



Club Manual

Communication in the Club

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GAA



Communication in the Club

Communication is one of the most important ingredients of a well managed and successful Club. Good communication ensures that the Club operates efficiently and effectively and without this essential ingredient, the Club cannot achieve its full potential.

Where communication breaks down in a Club, people do not know what is happening, members miss meetings, players miss games and the wider community knows little about the clubs activity. The perception of a 'closed shop' may be formed, which can damage the Club and hinder volunteers from becoming involved.

Communication in a Club takes place on two levels.

- **Internal Communication**
- **External Communication**

1: Internal Communication

Internal communication is about the day to day running of the Club. Players and members must be aware of all Club activities i.e games, meetings, results, fixtures etc. People in the Club need to know what is happening, where it is happening and when it is happening.

Internal Communication involves communicating with:

1. Club Officers

2. Executive committee and Sub-Committee Members

3. Players

4. Mentors

5. Parents

6. Active members (volunteers)

7. County Committee

Various people within the Club have responsibility for internal communication. The Club Secretary has the job of informing people of committee meetings, team mentors are responsible for informing relevant people about games and coaching events, the County Committee Delegate reports to the Club on County Committee meeting etc.

While we must give notice in writing for certain meetings and events, the most effective form of communication is still verbal communication. Being open to the involvement of others means that we need to enhance their involvement by giving them all the information on our Club, not just what we decide they need to know!

Effective Internal communication ensures that:

- Everyone connected with the Club is aware of what is happening.
- People know their roles and responsibilities i.e. who is to do what and when they are supposed to do it.
- Everyone knows the details of the Club plan and the direction the Club is taking.
- The Club functions i.e. meetings, games etc take place.

It goes without saying that a Club cannot operate if internal communication is not what it should be. Where internal communication is poor, people begin to miss meetings because they don't know about them, players miss games, children miss their activities etc.

2: External Communication

External communication is about communicating with people outside the Club and the wider community in general. It is about projecting a positive image of the Club and promoting the Club to the community as a whole. The Club needs to be seen as 'active, alive, positive and progressive' in the local community. The GAA Club must present a positive image of itself in the community, particularly to the youth of the area. This image must be one of efficiency, activity, enjoyment and community spirit.

External Communicating involves communicating with:

- Club members (active and non-active)
- The wider community in general
- Those from the Club living outside the locality
- Parents
- Sponsors

Clubs need to consider that their Club may be one of many sports clubs in an area. All clubs in the locality will be looking for sponsorship, fundraising, looking for new players etc. from the wider community. Therefore, it is essential that the GAA Club is projecting a positive image of itself because people will want to be associated with a Club that is seen as progressive and well managed.

External communication is the job of the Club Public Relations Officer and therefore is one of the key officer roles in a Club.

For more information on the Club PRO, please look at the chapter on the **'Role of the PRO'**.

“Good communication will help to create a ‘buzz in the Club’”.

Effective External Communication Ensures:

- The Club is seen as ‘vibrant’ and ‘active’ in the general community
- Parents see that their children get meaningful activity and enjoyment
- Sponsors see a benefit in being associated with the Club
- People are encouraged to become involved

“A Club does not have to be winning competitions to be seen as a successful and vibrant Club!”

What to communicate (examples):**The Club Plan – Games plan etc.**

If a Club has a Club plan, then the details of this plan must be communicated to the wider community. This will ensure that people in the community see that the Club is well organised and well managed and will help give people confidence in the Club.

Parents are also need to see that their children will receive enjoyable activity when playing our games in your Club.

Therefore, the clubs needs to communicate the enjoyment that children receive from playing Go-Games, blitzes etc and need to show parents that their child will get meaningful activity in the Club.

Club match results and reports.

Clubs should ensure that all their members and the community in general are aware of what games the Club are playing and the results of those games. Let people know about each and every game in the Club, including

competitive and non-competitive games. This ensures that people are aware that the Club is ‘active’ and ‘alive’.

Details of the clubs social and other activities.

This helps people to be aware that the Club is a place where they can meet new friends and socialise together. This is particularly important in areas where new people are moving in to the locality because they will see the Club as a place where they can fit in to the community and make new friends.

Positive stories for the Club.

These stories can include winners of fundraising draw, players being selected for county team panel, involvement of a new sponsor, a county player visiting the Club, go-games blitz etc. These stories are important because they are positive stories and the Club must always try to project a positive image of itself. The Club should boast about itself in the community and let everyone see the good work that is going on.



How to communicate: Methods of Communication

- Bulk Text Message
- Email and Website
- Club newsletter
- Local newspapers
- Local radio
- Word of mouth

These are discussed in greater detail in the chapter on the **'Role of the PRO'**.

In summary

Results of Good Internal and External Communication

- Meetings and games happen when according to plan
- People know their role in the Club
- Members and supporters know that the Club is operating to a plan

- The Club is 'selling itself' to the local community – positive image
- Helps to attract new members and volunteers
- Helps in fundraising because people will contribute to a Club where they can see their money being put to active use.

Results of Poor Internal and External Communication

- Breakdown in Club activities
- Players miss training and games, officers miss meetings
- Parents lose confidence in Club
- Club loses its relevance in the local community
- People become disillusioned
- Perception of a 'closed shop' exists in the Club.

For more information on Communication, please see the GAA Communication Toolkit