

Presenting the Sponsorship 4

Now you are ready to enter sponsorship discussions. The four elements of presenting and progressing the sponsorship opportunity are the introductory letter, the follow-up telephone call, the meeting, and the follow-up contact. All four are equally important and deserve careful consideration.

- A An **introductory letter** briefly describing your interest and opportunities should be sent to the contact information you have already researched. It must be written in business style and should not be longer than one page, on letterhead. Introduce the club and the event or programme with minimum detail and use the letter to secure a meeting, not to sell the sponsorship opportunity. In the last paragraph, state that you will be contacting him/her within one week to answer any initial questions and arrange a meeting time.
- B Follow your introductory letter with a **telephone call**, and be sure to make that call within the time you stated in your letter. Begin the conversation by introducing yourself and reminding the potential sponsor of the letter you sent, giving a few details to jog his/her memory. Ask if he/she has any questions that you may answer at this time. Through these first few moments, try to ascertain his/her level of interest. If the response is positive, then request a 15-30 minute meeting to further explain the project in person. Be positive and flexible regarding the meeting date and time, as it makes it more difficult for the potential sponsor to wriggle out. Finally, a great deal of information needs to be given and received during this brief conversation, so it might be helpful to write out a script to help you remember all the points you wish to cover.
- C The **meeting** is your opportunity to present your well thought out package as a proposal. A formal presentation of this proposal to your appropriate contact person is recommended. The presentation should provide a concise background of your organisation and the sponsorship opportunity. Make your points clear, yet be flexible to adapt your proposal should you receive further pertinent information from the potential sponsor. Understand that the proposal should be written and presented to accentuate the benefits that the potential sponsor will find attractive, rather than as what the cricket club wants or needs.

The proposal should include

1. Further detail on cricket, your organisation and the sponsorship opportunity
2. Any current partners with which you work
3. Anticipated media coverage surrounding the event or initiative
4. Benefits cricket will bring to the sponsor
5. Value and cost of the sponsorship property
6. Contact details

The proposal should be presented by the person with the best communication skills, not necessarily the person who knows the most about the sponsorship package. Two carefully selected additional members of the club may also attend the meeting to answer detailed questions. Remember to utilise the material provided to you by the ECB and the county (eg: publications, videos, statistics, charts, posters). Most items are available through the county CDO. They will not only add to the content of the presentation, but will also help the presenter stay on course.

Following the presentation, you should allow time for questions. When planning for the meeting, allocate at least five to ten minutes at the end for questions and discussion. And, remember that it should never be your fault that the meeting goes over the allotted time. If the potential sponsor extends the discussion past the scheduled time, take this as a good sign, and continue to answer all questions without being long-winded. Also, to ensure that the potential sponsor can review your points after the meeting, take a number of copies of the presentation or proposal with you to leave behind, if appropriate.

Points to Remember

- 1 Presenting the sponsorship involves four elements: introductory letter, telephone call, meeting, follow-up contact
- 2 The introductory letter should include a brief introduction, description of opportunities, and mention of a telephone call to set up a meeting
- 3 The telephone call should be concise and business-like, culminating with the organisation of a 15-30 minute meeting
- 4 The meeting should be comprised of a formal proposal and a question and answer period
- 5 The follow-up thank-you letter should be sent, encouraging the potential sponsor to contact you with further questions



To ensure the proposal falls within the time limit, that the points are clear, and that all the appropriate material is available, the presenter should practice the presentation before the board or club members. There is no excuse for not being properly prepared when presenting a proposal.

- D The **follow-up contact** should be in the form of a thank-you letter, again business style, and should be sent within two days of the meeting. Feel free to list the main points of your presentation, but be sure to keep it all on one page and not go into too much detail. Also, offer the opportunity for the potential sponsor to contact you with any questions, comments, or concerns. Keeping yourself open to further discussion will help promote your interest in working with this company and your willingness to find common ground.

Again, sponsorship discussions can be tedious. Remain positive throughout the process and do your best to answer all questions posed by the potential sponsor. Utilising all your resources, both material and people, will help you to come across as organised and pro-active, not to mention provide you with the necessary behind-the-scenes support.

Signing the Sponsorship Agreement 5

Once both sides have answered all questions and feel positive about forming a business relationship, it is time to draw up a contractual agreement. Contracts outline what is expected from each party and their respective responsibilities, thereby reducing conflicts in the long-term. The contract is a legal document, and receiving advice from a lawyer may reduce your risk and protect your legal position. It is recommended that the larger the sponsorship, the more important it is to take professional advice. **Throughout this step, the contract should be seen as something positive, as the starting point for the working relationship.**

As a general rule, the detail in the contract should be proportional to the value of the sponsorship, but you may make it as long or short as you feel necessary. It is advisable to establish a twenty-four month contract, as the first year may be needed to iron out the bugs. Important points that should be examined and clarified from the start are payment amounts and dates, benefits to the sponsor, obligations on both partners, use of both parties' logos, market exclusivity, naming rights, confidentiality clause, and grounds for termination. Plus, it is important that your rights and intellectual property are protected, and that your risks are minimised where possible. For further guidance with the contract, please refer to the guide 'Legal Issues to Consider When Drafting and Entering into a Sponsorship Agreement' at the back of this resource.

Again, drafting and signing the contract should not be seen as a hostile activity, but rather the beginning of an effective and pro-active working relationship.

Points to Remember

- 1 **The contract is a legal document which outlines what is expected from each party**
- 2 **Be positive about entering the agreement as it confirms the beginning of a working relationship**
- 3 **Examine all important elements within the contract to minimise future conflict**

Case Study Norfolk Cricket Board

Norfolk Cricket Board entered a three-year contract for subsidised junior cricket equipment with Gunn and Moore Ltd., effective January 2000. The lead for this sponsorship came through a Norfolk County Board member who owned the sports equipment retail store, R.G. Pilch Ltd. Through positive and compromising discussions between NCB, Gunn and Moore Ltd., and R.G. Pilch Ltd., and with input from the NCB Schools and Youth Sub-Committee, a successful working relationship was established. While lawyers were not used during this process, the involvement of and contribution from many different people ensured that the sponsorship has effectively touched hundreds of young cricketers in Norfolk, plus has enabled greater exposure for Gunn and Moore Ltd. and R.G. Pilch Ltd.

