



NORTH COUNTRY REGION

VOLLEYBALL FOR LIFE™

Now that summer has finally arrived it is time to begin enjoying everything that is outdoors. However, planning for next club season needs to be high on your priority list as well. In between taking care of your yard and taking trips to the lake or ball field you should also make time to begin putting together your timeline or blueprint for your 2019-2020 club season. If you do this, you will certainly sleep easier once October arrives in all its glory.

The information that is provided below is not new and has been shared in any number of ways for more than 20 years. However, this information is extremely valuable for not only those that are brand new to this crazy world but also for those veterans that have seen clubs come and go because they refused to see the benefits of a tried and true pre-planning. The most successful clubs do not stop thinking about their organization on the last day of their last tournament and then pick it back up a month prior to tryouts.

Open up your calendar and enter all of the important dates that are pertinent to your club between July 1-Dec 31. On September 1st, you will want to begin adding pertinent dates that fall between January 1st and the usual last day of your season.

First and Foremost - Have a Killer Website

Nice website = good team or club in the mind of a **Generation Z** athlete. It is so very important to have a well structured website; one that is easily navigated should be high on your priority list. So many clubs shy away from this aspect because they think it's a time intensive/expensive process when really its not if you're working with the right people. The cost of a website runs the gamut from free to "wow, I can't believe it cost that much"! When people are researching clubs, they will skip over those that do not have a website. You can see many examples by viewing the NCR Club Directory page <https://north-country-region.sportsengine-prelive.com/club-directory>

Club Survey's

If you haven't already sent out end of the season surveys, now is the time to get that completed. Put together separate survey's to go out to all of your families as well as coaches. Keep the survey between 5-8 questions; multiple-choice answers make it easier and more people will return it as well. Though, be sure to welcome any and all comments. People do not want to participate in something that will take longer than 10 minutes to complete. If interested there is a free Survey Monkey version - <https://www.surveymonkey.com/>

Coach Survey

Thank them for their time, energy & dedication to your program. Emphasize the accomplishments your teams made this season. Coaches need to know that they are valued and appreciated. If you haven't already, please take the time to reach out to your coaching staff and ask them if they are planning on returning next season. Find out if they have an age and team preference as well. It should be mandatory for coaches to return this survey.

- How was their season? Did they feel that they had the proper tools to help in the training of their athletes? Did they feel that you were supportive throughout the season? And if not, ask for suggestions on how improvements could be made.
- If at all possible, plan a season ending meeting with each coach. It's amazing what you can learn and how appreciative your staff will be.

- Evaluate your staff and make a decision very soon if any changes should be made for next season. You may be one of the lucky club directors and may not need to make any changes, however that is not likely.

Parent/Player Survey

Thank them for choosing your club over all of the other good clubs in the region. Parents as well as players should understand how valued they are and that your organization can't survive without a good relationship between themselves and the administration. Strongly relay the message that they are important and that you spend countless hours working to prove that to them. Happy customers keep your doors open.

- Did they have a positive experience and improve their skills? Did the season progress how they expected?
- Ask them to evaluate their coach, the club director, practices, travel & communications (between coach/player/parent & club director/parent).
- Did they feel as though they received good value for the money that they spent? Was it a valuable experience for their child as well as themselves?
- Expect a 20% return rate. Unfortunately, you will find that the majority of surveys returned will be from those that were unhappy with their experience. That is OK because you can learn from these. You can also consider asking a few of your customers to meet with you personally to see how the experience can be improved upon moving forward.

On a different note: Player Evaluations - if you did not require coaches to offer mid-season as well as end of the season evaluations for players, please consider doing this moving forward. It does take time for the coaches to do this however they are your employees and if you think that this is valuable then it should be part of their job description.

Self-Evaluate the Management of Your Club

- #1 is finances – your club is a business. Where can you make improvements before next season? Did you stick to your budget? Do you need to cut expenses? Where should profits (if any) be spent?
- Communications – between yourself and your staff & families (this can always be improved upon).
- Training of both coaches and players (there are always new and improved ways of doing things). Don't let the band pass you by.
- Marketing – were you satisfied with the amount of coaches and members in your organization or does your brand need a pick me up? What will it take for more people to know about the great product that you are providing?
- Review your scheduling: (1) uniforms and supplies orders (2) fall clinics (3) tryouts (4) practices (5) coach training (6) player positional training (7) strength/agility development (8) competition schedule (9) community service projects (9) end of the season events

There are clubs that put together both a parent and player council. Before doing this, think long and hard as to the amount of time that you (club director) will be able to devote to the meetings that would be required. This is your club and you will want to lead these discussions.

Planning – Short & Long Term Development

- Review your notes and evaluations from the season and begin to build your to do list for next season. What is important to begin implementing now and what can you plan to begin doing in the fall.
- Develop the budget. Secure needed insurance (discuss with your facility).
- This is the best time to review your court space (leases and agreements) for next season and if changes need to be made.
- Will you be offering fall programs? If so, the planning and marketing of these needs to be done ASAP. Families have busy schedules and they need to get these on their calendars.
- Will you be adding teams next season or programs (ex: Little Diggers, Boys, etc)? This information needs to be marketed now.
- Finalize your staff (Heads, Assistants, Floaters) for next season by offering out those positions early and getting commitments. Hopefully from the surveys you can place coaches where they want to be and where they best fit the needs of the club.

- Promote your coach assignments to current as well as prospective members. Update their bios on your website and encourage them to be involved in fall clinics so that players get to know them.
FACT: Most players will choose a team on the coach.
- If you plan to offer any tournaments next season, get those dates out to clubs that have supported you in the past; prior to getting it out to the general club population.
- Estimate your uniform needs and secure your vendor. This vendor may also be able to help with spirit wear as well.
- You can enhance your productivity as well as the efficiency of your club operations by researching different apps and programs that are available to help save time and be more productive – For example:
 - Meistertask – an essential daily task manager
 - Canva – design and marketing app
 - GroupMe, Band, Team Snap – message with players, coaches, parents
 - Ecwid – instant online store
- Be ready to make changes if things do not go according to your well-laid plans.