**Factsheet**

**Attracting and retaining sponsors**

**Step 2 – Improve on what has traditionally been done**

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## **Attracting and retaining sponsors**

**Not all traditions are for the best**

Traditionally, Football Clubs approach sponsorship in the same manner. Generally, they will appoint one or maybe two people to be responsible for retaining the existing Club sponsors and to attract new sponsors to the Club each year. Some Clubs may set a budget or a target but most simply say good luck, get what you can!

**Improving what we have traditionally done - What’s the missing ingredient?**

Let’s take the local butcher. The Sponsorship Coordinator walks in and asks the butcher to sponsor their Club. The poor old butcher gets this question almost on a daily basis. They may be able to throw you a few snags here and there but generally they are not in a position to give cash to every Club who asks. Take a minute to reframe this scenario. Assuming the butcher is financially able to support a sports Club, who could walk in and ask the butcher for support and almost be guaranteed the answer will be yes?

Maybe the butcher’s:

* Spouse
* Children
* Other direct family members
* Close friends
* Business acquaintances (i.e. their biggest client)
* Employees
* Surrounding businesses

There actually a lot of people, who if they asked the butcher to sponsor them the butcher would do so without hesitation. Why? Because the butcher has a close personal relationship with this person and therefore will be more willing to support that person, and by extension, their football Club.

**Share the burden of attracting sponsors**

Clubs seek to attract sponsors to the Club to minimise the direct cost of running the Club on its players and members. It is fair that players therefore contribute to the attraction and retention of sponsors. A potential way to do this would be to request each player to attract a business or friend to become their “player” sponsor. This allows the Sponsorship Coordinator to focus on retaining sponsors from previous seasons and creating tailored sponsorship packages for the Club’s major sponsors maximising the benefit to both the sponsor and the Club.

The value of the player sponsorship should be low enough that most organisations approached are able to afford the sponsorship. The purpose of the player sponsorship is to attract new sponsors to the Club so that we are able to build a sense of belonging over time, hopefully leading to a long-term sustainable relationship.

Requesting players to attract a player sponsor to the Club allows the Club to access each player’s network of friends and family with the player making the sponsorship request not the Club. As the player will only approach people they believe will sponsor them it is a much more effective approach than the Sponsorship Coordinator cold calling all the businesses in town.