowing what you did, and, especially what you did well for what to do next time. Know what it is you need to do, as you wrote it, to gain and maintain success.

Preparation is the cornerstone to and for success.

Develop a 'failure muscle', a trigger that you have trained to connect to the technical, the tactical, the team factor that needs addressing NOW in the midst of the competition.

How to proceed

- Appoint an experienced club coach.
 - Encourage a greater team focus.
 - Provide structured training & practice.
 - By individual skill development.
 - Basing selection on merit & form.
 - Continue the development of non pennant players.
- Individual improvement will provide collective results.

What are the steps in lifting the club to a higher level?

Set club goals for pennant sides for the season.

Have a strategy to achieve those goals you set.

Selection as a tool via criteria statement.

Player buy-in,

Coaching,

Structured team training,

Dealing with people who are roadblocks.

Championship entries to be increased,
Use and validity of the rating system, 1-9,
Measure player performance in pennant,
Game plans as a tool to have a game goal / objective,
Defined and measured player position roles,
Review the people management skills of skips,
Review who skips following the above review,
Some players are known to not want to play higher, so selectors should act,
Identify few keen & capable bowlers in lower sides and invest in them,
If in agreement, make the move to change now, not wait to see what happens,
Communicate the known pennant level standards to players (on table that follows) to help,
Dispel false expectations of all the bowlers.

Ideas on recruiting, retaining members

Communicate regularly to the membership,
Communicate personally to the membership (there are about 9 on committee to spread that responsibility),
All committee members to know everyone in the club,
Extend your program services such as more intra club events at varying times,
Get players out in other tournament events as club members are walking ambassadors (cannot recall ever seeing some club shirts at any serious bowls tournament).
Talk to those who depart the club to get a better insight as to what may be lacking for them at your club - helps address issues.
And,
As most clubs place top emphasis on pennant as their major competition program for the club, remind selectors of club pennant sides they have a major impact on morale within the club, among the members, and as such a major responsibility to do well for the club (morale).

Lachlan Tighe, 2022