

AFL NSW/ACT CLUB GUIDE TO **STRATEGIC PLANNING**



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1. INTRODUCTION

Planning refers to the process of identifying goals or objectives and developing ways of achieving them. The purpose of planning is to eliminate as much uncertainty about the future as possible and allow the club to move forward in the most efficient manner.

Without adequate planning, immediate issues tend to take up all available time and clubs fail to anticipate any changes in the internal or external football environment that will affect the club's viability in the long term. It is vital that a club is proactive rather than reactive in achieving its goals and objectives.



2. CLUB STRUCTURE

Before your club can start the planning process, you will need to identify the current governance and management structure.

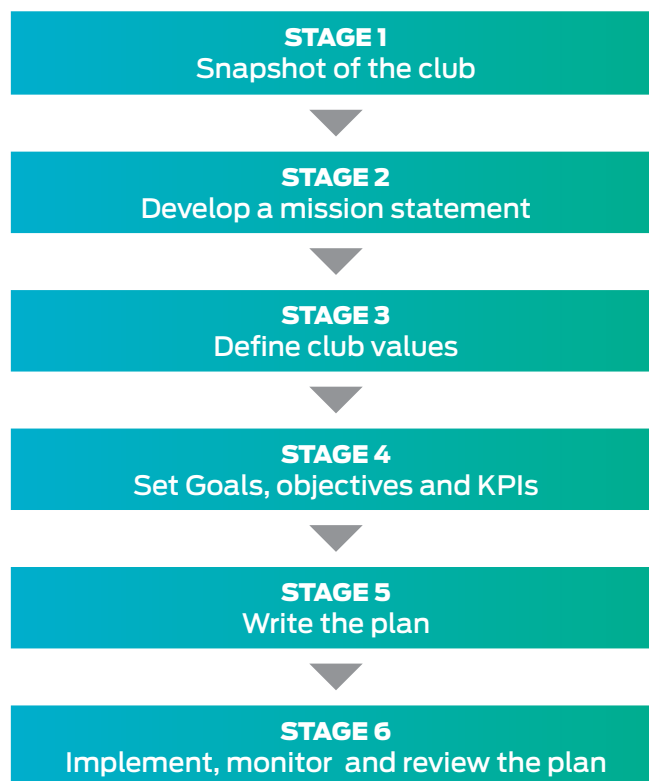
Clubs are typically structured around a committee, which is responsible for the administration, financial management and governance of the club. Although the size and structure of the committee will vary according to the type, size and function of each club, the committee should be organised around the needs of the club and its members.

3. PLANNING PROCESS AND STAGES

The club committee needs to consider planning for the short and long term. Short-term planning relates to planning for specific events of up to 12 months, whereas long-term planning involves a longer period, between 12 months and five years.

When planning, consideration must be given to the overall direction of the club in terms of what it wants to achieve and how it will go about getting there. Consider the reasons for establishing the club, together with the nature of the community it will serve, and how it will do so.

The planning process should involve four to five key people within your club and be led by the club president.



3.1. STAGE ONE – SNAPSHOT OF THE CLUB

All clubs should have a clear understanding of where they have come from and where they are now before any forward planning can be completed. A snapshot of the club allows the club to identify its current position to plan effectively for the future. Information to consider includes:

- Financial data
- Membership demographics
- Facilities needs
- On-field performance
- Off-field activities
- Social changes that have an impact on the environment in which the club operates

The SWOT analysis is the first step in determining the club's priority areas for development. It will allow you to identify the club's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

Strengths and weaknesses relate to the internal aspects of the club such as facilities, members, coaches and equipment whereas opportunities and threats are those external aspects relating to the club, such as funding, school/club link opportunities and issues relating to weather, other sport codes etc.

3.2 STAGE TWO – DEVELOP A MISSION STATEMENT

The club needs to develop a clear, concise statement about what it sees as its fundamental purpose. The mission statement should identify the main reason for the club existing and acts as a catalyst for change and development within the club.

The mission statement answers the following questions:

- What is the organisation? (Its nature)
- What does it do? (Its products/services)
- Who does it serve? (Its customers)
- Why does it exist? (Its purpose)

Examples:

Geelong Cats AFC - To be the greatest team of all: a Club people can be proud of because of how we play the game, live our values, conduct business and engage with the community.

Caroline Springs Football Club - The prime objective of the Caroline Springs Football Club is the development of junior football and footballers. To this end we will provide within the Caroline Springs area a junior football programme that prepares young footballers both physically and mentally for senior football.

Southern Power AFC - Southern Power Football Club is dedicated to raising the profile of AFL within the Sutherland Shire by providing a supportive and welcoming environment for members and associated families. We will earn the respect and pride of the local and football communities through our determination for sustained success, while maintaining integrity, sportsmanship and proud unity in all our endeavours.

3.3. STAGE THREE – DEFINE CLUB VALUES

During this stage, your club needs to reflect not only on why it exists but also on what it intends to do and achieve. You will need to look at establishing between four and six key values for your club. These can then be used as a base to develop a genuine understanding of what is important to the club.

Examples:

Blacktown Suns Juniors AFL Club

To ensure all players, officials and family members are treated with respect and given reasonable opportunity while participating in Club activities.

To promote, advance, foster and cultivate the enjoyment of Australian Football for all participants.

To provide a safe, fun and nurturing environment to play Australian Football, and those activities ancillary to the game.

To assist in the educational advancement of the community by means of the development of a sense of fair play and a love of sport, in particular Australian Football.

To encourage, advance and assist in the development of an improved standard of physical fitness in all members of the AFL community, both individually and collectively.

To operate at all times in the best interests of the Players and Families.

The Marist Australian Football Club

FUN: creating an environment where players and families can enjoy the great game of Australian Football.

PARTICIPATION: creating an environment where all our players get a fair go

INCLUSIVENESS: recognising our players and families are different and in this we celebrate

EMPATHY: ensuring we think about the other person and their needs before our own

FAMILY: recognising the importance of family values and connectedness

3.4. STAGE FOUR – SET GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPI)

Goals, objectives and KPIs are an important part of any successful clubs and help determine how members represent their club and what activities they want to plan. Goals are what the club wants to accomplish, Objectives are the activities to achieve the goals and KPIs are how objectives are measured. When determining goals, objectives and KPIs, consideration needs to be given to responsibilities, timelines and financial resources available.

Here are a few things to consider when setting your goals:

Specific – be clear about what you want to achieve

Measurable – make sure the goal can be measured, and you can recognise if you've achieved your goal

Achievable - check that your goal is something you have the time, money and resources to meet

Relevant – ensure your goal is relevant to the direction you want your business to head in, for example, increasing profit, employing more staff, increasing brand awareness

Timely - set a realistic deadline for completing the goal.

| GOAL | OBJECTIVE | KPI | RESPONSIBILITY | TIMELINE | RESOURCING |
|---|---|--|-----------------------|---------------|---|
| Increase sponsorship by 10% from 2017 commitments | 1 Identify a group of four people to form the Sponsorship committee | Group selected and briefed | Club committee | January 2018 | \$500 for design and printing of sponsorship proposal package |
| | 2 Establish a list of assets the club can offer to sponsor | List created with money value allocated | Sponsorship committee | February 2018 | |
| | 3 Develop sponsorship package to present to potential sponsors | Sponsorship package developed and approved by club committee | Sponsorship Committee | March 2018 | |
| | 4 Approach potential sponsorship partners with proposal | Sponsors approached, and commitment gained for sponsorship dollars | Sponsorship Committee | May 2018 | |

3.5. STAGE FIVE – WRITE THE PLAN

The club's plan can be used for player recruitment, funding applications, sponsorship proposals and various other purposes. When writing a club's plan, consider the following points:

- It should be clear and well set out
- An executive summary should be included as an introduction
- Timelines, responsibilities and financial factors should be clearly identified
- The review process should be outlined indicating the ongoing monitoring of the plan
- Financial indicators should be evaluated monthly, whereas the action indicators should be reviewed more regularly, even weekly or daily

Once the plan has been drafted, it should be circulated to other members of the committee to ensure it reflects the club's needs.

3.6. STAGE SIX – IMPLEMENT, MONITOR AND REVIEW THE PLAN

It's important to remember the plan is a living document and needs to be continually referred to and evaluated at specific times throughout the year.

The plan should be tabled at each club meeting so that each portfolio manager can report back regarding the progress and identified timelines. Each portfolio area within the club should conduct an end-of-season review, by discussing the strengths and weaknesses of the plan and the outcomes from the season. A report should also be compiled at the end of the season and be presented at the AGM regarding the implementation of the plan.

4. FURTHER INFORMATION

More information on strategic planning for your club can be found online:

- www.aflnswact.com.au
- www.aflcommunityclub.com.au
- www.clubhelp.org.au
- www.sport.nsw.gov.au
- www.ausport.gov.au

