



## Inclusive Communication

On and off the field, communication is vital in ensuring that your players, coaches and volunteers know what they need to know and when they need to know it by.

But it's also a critical component in making sure your club environment is fun, welcoming and inclusive of people of all backgrounds, identities and abilities.

Making sure that the information you share is inclusive and accessible doesn't have to be tricky, but there are a few things that you might need to be mindful of!

Check out some of these tips and tricks to ensure that your club's message is heard, whatever it may be!

### Quick tips

- Try to use a minimum of size 12 font
- Try to avoid slang or acronyms
- Stick to clear and easy to read fonts
- Use contrasting colours to ensure your message pops!
- Use pictures, photographs and infographics

## Welcome Packs

Welcome packs are a great way to bring all your information together in one place for new club members.

Having an up-to-date welcome pack might take a bit of extra work to put together, but it will be well worth the time saved by cutting out all the frequently asked questions by new club members.

Plus, a nicely designed welcome pack can act as a great soft marketing tool when you are promoting your club to attract new players and volunteers.

## Image Descriptions

Image Descriptions are little captions that describe what is going on in an image or post. Image descriptions are essential for people who are visually impaired as, without them, they may not be able to see what you are sharing.

Try this simple formula – think of the object, the action and the context. Talk about who or what is in the picture or post (the object), what is happening (the action) and the environment (the context).

## Try Different Communication Methods

Not everyone communicates in the same way. As much as possible, make sure your important updates are shared on a variety of platforms or channels. Follow up committee meetings or important conversations in writing and keep your messages clear and to the point.



## Planning Effective Meetings

It is the responsibility of the President or Chairperson, in conjunction with the club Secretary to set the agenda for all meetings.

The agenda, along with any relevant information, should be circulated by the Secretary prior to the meeting. This ensures fellow committee members have time to prepare, and consequently when needed, contribute constructive input to help the committee make well-informed decisions.

The period of notice for circulating information, may be dictated in your constitution. If not we would recommend circulating information no less than 72 hours prior to a general meeting and at least 14 days prior to an Annual or Special General meeting.

The agenda should include, accompanying reports for review, and list all items for upcoming discussion and decision.

For clubs aiming to keep a meetings length to a minimum, wherever possible reports should be submitted in writing, and circulated prior.

Should the committee need to consider a one off item for discussion or decision, this should be notified to the Chairperson, so it can be included in the agenda, along with as much relevant background information as possible.



## What should be covered?

- Open your meeting with an Acknowledgement to Country.
- Record attendance and any apologies.
- Confirm you have a quorum. (If not the meeting can proceed but no decision can be made)
- Confirm the previous minutes, (make amendments if necessary), then call for a motion to confirm the minutes as an accurate record.
- Review and update the status of any action items from the previous minutes.
- Review and record any correspondence.
- Table and Review all Committee Reports.
- Motions or items for decision.
- General business – only relatively minor points should be raised at this time.
- Confirming the next meeting date, time and location.
- Meeting close

## Pro tips

1. If you can insist on written reports from committee members area of responsibility, you will not only ensure everyone is up to date, you will speed up your meetings significantly.
2. One task that occurs immediately after every meeting falls to the Secretary. That is the duty of finalising and circulating the minutes. We strongly recommend this is given priority and the meeting minutes are distributed within a few days. Certainly no later than 1 week after your meeting.





# Recruiting and Supporting Your Volunteers

Human beings have an innate but powerful need to feel connected. No matter who we are or what our interests are, we all want to feel welcomed and have a sense of belonging.

That's why sporting clubs and soccer clubs, in particular, are such an important and integral part of a community. They provide opportunities for people to come together and share in something they are extremely passionate about.

With many clubs being run by invested and passionate volunteers, soccer clubs must have the skills, structures, capacity and plans in place to be able to support the people that contribute to making it all happen. Below are some hints and tips for recruiting and retaining your volunteers.

## Recruiting

1. Avoid a one-stop approach to recruiting – Look at the person and not just the role
2. Be clear about the commitment involved and what exactly people are signing up for
3. Know your members & their skills, their knowledge and their passions (see HHH)
4. Think about the reasons people volunteer
5. Make it fun with a social element to volunteering
6. Make the roles flexible and less time restrictive
7. Always Ask!  
– 41% of people are likely to say yes if directly asked

## Retaining

1. Be flexible and understanding. Prioritise your volunteers well-being and health above all else
2. Break roles into smaller and more manageable tasks to avoid burnout in volunteers
3. Value, recognise and celebrate your volunteers and the work they do in your club. This raises their sense of belonging in your club – EG: Volunteer of the week awards.
4. Provide support and training opportunities for all volunteers where possible. Investing in your volunteers can go a long way

## Club Skills Audit Head, Heart, Hands

The Head, Heart, Hands approach is a helpful way to get to know your members and see where their skills can be best placed to assist your club.



**Head:** What are you knowledgeable about?



**Heart:** What are you passionate about?



**Hands:** What are you good at doing?

By activating these skills and talents you will offer people opportunities to be valued in their community



## PLANNING A SESSION

Planning a training session for players with disability is no different than any other training session.

Having a disability does not mean a player has no ability, it's important all players are challenged to a level that helps them develop, and more importantly have fun and keep fit.

If there are players who have a physical disability, (e.g Cerebral Palsy) be aware of any obstacles that may not be suitable for the session, such as training poles, mannequins, small hurdles, bags!

Focus should be on 4 components of the basic skills, Striking the ball, Running with the ball, One v One (tackling) and first touch.

## What should the session include?

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Fun activities to develop teamwork
- How to keep close control of the ball
- How to use different parts of the foot
- How to tackle safely
- How to score goals!
- Build confidence

### KEY FACTORS

- Always encourage players
- Enjoyment of the session
- Session is relevant and age appropriate
- All players are taking part in the session
- Encouraging creativity and belonging to your club

## What's the role of the coach?

It's important for the coach to understand different disabilities and how different players may respond to different things. EG; success, losing, not being able to do a drill the way the player wants, playing in a team, being patient, understanding and helping them overcome these obstacles. Encourage parents to get involved in training (kids love beating their parents).

Encourage and invite other teams or players to join in the session, this develops a sense of belonging to their club and highlights the inclusive nature of a club. It's also a great way of developing inclusivity in young players and coaches from other teams within your club. Encourage players to try out for mainstream teams if you think they are confident and able enough.

Finally, being aware of all the pathways available for players with a disability, there are forms of elite football (and other sports, eg paralympic sports) for players with a disability, that encourage and motivate them to strive for success.





# Disability Awareness

Disability awareness is the practice of knowing, acknowledging, and accepting individuals' experiences as they relate to disability.

Knowing, being aware, and moving beyond your own level of comfort is key to a greater understanding as well.

It is important to be aware of your own biases; this can be especially important when thinking of hidden and visible disabilities.

Some individuals may have a disability that cannot be seen – try and check your assumptions at the door.

1 in 5 people in your community will identify as having a disability. So what are the categories of disability?

**Sensory:** a disability that impacts the senses such as hearing, sight, smell, touch and taste

**Psychosocial:** a disability that impacts one's mental health such as Schizophrenia, bipolar and depression

**Neurocognitive:** a disability that affects a person's judgement or emotions such as Parkinson's or a traumatic brain injury

**Physical:** a disability that can impact a person's mobility or physical capacity

## Pro Tips



The following tips are helpful in communicating and interacting with people with disabilities.

- **Be yourself:** Present the way you are and don't change the way you behave or speak when communicating with a person with a disability.
- **Use person first language:** put the person before their disability. Ask the person how they would like to be referred to and remember "labels are for cans and jars".
- **Speak directly to the person with a disability:** Avoid speaking to their interpreter or their companion. A lack of immediate response doesn't mean that they won't respond.
- **Don't assume:** Don't assume people with a disability need our help, they will ask or you can ask if they require help. Don't assume people with a disability can't make decisions, give them the opportunity to do so.
- **Don't touch:** Avoid touching or moving a person's mobility equipment or petting a companion pet without permission.

## LGBTQIA+ INCLUSION

Soccer clubs should be places that are fun and safe for all people. No matter what your gender identity or sexual orientation is, your soccer club should be a place where you can express yourself freely and be your authentic self, without fear of judgement or discrimination.

As our society continues to grow and evolve, language is becoming more available, and more people than ever are feeling comfortable, colourful, and proud to be themselves in their communities. And our soccer clubs should be no exception.

### WHAT DOES LGBTQIA+ STAND FOR?

- **Lesbian**
- **Gay**
- **Bisexual**
- **Transgender**
- **Queer/Questioning**
- **Intersex**
- **Asexual**
- **+ includes the several diverse sexual orientation and gender identities**

## PRONOUNS

Everyone has a gender, sexuality, and set of pronouns that they use, whether it is she/her, he/him, they/them, or other newer pronouns called 'neopronouns'.

Did you know that the singular 'they' pronoun has been around since before the 1300s? The 'you' pronoun used to function as strictly a plural pronoun, that later became singular as well. The more you know!

The best thing is, you already know how to use the singular 'they' pronoun. Imagine you are at a café, and notice there is a lost coat that has been left on the floor. You might say, "Is this yours? I think someone has left their coat behind!"

It's so important to respect everyone's identity and way of expressing themselves in dress, even if you don't understand it or don't express yourself in the same way.

## PRO TIP



Use people's correct pronouns and names even when they're not around, and gently remind others when they slip up. Mistakes will happen, and this is okay. Simply apologise, correct yourself and try not to make a huge deal of it.