

SUCCESSION PLANNING

Strategies for Effective Committee Continuity

This is your guide to creating a seamless leadership transition within your club. Effective succession planning is about more than just filling positions; it's a strategic approach to cultivate new leaders who are ready to step up when the time comes.

With a well-thought-out succession plan, your club ensures a steady handover of leadership, preserving the invaluable knowledge and vision that has been built over time. It's about nurturing the next generation of committee members, equipped with the insights and experience necessary to drive the club forward without missing a beat.

BEGIN EARLY

Succession planning should begin when you start your role as a committee member. Waiting until a committee member is ready to leave before identifying a replacement can result in a rushed or ineffective transition. Early succession planning helps to create a culture of leadership development and encourages ongoing learning and growth. Potential successors can be identified, a plan can be developed for continuity of leadership and a pipeline of future leaders can be created.

IDENTIFY KEY POSITIONS

The first step in succession planning is to identify the positions that will need to be filled. These positions are those that are critical to the club's success and have a significant impact on its overall direction. Typically this would include all committee members, key operational positions (e.g. head coach) and any staff.

DEVELOP THE SUCCESSION PLAN

A succession plan can be very simple. It should outline the steps necessary to identify, train and transition new committee members into key positions. The plan can include:

- **A timeline of terms** – A timeline for when current committee members will reach the end of their terms in office and new committee members will be required.
- **Position descriptions** – Including the specific responsibilities and typical activities of each position.
- **Recruitment** – Steps needed to identify suitable successors.
- **Handover process** – Include a handover process to ensure a smooth transition.
- **Professional development opportunities** – Strategies for developing the skills and knowledge of future leaders to prepare them for leadership roles.
- **Updating** – A process for reviewing and updating the succession plan.
- **Processes** – Keep an up-to-date list of relevant processes and documents and clearly identify where they are saved so new committee members have access to everything they need for their role.

Tip: Position descriptions will help you identify people with the relevant skills and they can help potential new committee members understand what their role would include.

Tip: The handover is an opportunity to talk about your personal interpretation of the role along with what is expected, and the culture and objectives of the club.

Build a pipeline of potential leaders

- To ensure that there are qualified candidates available to take over key positions, build a pipeline of potential leaders. This can be done through informal mentorship programs, leadership training, or by current committee members identifying potential successors and encouraging them to nominate for elections.

Communicate the succession plan

Share the plan with members to ensure that the right people are aware of the plan and understand their role in making it a success. Succession planning is a great way to smooth out the bumps of committee change overs. Keep it simple so it's easy to follow as you identify and develop future club leaders.