**Committee Succession Planning: The Step by Step Process**

Succession Planning to attract people on to the committee is an important aspect of a board/committee’s governance. Failing to undertake succession planning may be a lost opportunity to gain talent to your board, leaving a vacuum that may allow the wrong type of person on to your board.

Once your board/committee has read “Committee Succession Planning: A Strategy to Attract People to the Committee”, and determined the potential candidates to approach for nomination, the following process may be helpful.

**Prior to meeting with the candidate**

* An initial call to a potential candidate to have an informal chat to ascertain interest. Talk about the position, the board, the club and the skills being sought. If all goes to plan a formal meeting is set up.
* Provide a copy of the boards key governance document and strategic plan as well as who will represent the board and the structure of the meeting. Provide an outline of the responsibilities and expectations of the role.

**When meeting with the candidate**

* Explain the process the board is going through.
* Be sure to present the positives of joining the board and what the potential board member may get from it. Be realistic though about the time commitment and any particular issues the board is having trouble dealing with.
* Discover what they know of the club’s strategy and the challenges and opportunities the club is dealing with.
* Understand the available time they have to give to the club and the commitments required of the position. A candidate may not be able to commit the time to stand for the board at the next AGM but in a year or so this may change so the meeting may not be in vain.
* Identify the skills and attributes the candidate would bring to the board
* Ask about some specific situations they have been successful in that provide further evidence of the skills they offer. Ascertain the role played in each case.
* Ask what board or committee experience they have had.   
  Ask about situations that arose and how did they approached it? Ask them to   
  explain their thinking and the outcome that resulted. Look for signs of conceptual thinking and success in working in a team amongst different personalities.
* Check for values and culture alignment – how do they believe they will help deliver a positive and constructive board culture?
* Ask how, as a new board member, the candidate would establish credibility amongst the members, board members and staff.
* The candidates knowledge of strategic planning, risk management and how they would contribute to the governance role. What are the areas that they see the board should be focused on?
* Ask questions to determine if they have clarity around the boards role and the role of the GM/CEO. Discover is they have a predetermined agenda about the club or its management, or whether they see contribution to the board   
  governance agenda as being the focus.
* Determine the candidate’s level of financial literacy.
* What are their expectations are of the club in order to perform best as a director?
* Are they willing to have background and reference checks undertaken (both formal and informal)?
* Inform the candidate that the board will evaluate itself annually.
* Ask if there are any issues they perceive with the position description?
* Ask if they have any conflicts of interest if standing for the board or any other issues that the board should be aware of in standing for a board role.
* Try and arrange first meetings in a time scale as close as possible to one another.
* Don’t raise expectations until meetings have been held with all candidates, reference checked and received final board sign off before letting a candidate know the outcome. New information may come to light.

**After meeting with the candidates**

* Inform the board of results of meetings with candidates as soon as possible.
* Allow the board to discuss and determine suitability of candidates.
* Inform those candidates that the board does not wish to proceed with as soon as possible and in person or over the phone. Keep in mind if there may be opportunities to co-opt them onto a working group or sub-committee in future due to their skills, enthusiasm and availability.
* Undertake background checks on suitable candidates.
* If needed, arrange a subsequent meeting.

**A board’s considered endorsement of a candidate for election to the board at the next AGM is not a guarantee of election. It does, however, go a long way to presenting a suitable candidate to members for the club’s important governance responsibility.**