**Introduction**

Joining the board of a sporting organisation for the first time can be an exciting and sometimes an overwhelming experience. A comprehensive introduction to the organisation and board operations allows new members to be properly informed, supported and welcomed to the board from the time of their appointment.

The President is usually responsible for the delivery of the induction process and the board may also wish to nominate a mentor to assist the newly appointed director. Newly appointed directors will undertake the induction process as outlined below and will be supplied with the necessary information, training and support to contribute appropriately to the *(organisation)* board.

**Board Induction Procedure**

1. **Initial Contact**

As soon as possible after the board has confirmed the appointment of a new member the President shall:

* Make contact with the new member,
* Write a letter of congratulation and welcome,
* Provide a copy of the
  + Director’s Role Description,
  + Board Role Description\*,
  + Board Code of Conduct.\*

\*The Board Role Description and Board Code of Conduct should be contained in the Board Manual however it is recommended that these are brought to the new directors attention upon initial contact.

The President should advise the new board member that they will be contacted soon to participate in the Board Induction Program.

1. **Board Manual**

The President shall forward to the new member a copy of the organisation’s Board Manual. The manual will serve as an initial introduction to the board as well as an ongoing reference. It should include:

* Current board member profiles, relevant organisational documents such as *(organisations)* constitution, by-laws, strategic plan, current year-to-date budget, relevant sponsorship and funding agreements and the most recent annual report,
* Organisational chart and contact information for board members and senior staff,
* Meeting schedule and event calendar;
* Board charter including information about the board and board members' roles and responsibilities; and
* Any necessary background information.

Give the new board member sufficient time to review the documents and invite them to ask questions.

1. **Introductions**

The President shall introduce the new member to other members of the board (and senior staff, if appropriate) as soon as possible after their appointment and seek to involve the member socially in board activities.

The President shall nominate a member of the board to act as mentor to the new member and arrange a time for the new board member to meet and conduct tour with the CEO.

1. **Inclusion**

Involve all board members in the induction process and ensure the board gets to know the new board member as well as the new board member getting to know the rest of the board.

1. **Roles and Responsibilities**

The mentor should:

* Draw the new board members attention to the roles and responsibilities of the board and the expectations of them as an individual,
* Explain the process of decision making,
* Outline the board performance and evaluation process, and
* Discuss any questions/concerns the new board member may have.

1. **Briefing**

The assigned mentor shall take the new member through the minutes of recent meetings (last 6 months) and brief them on the issues the board is currently dealing with, or will be looking at in the future.

1. **Tour**

The CEO shall invite the new board member to take a tour of the (organisation) office and:

* Introduce them to the staff,
* Show the new member where the board meets,
* Where to park their car or access transport,
* Where the kitchen is,
* Where the toilets are,
* Where the photocopier and other office equipment is (and the rules for its use), and
* Provide the new board member with an access card & alarm code if appropriate.

1. **Feedback**

Once the new board member has settled in they should provide feedback on the induction process to the President so that the process can be improved in the future.

**Acknowledgements**

DeLacy, Geoff, *How to Design & Implement a Board Induction Program*, Australian Institute of Company Directors, Australia,2004, pps 1-22.

Our Community, 2009, viewed 2nd September 2009, <http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/boards/boards_article.jsp?articleId=1297>

Australian Sports Commission. *Governance Principles – A Good Practice Guide For Sporting Organisations,* Australia 2009, pps 1-24.