

Getting Off to a Good Start

"I wanted to put something back into the game, I really enjoy being involved"

Getting off to a Good Start

You told us:

"Because I'd been around at club level, everybody assumed that I knew what was involved at league level. It took me the whole of the first season to find out what I was supposed to be doing and who to contact. I made a lot of mistakes that could have been avoided if only I'd had some guidance."

"I was elected at the AGM, somebody dropped off a huge cardboard box full of papers the following day and I spent the next three months trying to find out what it was all about!"

"The retiring League Secretary let me work alongside him for a few months before I took over and after that, he was always at the end of the phone if I needed any advice."

The Football Workforce has produced a checklist of ideas to help you to support volunteers to settle into their new jobs. Investing time in the short term to help people to settle into their new jobs will pay dividends in the long term.

- They will feel more confident and will enjoy the job
- The quality of work will be better
- They will be working smarter, not harder
- People who are handing over their job will feel confident that their good work will be continued
- A smooth hand-over minimises disruption for the club
- Job shadowing helps a club to plan for succession. Don't leave it until the AGM to start looking for a successor!

Select ideas that suit the individual's circumstances, the complexity of the job and the time available.

Where to go for further help

Visit The FA website at www.TheFA.com or contact your County FA office/Volunteer Co-ordinator.

You may also be interested in the Effective Football Club Administration training and development programme.

For further details contact your County FA.

Getting Off to a Good Start

"I've learned so much
since I got involved with the
Mini-Soccer programme"

Getting off to a Good Start Checklist

- Make sure each new volunteer has a 'buddy', somebody they can ask if they are in doubt about anything to do with their new job - ideally, somebody who has done that job before.
- Check that they have received a list of their roles and responsibilities and that they understand exactly what they are supposed to do.
- Introduce them to the people with whom they will be working.
- Provide a list of names, addresses and telephone numbers of their key contacts, within and outside the club.
- Provide details of meetings or events that they will need to attend in the first few months of their job.
- Provide details of key dates, for example; the closing date for league affiliations.
- Make sure they know where to find the things they need to do the job (and how to work them!) e.g. line marking equipment, first aid kit, computer, paperwork, stationery.
- Do they have all the skills needed to do the job? Could somebody within the club help by 'showing them the ropes'? Or maybe they could attend an Effective Football Club Administration workshop and learn from people from other clubs?
- Provide written details of expenses that may be claimed, and how to claim them.
- If appropriate to the job, provide information on club financial procedures, confidentiality, and other operating policies such as child protection practices.
- Tell them how they are getting on - provide some feedback on progress. People like to know how they are getting on and to learn positively from any mistakes they have been making.
- Committee chairpersons should take time to get to know new committee members, briefing them about committee procedures, terms of reference and responsibilities.

Mid-Season Team Talks

"Is the team up to full strength?"

Mid-season Team Talks

You told us:

"We started off with a good team of helpers this season, but when things got really busy people felt overloaded and disappeared, leaving even fewer of us to cope."

"I thought I had volunteered to help out with the mini-football sessions on a Friday evening. I've ended up running the whole mini football programme. It's not really what I wanted to do."

"Somebody asked me if I could help out one evening setting out equipment and keeping an eye on the youngsters. I really enjoyed it, so now I go along every week. I'd like to get more involved, but I'm not sure how to go about it."

Good team managers know that to get the best out of their team they need to provide:

- Motivation
- A clear focus on the goals
- Recognition of achievements and performance
- Training and support to develop skills
- Team building activities

Your team of volunteers and helpers are no different.

Football Workforce offers some ideas to help keep your team performing well as things settle down during the mid-season.

So you started off the season with your team of Football Workforce volunteers and helpers. How are things going?

Take a few minutes to think about your team. Ask yourself these questions and try to be objective in your answers (nobody else is listening!)

The Team

- Is the team still up to full strength?
- If not, why have people opted out, overload, boredom, wrong job, or personal reasons?
- Are they working well as a team?
- Is the work being shared out or are one or two people doing more than their fair share?
- Are jobs being delegated appropriately, or are one or two people 'holding on' to jobs?
- Are there any gaps in the team, perhaps some skills that are missing?

- How would you describe the team spirit? Are they a happy team of people who enjoy what they are doing and working together?
- What do they think of the way in which you lead the team?
- Are people in the right positions?
- Are you using their skills, time and enthusiasm in the best way?

Mid-Season Team Talks

Individuals

- How are they performing?
- Are they still doing the job that they are expected to do and that you want them to do – or has it grown into something else?
- Are they enjoying their involvement?
- Do they have the potential to take on more or are they already feeling overloaded?
- Would some one-to-one support or skill development help them to do even better?

And last but not least – yourself

- How are you doing as a volunteer manager?
- Are you enjoying your role?
- What do you think you are doing well?
- What, if anything, would you want to improve about the way in which you carry out your role?
- List one or two action points that will make the job more enjoyable, or help you to do it even better?

Hopefully, things are going well and your answers to these questions are mostly positive. You might be aware of one or two problem areas and may have some ideas about how to address those problems.

Perhaps the team has some ideas on how things could be improved. Certainly the team needs to be made aware of the things that are going well.

Time for a Team Talk

Who?

Everybody who is involved as a volunteer or helper, even if they only help out occasionally.

When?

Maybe after a training session, a match or at a social evening organised as a mid-season 'thank you' for all of your helpers. Informal chats with small groups of volunteers or individuals can be an effective way of finding out how people are getting on, providing some feedback and demonstrating an interest in their role.

What?

Remember that a team talk is a two way process. The purpose of a team talk is to:

- Motivate
- Review performance
- Recognise achievement (and possibly make some changes)
- Renew the team focus
- Identify any skill gaps and need for support
- Build the team spirit

Ask questions, similar to those you asked yourself. Be prepared to listen, people may have different views about how things are going.

Encourage people to put forward their ideas, maybe a 'Football Workforce ideas box' would enable people to contribute their constructive ideas over two or three weeks before the meeting.

Why not set up three Football Workforce meetings each year – one pre-season to set the team going, one mid-season to review progress and one at the end of the season to review the year, say thank you and plan for next year?

When things aren't going According to Plan

You told us that many volunteers and helpers give up because they are:

- Overloaded and 'put upon'
- Not confident about the task they have been asked to do
- Fed up with doing the same thing
- Afraid that they will be committed for life!

Football Workforce solutions that might work for you include:

Job Sharing

If a job is too onerous for one person, why not split it into two or three smaller parts. It's not as difficult as it may first appear. Use the roles and responsibilities form to identify the

tasks that make up the job. You should find that you can group these into tasks that need to be done at the club, away from the club, daily, weekly, monthly, or tasks that need specific skills. This will help to break the job down into smaller, more manageable parts and people will enjoy having a 'buddy' to share the workload.

Support Systems

Help people to develop confidence in their current role or to prepare for a new role by providing:

- A 'buddy', somebody who has done the job before, who can help them settle into the job without feeling out of their depth. A smooth hand-over from the person who did the job last year always helps people to get through the first few weeks with more confidence.
- Some 'on the job' coaching
- Training opportunities which can include: Effective Football Administrator Workshops, Running Sport Workshops and booklets, Job shadowing, talking to other people to see how they do the job in their club or league.
- Football Association Club Development Manual and Workshops
- Magazine articles
- E-learning and websites

Time for a Team Talk

"Use team talks to build team spirit"

Planning for Succession

Try to find the balance between a high turnover of volunteers and helpers and stagnation. Skill and experience are invaluable qualities but 'waiting for dead men's shoes' can be off-putting to potential volunteers.

People will be motivated by new challenges and will be reassured that they are not taking on a life time commitment by volunteering their help.

Volunteers are more likely to feel comfortable about moving on to a new challenge if they know that they are handing over their role to somebody who will do a good job.

Plan ahead. Encourage volunteers and helpers to look out for somebody who could take over from them. Offer them the chance to 'shadow' the job for a while, to find out what's involved and to see if it's the right role for them.

Good succession planning helps to ensure that the right people are doing the right roles at the right time.

Where to find further information:

Football Workforce
The Football Association
25 Soho Square
London
W1D 4FA
www.TheFA.com

or telephone the Football Workforce
Hotline on: 020 7745 4777

or contact your County FA for
advice from:

Football Workforce
Advisor
County FA Secretary

Administration courses and supporting resources

"Learning to work smarter not harder"

Effective Football Club Administration Programme

The following details outline a number of courses and resources to help your Football Workforce to work smarter not harder.

The Effective Football Club Administration Programme is now offered by an increasing number of County Football Associations who run the following four workshops:

1. Running a Club – Club Secretaries

- Defines the roles and qualities of the Club Secretary. Describes ways in which the Secretary can work smarter not harder
- Outlines the club's obligations to its League and County FA
- Describes the way in which volunteers can be recruited and retained

Publications

- Running Sport – 'Running a Club', 'Getting things done'

2. Club Finances – Club Treasurers

- Describes the role of Club Treasurer
- Identifies simple rules in looking after the money
- Financial requirements for Clubs
- Lists possible sources of funding

Publications

- Running Sport – 'Raising Money', 'Looking after the money'
- The Football Association – 'Funding Guide'

3. Developing Youth Football – Youth Team Co-ordinators

- Lists the benefits of introducing young people to the football club
- Identifies the factors that contribute to a quality youth section/club
- Lists ways of obtaining help from the community to support youth football
- Guidance on Child Protection issues for clubs

Publications

- Running Sport – 'Developing a Junior Club', 'Sportslink'

4. Marketing and Sponsorship – Club Officials with responsibilities in these areas

- How to devise an outline marketing plan appropriate to the club's needs
- Ways of publicising the football club
- Production of a press release
- Funding and Fund-raising opportunities

- Preparation of a sponsorship proposal

Publications

- Running Sport – 'Raising Money'

5. Charter Standard Club Development

- Principles of Football Development
- Charter Standard Club Development Pathway
- Principles of the Planning Process
- How to write a plan

6. Volunteer Management

- Bringing the FA Football Workforce Resource to life
- Recruitment and Retention
- Roles of Volunteers
- Rewarding Volunteers

7. Soccer Parent

- Ideas and Resources for working parents
- Ensuring parents are aware of club policies
- Making parents aware of their responsibilities

For further details contact The FA, 020 7745 4601 or contact your County FA.

Administration courses and supporting resources

Sport England courses on 'Running Sport'

Marketing and Raising Funds

Introductory booklets

- 'Raising money', fund-raising, marketing and sponsorship.

Workshops

- Smart Marketing, Becoming better known to gain the rewards.
- Finding the funds, locating resources all around you.

Developing your Club

Introductory booklets

- 'Developing a junior club', Planning for Sports.
- 'Development', the basics of sport development.
- 'Laying the Foundations', an introduction to starting a building project.
- 'Sportslink', how schools and clubs can work together.

Workshops

- 'Sport Development Planning', how to plan your club's progress.
- 'Building for the Future', planning and managing a building project.

People Management

Introductory booklets

- 'Getting things done', an introduction to recruiting and training volunteers.

Workshops

- 'Employment Matters', recruiting and keeping your staff.
- 'Leadership and delegation', making the most of the people around you.
- 'Motivation and Team building', giving people what they need to get moving.
- 'Valuing Volunteers', recruiting, retaining, recognising and rewarding volunteers.

Money Management

Introductory booklets

- 'Looking after the money', basic book-keeping systems.
- 'Managing the risks', insurance guidelines for clubs.

Workshops

- 'Balancing the books', getting to grips with financial systems.
- 'Managing the money', budgeting.

Club Administration

Introductory booklets

- 'Running a club', the role of a club secretary.
- 'Running Meetings', the right 'chair' for a sports club.
- 'Getting it right', ethics, disciplinary procedures and appeals.
- 'Making a Match', how to organise teams and competitions

Personal Development

Introductory booklets

- 'Making your Point', how to present your views.

Workshops

- 'Active presentations', help with preparing and presenting information to larger groups.
- 'Time Management', beating the clock in stress free ways.
- 'Effective networking', calling on others to help improve your club.
- 'Personal Effectiveness', becoming a solid all-rounder for your club.

For more information about these courses, and for local contacts call the Running Sport Hotline
08457 583 136

Administration courses and supporting resources

"It's easy to forget that the hard work enables people to play football"

Saying Thank You

Why?

It doesn't take long or cost a lot, but it can mean so much.

How?

- A straightforward face to face thank you
- Make a phone call, perhaps the day after the tournament, to thank individuals for their hard work
- Or send a card. Make it specific, for example, 'thank you for all your help with refreshments.' This demonstrates that you really noticed and valued what they were doing.

When?

Overdoing the thanks may devalue your intentions or make them appear insincere. A simple thank you to the team at the end of an evening training session is fine. Use the cards or phone calls to recognise special effort.

Who should say thank you?

Chair, Vice Chair, Event Organiser, the players, maybe the Football Workforce Advisor, it doesn't matter who does it as long as somebody does!

Players' appreciation

It's easy to forget that all of the hard work that goes on is to enable people to play football. Players, most of all, should recognise the importance of valuing and recognising all the voluntary work that goes on behind the scenes.

Put together a player's appreciation pack for youth teams. Make it easy for them to say thank you, until it becomes a habit. Help young players to establish good habits, they are the volunteers of the future.

A player's appreciation pack might include:

- Some thank you cards
- A Team Helper of the Month award. The team can determine which volunteer or helper they wish to receive the award each month through the season.
- A list of all the people who work behind the scenes at the club and their roles, so that they can appreciate and value the off-the-field team.
- A reminder about the Football Association's Code of Conduct, which promotes fair play and a respect for everybody involved in the game

- Nomination forms for annual awards for volunteers and helpers

Make each Team Captain responsible for co-ordinating the use of the pack with their team.

Recognition and reward

"It would be nice if, just once in a while, somebody said thank you"

End of Season Recognition and Reward

Bringing the season to a close – review and preview

You told us...

"I enjoy my work for the club. I get a lot out of it. But, it would be nice if, just once in a while, somebody said thank you."

"The kids turn up to play, make a mess and go away again. I wonder if they realise just how much work goes into arranging their training sessions and matches?"

"There are people in our club who do very little, but they're hanging on in there until they get their long service award. On the other hand, there's a young Mum who has only just got involved and she's done so much to help already. She's the one who deserves the award!"

On or off the field, as the end of the season approaches, you can look back over the year, celebrate the successes, analyse the things that didn't go quite so well and think how it's going to be even better next year!

Recognising and rewarding the hard work and enthusiasm of the team of volunteers and helpers is something that should go on throughout the season, perhaps by:

- Somebody taking the trouble to say 'thank you' at the end of the training session
- Team talks that recognise achievement and hard work
- Raising the profile of volunteers and helpers throughout the club and in the local community

And at the end of the season, maybe something a bit special?

- An award evening
- A social event just for volunteers and helpers to say thank you
- An end of season team talk, to begin planning for next season

Football Workforce offers some suggestions that will make your volunteers and helpers feel valued and that will build their recognition and reward into your season planner.

The End of Season Team Talk

"Volunteering is great, you get to know lots of people with the same interests"

The End of Season Team Talk

Why?

To celebrate success, review and evaluate the year and begin to plan for next year.

Who?

Everybody who is involved as a volunteer or helper, even if they only help out occasionally.

Where?

- At a special social event for volunteers and helpers
- At an awards evening
- At an informal gathering

When?

At the end of the season, but before everybody disperses for the summer. Remember that you want to gain their commitment to being part of your team again next season.

How?

- Think back to your mid-season team talk
- What worked well?
- Was it more successful to talk to people in small groups, on a one-to-one basis, or in a larger meeting?

- Were the questions you asked effective in finding out how things were going?
- How effective were you in resolving problems?
- How are you going to motivate people to come back next season?

However you decide to manage the end of season team talk, aim to produce an action plan that will help you and the team to build on your successes. Revisit the Football Workforce Season Planner to help you.

Special note-Insurance

The FA advises that all members of the Football Workforce should ensure their legal liability is properly insured. If the club purchases liability cover on behalf of all its participants, committee members etc., we suggest that the policy should also include indemnity to volunteers in the club.

Raising the profile of volunteers

Raising the Profile of volunteers within the Club and the Local Community

Football Workforce offers some ideas to help you make the invisible team a little more visible not only within the club, but within the local community.

Just occasionally, think about adding some special interest stories about the off-the-field team in your news report to the local paper.

Look at the following examples, they may help you with some ideas for your own press release or an article for your newsletter.

Success at new Town is a family affair

The New Town Colts continued their best ever season last weekend with a 4-3 win at home against their old rivals, Old Town. Player of the match this week was Mark Jones, who has played for the Colts for the past three years. His on-the-field talents are matched by the work he does behind the scenes to support the club.

Mark is working towards his Community Sport Leader Award at New Town High School where he is a pupil. He puts his leadership training into practise by helping out at the Club's mini soccer training sessions and is an excellent role model to the younger players. In fact, it's a Jones family affair. Dad, Martin has been a volunteer at the Club since he hung up his boots some eight years ago. There's hardly a job in the club that Martin hasn't taken on, giving endless hours to make sure that the teams can run out on a Saturday to enjoy their football. Mum, Jean is always there to lend a helping hand at those essential fund-raising and social events.

So as the team runs out next Saturday morning at Mid Town, hoping to maintain their unbeaten record through another match, the Jones family will be there supporting on and off the pitch.

Raising the profile of volunteers

"...don't worry if you don't know anything about football, there are all sorts of jobs that need doing..."

Raising the profile of volunteers within the Club and the Local Community

Use your club newsletter to publicise all the work that goes on behind the scenes. Feature two or three people in each newsletter, perhaps in an interview style, asking them about their role, how they became involved, and the things they enjoy about helping out at the club, for example:

Volunteers in View

Introducing the October Football Workforce

Volunteer of the Month, Shereen Bashir

Shereen, you've never actually played football, so what got you involved as a volunteer with the girls club programme?

"Well, my daughters came home from school really excited about a new after-school football session just for girls. I wasn't sure that this was the right thing for them to be doing – girls and football – so I went along to the first couple of sessions to watch, just to check it out. The organiser asked me if I would mind helping out with registration and collecting subs and before I knew it, I was involved!

From after school sessions, the girls got involved with the club's new girls programme and once again I came along to check it out and once again I got involved."

What do you do, and how much time do you give each week?

"The coach said that there should always be more than one adult at the sessions, so I started out just 'being there'. Then one day she asked me to look after one group of players whilst she coached another group. I was terrified! 16 girls running in all directions at high speed with as many footballs and I was supposed to be in control!"

The experience didn't put you off?

"No, it spurred me on and now I've completed my Junior Team Managers Course! I'm much more confident and I feel that I can be a real help to the coach and to the girls.

I just come to the sessions that my girls are involved in, which means that we're here as a family for three sessions each week. I really don't have any other time to give. I'll be here as long as my girls are involved but I can't make any commitments beyond that."

Any tips for other Mums (or Dads) who would like to get involved?

"Yes, don't worry if you don't know anything about football, there are all sorts of jobs that need doing, some that only take an hour a week – others that need a bit more time. We're a very friendly group and we'll make you welcome."

Thanks Shereen and congratulations on being awarded the Football Workforce Volunteer of the Month.

Raising the profile of volunteers

Raising the profile of volunteers within the Club and the Local Community

Next time the photographer arrives to take a team photograph, make sure that the volunteers and helpers team is in the picture! They might even like some T-shirts or baseball caps to give them a sense of identity.

If your players award their Team Helper of the Month Award, make sure a photograph of the winner appears on the notice board.

Football Workforce Awards don't need to stop at club level. Why not nominate your successful Football Workforce team members for a County Award? The County Awards link into national award programmes run by the Football Association and other national sport organisations, your Football Workforce team members club may even hit the national headlines!

For further information about the FA County Awards programme and other volunteer recognition and reward programmes contact:

A. The Football Workforce Advisor
at your County FA office (for participating County associations)

B. Football Workforce
The Football Association
25 Soho Square
London
W1D 4FA

www.TheFA.com

C. VIP Programme
Sport England
16 Upper Woburn Place
London
WC1H 0QP

Or telephone on: 0800 363 373

www.englishsport.gov.uk

Raising the profile of volunteers

"I wanted to put something back into the game, I really enjoy being involved"

Rewarding Achievements

There will be some volunteers and helpers who deserve a special award.

It may be because:

- They never let you down, they were always there, even though their role might not be seen as high profile
- They took on a new role and made great efforts to develop the skills to do it well.
- They are an example of good practise that the club wishes to promote, for example, a young person who has taken on a voluntary role.

Try to think of a prize or gift that is appropriate to the individual, for example, a youngster might not appreciate a meal for two at a local restaurant, but the Mum who has manned the refreshments stand every Saturday throughout the season would welcome being waited on!

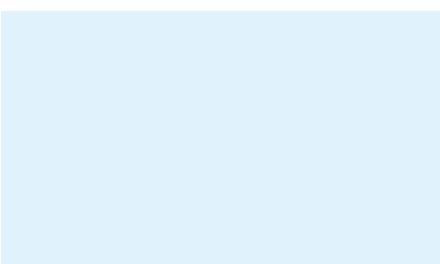
A youngster might appreciate some sports kit, or tickets for a premier league game.

Maybe the Club has a trophy designated for the off-the-field team members, which can be awarded annually.

Make a special occasion of presenting awards, perhaps an awards evening, or at the Annual General Meeting.

Schools are usually pleased to hear about their pupils' out of school achievements. It may be possible to arrange to present your Young Volunteer of the Year with their prize at a school assembly.

Think of other good examples of voluntary help that you might want to reward.



Club Certificate

- Using the criteria suggested in this section clubs may wish to use the club certificate provided by the Football Workforce programme to help recognise the efforts of volunteers and helpers. Certificates are available free of charge from the County Football Association volunteer advisor. All clubs/ organisations, which are part of our Football Workforce database, will be invited to request free club certificates to reward their volunteers

County Awards

- The County Football Association would also like to recognise the efforts which volunteers and helpers make during the year. Clubs and organisations are invited to nominate individual(s) who they feel have made a significant contribution to any aspect of their activities over the season. Letters and forms will be distributed to all clubs in the Football Workforce Programme. Clubs then reply to their County Football Association.

National Commendation

- The Football Association will be looking to recognise the contributions of volunteers and helpers by making five national commendations from those gaining County Awards. Those receiving National commendations will be invited to a suitable occasion to mark the contribution they have made.