The Grower Group Toolkit

for **effective** farmer groups

VOLUME 3

GROWER GROUP ALLIANCE

One-stop shop for collaborative RD&E in Western Australia

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This information booklet was compiled by Susan Hall, Rebecca Wallis, Megan Meates and Tracey Gianatti from 2002 to 2013.

Front Cover: North Stirlings Pallinup Natural Resources Group Spring Field Day, 2012

Introduction

The Grower Group Alliance (GGA) is a not-for-profit, farmer-driven organisation connecting grower groups, research organisations and agribusiness in a network across WA. It is funded by the Grains Research and Development Corporation.

Since its inception in 2002, the GGA has supported effective, relevant and sustainable grower groups, with expanded operational and networking capacity and greater involvement in collaborative RD&E projects with other groups, industry partners and the research community. This has been achieved through: developing a relevant network between grower groups, the GRDC, industry partners and researchers, that facilitates the exchange and application of knowledge and research results; enhanced participation of grower groups in delivering RD&E through independent and collaborative projects; and grower groups becoming more relevant, sustainable and effective through operational and strategic support.

The purpose of this booklet is to compile the wealth of knowledge the GGA has gathered in the past eleven years, to guide and support both new and developed groups and be a valuable resource for new staff or members taking on a role in a grower group.

For more information on the GGA, visit www.gga.org.au

GROWER GROUP ALLIANCE

GRDC Grains Research & Development Corporation

Starting a new grower group

All groups, whether they are farmer groups, tennis clubs, political groups or chess clubs, have a basic set of rules they follow. Some are very traditional in nature and highly structured. Others are very dynamic, adapting constantly to meet the changing needs of members and responding to political, environmental, social and cultural changes. Others are more informal, with a greater social aspect.

Grower or farmer groups tend to take on aspects of all three. Their physical environment is relatively slow moving, however the rate of change, particularly technological change, is increasing. The expectations and demands placed upon farmers by the outside world and themselves, to understand and adopt these new concepts and practices, is also increasing. In the context of agriculture, technology doesn't just mean things that go beep in the night – it also means new ways of undertaking commercial and industrial activity through scientifically proven systems.

Farmers come together to form groups to:

- Answer questions relating to their local conditions and farm businesses
- Learn about and raise awareness of new technology;
- Provide a critical mass to attract research and development in their region or area of interest;
- Trial new technology in local conditions and systems;
- Support each other as they acclimatise to the increasing rate of change;
- Share the implementation experiences of new technology;
- Build the ability of members to implement new technology; and
- Eat steak sandwiches and informally discuss weather patterns.

The challenge for local farmer groups is to decide how they will allocate their time and group resources between each of these potential priorities. (Interestingly and importantly, the groups that ensure that the final priority, in some incarnation, is incorporated in their operational plans, are often the most successful!).

Grower-driven is the key

When starting a grower group, the most important success factor is that the group begins and remains a grower-driven initiative. Ensure people are committed, be clear about the commitment and find out what interests them. Here are some steps to take to ensure success.

Have a common goal: The group must have a clear purpose from the start. It must be sufficiently ambitious to allow the group to grow but must also be achievable! This means strategic planning. A strategic plan helps to improve the operation of the organisation and ensures that the group is working on the 'right' things. See page 74 for a strategic plan template.

Start small and tangible: Connect the grand vision (the common goal) to the local level of the members.

Ensure interaction and feedback: Understand members' needs and create time for social interaction.

Demonstrate benefits: This ensures members want to get involved or contribute ideas. What benefits will being involved with the group provide to your members?

Form partnerships: No group can do everything themselves. Who does the group want to link with in the early stages, ie. sponsors, researchers, industry partners, agronomists. What can they offer you and what will you offer them?

Tips for building a grower group from scratch

A few tips on establishing a new organisation:

- Work out your goals and what your group wants to achieve. Set a strategy on how to realise those goals;
- Set up a constitution so that all members and partners are aware of your mission, goals and basic rules. You can find a model constitution on the state government websites that can be adapted to your own specific objectives and requirements. See page 94 for more information;
- Set up a management committee with keen, motivated, competent people who can make decisions and provide direction and focus. Appoint office-bearers such as a secretary, treasurer, president;
- All groups, no matter how small, need basic financial procedures to record all money raised and spent. Provide clear rules in who handles money/ banking and overall financial accountability. Establish a basic book-keeping system which keeps track of all transactions and liabilities;
- Establish a budget. This is a must to ensure your group remains sustainable and doesn't spend itself into obscurity. Make your best estimate of likely income (sponsorship/ memberships/grants/fundraising) and expenditure and check regularly;

- As many groups grow, they register to become incorporated. This is a system of state government registration that gives not-for-profit groups certain legal advantages in return for accepting certain legal responsibilities. See page 94 for more information;
- Appoint a spokesperson. As a group, you have more lobbying power and status than one individual. Use it to further your cause and market your group to the community and industry;
- Maintain the rage. It's important that the reason for starting the group in the first place isn't lost as your group grows.

Acknowledgements: Simple Secrets of Successful Community Groups, www.ourcommunity.com.au. Robbins, S. 2001 Organisational Behaviour

The Grower Group Alliance

What is the Grower Group Alliance?

The Grower Group Alliance is a farmer-driven organisation connecting grower groups, research organisations and agribusiness in a network across WA.

The GGA acts to support effective, relevant and sustainable grower groups with expanded operational and networking capacity and greater involvement in collaborative RD&E projects with other grower groups, industry partners and the wider research community.

The GGA was developed in 2002 by grower groups who recognised the advantages of networks and the need for partnerships with other grower groups, researchers and private industry for better knowledge and information sharing. The project was funded by the Grains Research and Development Corporation until 2014. It is run by two staff and managed by an advisory committee with representation from grower groups, research organisations and private agribusiness.

The core outcomes of the GGA are:

- Ensuring a relevant network between grower groups, GRDC, industry partners and the research community, that facilitates the exchange and application of knowledge and research results
- Enhanced participation of grower groups in delivering research, development and extension through independent and collaborative projects.
- Grower groups becoming more relevant, sustainable and effective.

GGA's Grower Groups

About 40 Western Australian grower groups are members of the Grower Group Alliance, with more than half of WA farmers involved in a group.

The majority of groups aim to increase the production and profitability of their farm businesses through the adoption of new production technologies while minimising impact on the environment. They are independent, self-directed and mainly focus on production or environmental issues at the local or regional levels. Key topics groups may address include research and development, NRM, agronomy issues, grain quality, livestock and pastures, skill development courses and community issues.

Groups are mainly broadacre farmers of the WA grain production zone located from Binnu in the north, to Bodallin in the east and Esperance in the south east. The smallest groups have between 10 to 20 members, while the larger, statewide groups have from 100 up to 600 members.

The majority of groups formed between 1994 – 2002, with the oldest group forming in 1938. Groups are still forming today, as they continue to realise the importance of participatory research in adoption of new technology and the impact grower groups have in attracting funding for projects.

Some groups are statewide or regional groups, coordinating a variety of projects, and supporting between one and five full time staff members to conduct their own R&D projects. Other groups are medium sub-regional groups, coordinating some projects with partners or on their own, and up to one full-time staff member. Other groups are small local groups, run by volunteers.

The size and structure of each group is designed to meet the specific aims of that group, and there is no 'best way' to run a grower group – simply 'best fit' to local aims.

How the GGA helps its members

Being a member of the GGA provides a link to all the other grower groups in WA and also nationally, and to our research and industry partners, providing opportunities for collaboration and cooperation.

The GGA can also provide assistance with funding applications, sponsorship, corporate governance and other operational issues.

Overall benefits for grower groups

- Support from a statewide network;
- Increase information and knowledge exchange;
- Identification of support for collaborative RD&E project opportunities;
- Two-way communication – linking the right people with the right information;
- Coordination of field day presenters or workshops;
- Access to resources and training;
- Grower group operational support;
- Promotion of grower groups to the wider agricultural industry.

Overall benefits for partners

- Access to a statewide grower group network;
- A central point of contact to reach grower groups;
- Conduit for project development and consultation;
- Opportunities for participatory action research, extension and communication, directly with growers;
- Opportunities to develop links with grower groups for collaborative projects – adding value and impact to project activities.

Criteria to join the Grower Group Alliance

The Grower Group Alliance project is an inclusive network of grower groups, research providers and agribusiness. Currently, the majority of grower group members focus on broadacre crop and livestock production. However, groups with a NRM or industry specific focus are also welcome as they bring diversity to the network.

There are no membership fees to join the GGA. Instead, new groups need to address a list of criteria to participate in the network. This adds an element of formality and informs the project staff about the new group.

The following criteria were developed by the project's Strategic Advisory Group consisting of grower, researcher and agribusiness representatives. To join the GGA, each criteria needs to be addressed and submitted with a group profile form.

Criteria to join the Grower Group Alliance
Primarily focus on broadacre, integrated farming systems
Primarily focus on engaging in research and extension partnerships
A contact person who is able to respond adequately within a defined time frame and requirement
Have a membership list
Hold regular meetings
Identify or deliver a series of activities related to the GGA's aims
Have an identified goal
Organise at least one activity for members each year
Provide a standard one-page annual report to the GGA on group activity

Funding sources

The main funding sources for groups come from sponsorship, project grants and memberships.

Sponsors

Sponsors of grower groups come from all types of businesses – don't be afraid to think outside of agriculture. Sponsorship money can run thin when spread across different organisations, so it might help to think outside the square when sourcing funds. Local and niche businesses, local governments and flour mills are potential sponsors not normally considered but have signed on as major grower group sponsors in the past.

Other businesses that sponsor grower groups include banks, fertiliser companies, herbicide companies, marketers, acquirers, seed companies, newspapers, machinery dealerships, rural services and more.

Project Partners

Potential project partners are funding bodies or funding recipients at state and national levels wanting to fund projects that fulfil desired outcomes. Project partners include:

- Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
  - Caring for our Country
  - Carbon Farming Futures
  - Carbon Farming Initiative
- Grains Research and Development Corporation
  - GRDC Investment Plan
  - GRDC Industry Development Award
  - Agribusiness Trial Extension Network
  - Regional Cropping Solutions Network
- Department of Agriculture and Food WA
- CSIRO
- Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation
- Regional Development Commissions
  - Royalties for Regions
- Catchment Councils

Memberships

Nearly all WA grower groups have a membership fee which go towards running the group. This amount is usually decided by the committee, and varies from group to group depending on group objectives and other funding sources incomes, from about $20 to $1000. Membership provides access to various group events at a lower or no cost, and can include member-only advantages such as newsletters, trial results and research annuals.

Sponsorship

A sponsorship is a business transaction where you are essentially offering or exchanging some rights and associations in return for money or in-kind goods and services. It's about getting the money and ensuring everything that you promised does indeed happen, and that your sponsor is so happy that they can't wait to sign up again next year!

Concentrate on what's in it for the company or the sponsor and NOT simply on what the benefits will be to your group. They are making a business decision so you have to build a case to support the sponsorship not only being good for the wider community but good for their business.

DOs

- Sponsorships should be used to enhance your group's operations and activities;
- Sponsorships must be consistent with the generally accepted values, purposes and goals of your group and members;
- Sponsorship agreements should only be negotiated with organisations whose public image, products or services are consistent with the values of your group;
- All sponsorship agreements should be reached through negotiation. The agreement must specify the roles and responsibilities of individual parties. This includes your members and the nature and level of acknowledgment to be given to the sponsor;
- Sponsorships and promotions should be compatible with acceptable social practice;
- All sponsorships must be fairly discussed, voted on and ratified by a majority of your membership;
- Show passion!

DON'Ts

- Sponsorship should not displace existing or future funding arrangements on which your group depends;
- Participation in sponsorships should not generate undue pressure on your group and members;
- Participation in sponsorships should not interfere with your group's ability to acquire any particular product or service;
- Participation in sponsorships should not impose you, your members or your group to adopt particular beliefs, attitudes or courses of action outside your existing charter;

- Sponsorships and promotions should not involve endorsement of products or services by you, your members or your group unless so agreed by all parties;
- Acceptance of a sponsorship should not be as condition of an individual member's participation in the sponsored activities.

Securing a sponsor tips:

- Identify all the possible assets and goods (signage, naming rights for events, programs, awards, uniforms, buildings, rooms, people etc.) available for sponsorship. For example:
  - A group 'partner' – potentially linked with all activities;
  - An event or activity name – or naming rights;
  - Key functions within the event;
  - Key items within the event (for example, speakers, proceedings, morning tea, satchels);
  - Display space.
- List all the benefits that you are offering a potential sponsor. What exactly will they get for their money? How will it be delivered? They are, essentially, buying access to your network, and you are selling them a product in the form of involvement with your group. Market your group accordingly;
- Explain the potential for sponsors of taking up those opportunities – how big is their audience? How will you help to promote their business or product?
- Explain why they should partner your organisation and another group – what is it that makes both your group and the sponsorship opportunity unique?
- Emphasise how your group has the professionalism to fulfil your end of the deal.

A few starting points

- Work at least six months ahead. Budget time varies from company to company, and it's never too early to start on sponsorship;
- Find out what kind of financial year your target organisation uses;
- Define what the group has to offer (what's in it for the sponsor?);
- Talk to other groups who are seeking sponsorship – coordinate the approach;
- Create a hit list of organisations you could target;
- Research potential sponsors. Fully understand the product/service of the company you are targeting;

- Do some informal groundwork beforehand – so the pitch when it arrives is not unexpected;
- Email your pitch (it will need to be circulated in most cases);
- Advise that a hard copy is in the mail – and ensure it is;
- Phone for an appointment to discuss it within three working days of the email;
- Ring early in the morning to follow-up. Expect to chase them for at least a week before contact is made.

Servicing the sponsor

- By meeting your partner's requirements and expectations, they are more likely to keep sponsoring you. Make sure you know what these expectations and requirements are;
- Engage with your partner on a regular basis;
- Involve the sponsor at events;
- Achieve benefits, report them clearly and provide feedback;
- Manage the relationship so that they will sponsor your group or event again. Go above and beyond the usual acknowledgements, and look for creative ways to show your appreciation.

Sponsorship Agreement

See page 91 for a template.

Acknowledgements: Grass Roots Fund Raising, www.ourcommunity.com.au

Insurance

The key message to all community groups is that the more that you can minimise your exposure to risk through more rigorous processes and procedures (that should from then on only require review and maintenance) the better off everyone will be.

Seek out insurance for your particular needs. Obviously, insurance is not free so it is important that you ensure that you are insured for exactly what you need and not for things that are not relevant to your organisation. Ensure the people who help you and are part of your organisation are covered for any potential liability and/or injury or loss. You also want to ensure that all possible equipment, materials and property are also protected.

Prior to seeking insurance, check to see if you are already covered by a blanket government or funding body scheme. In some states, some government departments will cover groups who receive funding from them. If you are included in a blanket coverage, check your own insurance cover and see if you are now over-insured or double insured. There may be some components of your individual policy that you can scale back.

Some community groups believe that because they have become an incorporated association, they can no longer be sued, however this is not the case. Incorporation creates a legal entity that is separate from the individual members. Members and committee or board members of unincorporated bodies can be sued as individuals. Incorporation provides a certain amount of limited liability for members. It may not, however, protect the organisation or individual directors in cases where negligence can be proven.

What are the different types of insurance that a group may need?

Associations and officials liability/associations and not-for-profit organisations liability insurance

These policies are designed to protect the assets of both the organisation and their officers against the risk of litigation. Generally only available to legally incorporated associations, this may need to be taken in conjunction with a public and products liability policy. This type of cover provides professional indemnity and cover for volunteers. It protects the elected or appointed officials (generally committee members) and the association, in relation to potential financial losses or compensation associated with the association's management activities and the performance of their duties as officials.

Public liability insurance

A public liability insurance policy is necessary for an organisation to protect itself against negligent claims made by a third party in respect of bodily injury

or property damage arising out of the operation of the organisation's business. Check the extent of your cover to ensure that public liability is included in your policy if relevant, particularly if you sell food or products either as part of your day-to-day activities or as part of a fundraising effort. Also check to see to what extent your volunteers are covered.

Directors and officers liability insurance

While incorporation does provide some protection to board and committee members, it does not prevent individuals from being sued for acts of negligence. A board member may negligently give some wrong advice, request someone to perform a dangerous task or could dismiss staff without proper authority or process. Where such cases can be proven the personal assets of negligent board and/or committee members can be seized to meet any damages.

Property insurance

Similar to normal household property insurance, this generally covers contents held within a property owned or occupied by an organisation and other cover for items such as fire, storm or accidental damage or theft.

Personal accident insurance (volunteer insurance)

Personal accident insurance generally covers members, volunteers, officials or participants for any out-of-pocket expenses following accidental injury, disability or death while carrying out their work on behalf of the organisation.

Worker's compensation

In almost all cases, this is compulsory where you have paid employees and covers expenses such as wages and medical bills if a person is injured at work. You must meet your obligations under relevant occupational health and safety legislation.

What you should investigate when looking at policies?

- The limit of cover – how much does the policy cover you for?
- Any excess on claims – is there an excess on a claim? If so what is the excess? Is the excess on each and every claim?
- What is the geographic scope of the cover – does it cover you and your members when they are interstate or overseas?
- Be mindful that most policies will only cover your organisation and members when they are acting in authorised activities.
- Make sure that you investigate any exclusions – it could well be that these exclusions make the policy irrelevant to you.

- If you do require several different policies try and package them together as it can lead to savings.
- If you belong to a group that is associated with other similar groups explore the possibilities of 'pooling' your insurance needs to save money.

A final point

Always make sure that your insurer is notified of any activities that you may wish to undertake outside of your normal operations as it may not be covered or may require an additional premium. While this may not be great news for your group, it is preferable to attempting to make a claim and finding out that you are not covered and having to find funds to pay out a claim.

For more information relating to insurance issues for community groups visit the insurance centre at www.ourcommunity.com.au.

Acknowledgements: Our Community Help sheet: What types of insurance may I need and why? ourcommunity.com.au

Policies and Procedures

A **Policy** is a statement of agreed intent that clearly and unequivocally sets out an organisation's views with respect to a particular matter. It is a set of principles or rules that provide a definite direction for an organisation. Policies assist in defining what must be done.

A **Procedure** is a clear step-by-step method for implementing an organisation's policy or responsibility. Procedures describe a logical sequence of activities or processes that are to be followed to complete a task or function in a correct and consistent manner. Procedures can be produced in the form of: flowcharts; checklists; written; steps of the process

What goes into a policy manual?

The key determinants of quality for your organisation or service should appear in your policy manual.

A focus on the key determinants of quality will help contain your policy and procedure manuals to useful and manageable proportions. How do you work out what these might be? What do your key stakeholders think? What does Government think, e.g. specific acts, regulations, related acts (OH&S) and industry standards? What governs your organisation e.g. strategic plan, mission, vision, values, philosophy?

For each key determinant of quality write one policy. Remember these are sign posts and commitments to quality. Use a standard format.

Policies should be written to a standard format to comply with community standards and meet various accreditation requirements. To ensure consistency, currency, inclusion of all relevant pages, authorisations and appropriate timing of reviews, it is important that a standard header and footer be used for all policies, procedures and work instructions.

Potential policies and procedures include:

- Corporate governance
- Occupational safety and health
- Employee performance, training and development
- Recruitment, selection and induction of employees and board/committee
- Security
- Project management
- Procurement & quotations
- Intellectual property
- Privacy and confidentiality

- Records information management
- Insurance
- Disclaimer

For more information, including further detail on each area of policy, how to format a policies and procedures manual and a policy example, refer to the GGA Policies and Procedure Guide on the GGA website.

Roles of office bearers

Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Committee

The role of the chair

A chair will be expected to be many things during their term in the leadership role of their farmer group. Whether it be referee, tactician, leader or delegator, each of these (and several other) roles will need to be undertaken in a consistent, patient, impartial and objective manner. Often the chair does have the ability to be all of these things, and while they may not recognise these skills within themselves, their peers have – that's why they were elected to the role.

The keys to a successful chair are simple:

- The chair should have a deep belief in the organisation and its vision;
- They must make a conscientious effort to be impartial;
- Be focused on achieving a productive meeting – avoid disorderly discussions and topics that are not directly related to the organisations visions and objectives;
- Think about a successor for the role of the chair. Do not hand the role on to the most obvious person but think about how you can develop skills in all potential chairs;
- Keep the pace of the meeting fast enough to create a sense of enthusiasm and urgency, but not too fast that members do not have the opportunity to have their say;
- Have an intimate knowledge of the rules of the organisation and previous successes and disappointments.

Who can be the chair?

This needs to be established by the group very quickly. There are two basic options:

Elected chair – this person would need to be a financial member of the group. The benefits of a member being the chair are that they have an intimate knowledge of the group members and their individual properties, they will tend to have a history with the group and they will have vested interest in the outcomes. The disadvantages are that this person may be too close to see where the group is repeating the same mistakes, or they may not be able to address conflicts between members as the catchment area for local farmer groups tends to be quite small and no-one wants to get into the middle of a local feud.

Independent chair – this person would be a respected local person, not a financial member of the group, who has been nominated and approved by the group as having the local knowledge or skills to lead the group. An independent chair can be beneficial in providing an objective position on issues and in seeing the 'big picture'. They can be particularity valuable when the group is going through a change process. The disadvantage is that these people may not be as passionate about the group's goals as the group members.

Chairing the meeting

Some tips to chairing a meeting include:

- Welcome new members and make sure they are introduced to other locals;
- Start on time, providing a quorum is present;
- Call for any additions to the draft agenda;
- Try to encourage quieter members to participate in the discussion. Don't let talkative members dominate the discussion and direction of outcomes;
- Keep the meeting moving by ensuring all discussion:
  - Will work towards achieving the organisations vision;
  - Follows the agenda;
  - Points have an action, timeframe and accountability arising from it. If it's a closing report, that it be accepted by the meeting;
  - Allows each speaker their fair turn; that a debate between two people doesn't take up too much time and that no-one interrupts another person;
  - Motions or amendments are clearly understood by the meeting before proceeding to vote.

Other roles for the chair

The chair should ideally set an example for other group members, seeking new opportunities for the group and having respect for new and different ideas. The chair may also need to act as a representative for the organisation in larger or state wide forums and ensure the secretary and treasurer are fulfilling their role obligations.

Most importantly, the chair will be required to make sure the group is working towards its vision through the objectives and not becoming bogged down in side issues or detail. This will ensure that the group is achieving, and as such members will want to continue to be a part of an organisation that 'walks the talk'.

The secretary and treasurer's role

The secretary and treasurer are as important as the chair. They require accuracy, timeliness and organisational skills.

The secretary is responsible for the following activities:

- Develop and send out a draft agenda before each meeting. Remind members to provide you with issues they would like added to the agenda;
- Take the minutes of each meeting. Do not worry about word for word transcripts, but do ensure major points are recorded. If an action is agreed upon, ensure the chair obtains a person responsible and time frame for the activity;
- Ensure the minutes are properly written up and distributed;
- Identify funding opportunities and work with treasurer to coordinate submissions for fundraising;
- Ensure that the persons accountable for activities set in the past meeting are prepared to report at the next meeting.

All of this is a guide and there is no definitive rule. One important point for secretaries is to consider that if their organisation does not have a vice-chairman, their support in ensuring the organisation is working towards its visions will be invaluable to the chair.

The treasurer's role is to:

- Make sure that the proper financial management systems are in place;
- Make sure the system is followed;
- Draw up a budget at the beginning of each year for presentation to the management committee;
- Ensure that spending is in line with the budget;
- Prepare a brief financial report for each meeting;
- Ensure financial reports required by funding bodies are prepared on-time and in the format required by the funding party;
- Ensure the reports are audited each year;
- Work with the secretary on submissions for funding.

Again, the treasurer's responsibilities are not limited to the points above, however, this does provide a guide for new treasurers as to what they can expect in the role.

The committee's guide

Every local farmer group is individual in why and how it came together, how it runs, what purpose it has and how the members interact. However, there are some traits that are common amongst successful groups.

Members of high performance teams – such as those leading successful grower groups – tend to have a high degree of personal commitment towards the common goal, in addition to one another's personal growth and success. This commitment is common in many farmer groups as they are locally based and members want to ensure the economic, social and environmental sustainability of their local community and area.

Highly effective teams have eight 'rules of thumb' that turn their interactions into actions and outcomes.

1. Establish direction and build enthusiasm.

Work out exactly why your group has come together and what it hopes to achieve, and develop a short statement that conveys this. This will be the group vision, and should be developed by the group as a whole or by the group's executive committee. If all members know what the group will achieve, then they will all understand the potential and limitations of group activities. Example vision: To leave a sustainable community and environment for future generations.

2. Set clear goals and define immediate tasks, allocating who is responsible for its achievement and providing a due date.

Underneath the vision, there may be several directions the group may want to investigate, all of which should work towards achieving the vision. Under these objectives will be individual tasks for which a specific group member should be responsible for delivering by a specified time. Example task: Organise a field walk to four local farms in mid October.

3. Establish clear rules of behaviour and expectations of group members.

Set clear rules for members such as 'respect for another point of view', 'openness' and 'trust'. Ensure that all members understand that the group is as effective as the collective member effort and as such, they will be expected to contribute time, finances or skills towards the common goal.

4. Select your committee based on skill and potential, not qualifications or previous status.

Your executive committee should have a variety of people on it – not just those who the group believes are the best farmers in the district. Consider the potential of the committee (including the leadership role) to be revolving. For example, every two years the vice- president may take over the president

role, while the president moves into a general executive committee role. The new vice-president would understand that they will be required to take over the president role in two years time.This process, or one like it, will provide several benefits:

- Leadership skills are being built within the community as a whole;
- Members understand that being a leader is not beyond their capability; and
- The president is not the only driving force behind the group. This is important because if the president moves on, sells their farm or is unable to continue in the role, there are skills and motivation within the group to carry on regardless.

5. Ensure that meetings are efficient and have useful outcomes.

Read more on how to run a good meeting on page 28.

6. Challenge the group regularly with new facts and information.

Seek guest speakers, present local research or technology implementation findings and provide interesting article for others to read. Keep the minds of members active and inquisitive. One way to do this might be to set a task each meeting for one person to organise or find 'something new'.

7. Spend time together removing interpersonal barriers.

Groups that play together stay together. Encouraging members to stay after the meeting will allow time for discussion that will allow key 'messages' to sink in and encourage further open discussion. Include family members in meetings and trips and invite them to lunch/dinner/drinks before or after the meeting.

8. Use positive feedback, recognition and reward.

Ensure that when group members contribute, it is rewarded. This could be a formal part of each meeting, or an informal role of the chair.

Acknowledgements: Bentley, C. 1970 Handbook for Chairmen and Secretaries Robbins, S. 2001 Organisational Behaviour

New committee induction checklist

It is important when new members join your groups' committee that they are aware of their roles, responsibilities and legal obligations. It may be beneficial to run through an induction process to ensure your new member has all the information he/she needs to perform their role. An induction can be a balance of formal and informal elements, or may just be an information pack an individual can read in their own time.

A typical induction should cover the following information:

1. Information about board members' legal obligations.
(visit www.ourcommunity.com.au/boards/ for more information)

2. Information about your organisation, including the:

- purpose of the organisation, glossary of common terms and acronyms
- the constitution
- organisational structure
- role of key stakeholders
- strategic plan (strategic development plan or statement of corporate intent if applicable)
- core operations
- reporting requirements
- compliance obligations.

3. Information about the board, including the:

- role of the board
- board structure (including committees)
- information about other board members
- board procedures
- minutes from recent board meetings
- code of conduct
- procedures for managing conflicts of interests
- board policy manual (if applicable)
- board annual calendar of activities.

The delivery mechanism for induction of a new committee member should be considered carefully. It may be beneficial to:

- provide all information in a written pack
- conduct sessions with the chairman
- conduct sessions with the staff

- conduct sessions with individual board members
- provide access to a training program in relation to board member responsibilities. The Western Australian Council of Social Services (WACOSS) provides one day or evening governance courses for not-for-profit and community groups.

Acknowledgements: Induction Checklist – Public Sector Governance, www.publicsector.wa.gov.au/

Meetings

While there are no hard and fast rules to a meeting process, the following is a few steps to take to ensure a successful and efficient meeting:

- The secretary should set and circulate a meeting agenda before each meeting;
- Members must be aware that if they want something discussed at the meeting, they should put it on the agenda prior to the meeting;
- Each meeting should follow a consistent process, for example:
  - Welcome by the chair;
  - Apologies;
  - Receive and accept previous minutes;
  - Business arising – a report from each person responsible for tasks set at the last meeting and general matters arising from the minutes;
  - Correspondence tabled;
  - Specific business (address each objective);
  - General business;
  - Set next meeting date;
  - Recap set tasks and allocate time frames. This helps ensure that meeting discussion stays on track.

Building the agenda

The purpose needs to be printed clearly on the agenda to be distributed to all meeting participants prior to the meeting. Only include items on the agenda that will contribute to furthering the purpose of the meeting.

To help develop an agenda for a purposeful meeting, ask the following:

- Are there any decisions that the meeting needs to make so that staff members or volunteers can proceed in their work?
- Are there any key administrative decisions that have to be endorsed?
- Are there any matters coming out of the committees that are at a point where the full meeting has to make a decision on them?
- Are all these items accompanied by clear recommendations for action?
- Put any item that calls for energy and fresh ideas near the beginning of the agenda. Also put urgent items early on, in case the meeting has to break with unfinished business.

It can be a good idea to put time allocations next to items, more or less depending on their importance. Don't be obsessed with clockwatching, but ensure important items receive the time they need.

The meeting papers

Make sure meeting papers are sent out prior to the meeting, accompanied by any necessary background papers – proposals, budgets, etc. Ideally, any recommendations for decisions should also be circulated in writing so they can be voted on at the meeting without any confusion about wording.

Reports

The Treasurer delivers the financial report and answers any questions. This is simply an explanation of the situation as it now stands – any discussion of fundraising or economies should come elsewhere in the meeting under its own agenda item.

The financial report should come early in the meeting, just in case the meeting has to decide on spending elsewhere in the agenda and needs to know the background.

If there's a report from the chief executive officer, it comes in next. The CEO reports on background to the organisation's activities, for information only. If the issues involve any decisions from the meeting then they should be given their own place in the agenda and voted on separately.

If the Board has any committees or sub-committees their reports should be represented now. The committees report on their activities and bring recommendations and proposals to the full meeting.

Conduct business

After the meeting has received the background, it can consider the items that need to be decided. Each item should have its own section in the previously circulated agenda. Ideally, there should be a supporting paper for each issue, and recommendations for further action.

After you've handled all the business on the circulated agenda, it's time to discuss any items that were brought up at the beginning of the meeting without notice, bearing in mind that if anybody wants more time to consider things you will probably need to put the question on the agenda of the next meeting.

Satisfactory conclusion

Always end on time and on a positive note so that people will feel that their contributions have been worthwhile. If there's a success to announce, bring it up here.

Briefly review decisions and in particular the actions resulting from the discussions. Tell the meeting that the minutes will be distributed within a week as an aide to help them remember what they have agreed to do.

Confirm the next meeting date and time to make sure everyone is able to attend.

Finally, thank the meeting participants for taking part. Remember that as volunteers, they have made a serious investment of their time to support your organisation and its cause.

10 quick ways to improving a meeting:

1. Make name tags for everyone, every meeting. It's embarrassing to have seen people at several meetings and wonder what their names are.
2. Make a poster of frequently used external and internal acronyms and post it on the wall of every meeting (if you distribute the list on paper, it's soon lost).
3. Write an 'anticipated action' for each agenda item. For example, 'Public Policy Committee: anticipated action – approve organisational statement to city council on zone changes'.
4. Make sure that each person says at least one thing at every board meeting. This is the chair's responsibility, but everyone should help!
5. No one-way communication from staff. If you have a regular CEO's report on the agenda, or if a program director is giving you a briefing, be sure that such presentations get a response from the board.
6. Don't include committee reports on the agenda just to make the committee feel worthwhile. If a committee has done work but doesn't need it discussed, put the committee report in the board papers, rather than as a separate agenda item.
7. Get on top of the big issues. What are the three most important matters facing the organisation?
8. Encourage 'dumb' questions, respectful dissent and authentic disagreements. Find a chance to be encouraging at every meeting, for example, 'I'm glad you asked that question. I didn't know the answer either'.
9. Make sure the room is comfortable! Not too hot or cold or crowded. Offer water and tea and coffee and something light to eat such as biscuits or fruit.
10. Keep to time, adjourn on time, or agree to stay later. Twenty minutes before the scheduled end of the meeting, the chair should ask whether the group wants to stay later.

Acknowledgements: Making Meetings Work, ourcommunity.com.au. Our Community Help sheet: Orchestrating great meetings, ourcommunity.com.au. Robbins, S. 2001 Organisational Behaviour

Facilitating a meeting

No matter what kind of group you are part of, or what crowd you are trying to control, facilitation skills always come in handy to get from A to B and reach desired outcomes agreed upon by the entire committee. The following are a few steps in preparing and facilitating a meeting to ensure you achieve your outcomes.

- **Clarify the proposed meeting outcomes:** be clear on why the meeting is being held;
- **Write out your plan:** a meeting plan should include a focus question, acting as an anchor and bringing people back on track. The plan should also include materials required and timing of each session;
- **Get geared up:** butchers paper, markers, Blutack, flipchart/whiteboard, butterfly clips, a watch, scrap paper/post-it notes, spare pens and name tags should all be part of your facilitation 'kit';
- **Get set up:** seating is positioned so all can see the whiteboard and facing away from the window, have tea and coffee available, and check where the toilets, air conditioner and exits are.
- **Starting the meeting:**
  - Introduce yourself and your role, including who you represent;
  - Thank participants for investing their time, effort and passion in the meeting;
  - Provide a brief outline of why the meeting is being held;
  - Provide a brief outline of what the meeting plans to achieve (outcomes);
  - Indicate how long the meeting will take;
  - Talk briefly about how you intend to run it (ie. brainstorming, goal setting etc);
  - Emphasise that your role is to lead the process and ask questions;
  - Emphasise that you'll be drawing on the skills and experience of those in the room to develop agreed solutions;
  - Check if everyone is clear on why they are here and what can be achieved, and if there are any questions.
- **Introductions:** People like to know who they are working with. For a short meeting, keep introductions short as people will be keen to get into the main body of the meeting. For a long meeting, relationships between people are often more important and so a longer introduction may be preferred. Introductions may include their role, location, a highlight over the past two weeks or something they're really good at. There are many

ideas of icebreakers on the internet if you need inspiration. Individual introductions are recommended for small groups of up to eight people, introductions in pairs/at their tables are recommended for big groups of more than eight people.

- **Ground Rules:** If you envisage some challenges in managing your group then it may be worth setting some ground rules. One handy tool is called 'showing the ropes' where participants should agree to **R**espect other opinions, **O**pen-minded to other ideas, **P**articipate, **E**xperience – be sure to share what they have, **S**hare the air.
- **Expectations:** Asking participants what are their expectations from the meeting helps to reiterate the meeting aims. Write the responses on a flipchart and refer to later in the meeting.
- **Getting focused:** Reiterate the meeting aims so that people are clear on the issues that you are tackling. For each session, read out/write up the focus question and clearly explain what you are requiring from participants.
- **Gathering Ideas:** Get people to write down two to three responses to the focus question. Give people time to respond.
  - Go around the group and get each person's 'number one' choice. Then get any other remaining responses by asking the group as a whole. Ask "anyone else" whilst looking in the direction of those not contributing.
  - Use eye contact, smile, nod and thank people for their ideas.
  - Use people's names as much as possible.
- **Recording ideas:** when recording ideas, try to use the same words as the participant, always aim to get single ideas from participants, and if they use more than two sentences to express their idea, ask them to clarify or paraphrase the idea.
- **Moving between different sections of the meeting:** Briefly summarise each section before moving on. When starting a new section, briefly explain what you are about to cover and why.
- **Closing the meeting:** Do a brief summary on the process covered and some of the results from each section. Identify the key outcomes and describe how the information generated will be used in the future. Thank all the participants for their commitment and participation.

Acknowledgements: Huffer, A., 2008, Crash Course in Facilitation, ARID Group

Member recruitment and retention

Steps to build and maintain membership

Farmer groups are traditionally member-focused and driven, with membership development and retention critical to groups. Identify what makes your group unique and what they have or can achieve, and use this to attract and retain people.

- For groups looking to expand their membership base, the first step is working out who to approach. Efforts should be focused on those who are most likely to join, so approach people with issues or interests your group is able to address.
- Once potential members are identified, look at how best to approach them. Traditional word-of-mouth marketing is great because people like referral from those they know and trust, so invest in establishing a referral network. Members recruiting new members can also work well if they know who to ask, when to ask and how to ask them.
- Once members join your group, the next step is retaining them! The first year of membership is most critical with members expecting to get something out of the group. Some members will become involved with little help, while others may need support and ongoing contact to encourage involvement. The annual renewals notice should be integrated into membership communication. For those members who choose not to renew, approach them to find out why, and use their answer to improve operations in the future.
- Continue engaging your members, with a process in place to deepen their involvement through ongoing communication. Members take great value in talking to other members, so connecting members is a great tactic. A group's membership base is continually evolving, so continue to work making your group attractive to potential members and provide interest and benefit to current members.

Drafting new talent on your board

- Work out your group's key objectives over the next three years, what skills you need to achieve them and if you have gaps in your present committee;
- Determine how many people you want on your board. Too many can be unwieldy and ineffective;
- Compile a list of possible board members, keeping in mind the skills your group needs;
- Once potential board members are identified, approach them and explain your group's vision and where you think they could help out;

- Ensure they have the qualities you need. Are they filling skills gaps? Can they work in a team situation? Do they have genuine interest in your group? Are they prepared to put in the time?
- Keep an open mind. Often the keenest board member is someone you have never previously considered.

Acknowledgements: Simple Secrets of Successful Community Groups, ourcommunity.com.au

Communication and technology

Webinars

A webinar allows participants to interact on their computer while simultaneously talking to each other. By entering a webinar room on the internet, everybody can look at the same website, document or powerpoint, write to each other, and talk as if they are in a teleconference.

In a room of up to 30 people, documents can be viewed and worked on. Budgets, powerpoints, funding applications or websites can all be written over and edited by anyone who has logged into the room. Even brainstorming on a whiteboard can be done on computer screens across the country. Conversations are via teleconference or computer headset.

Through facilitation companies, downloading the software is free and once-only. Once downloaded, participants need only log into the room from a webpage.

Cost: For a room of your own, expect to pay about $250 per month which gives you unlimited access 24 hours a day 7 days/week. Rooms can be rented on an hourly basis for

$50 per hour which includes the room and a facilitator's time to set up the meeting, train the participants and facilitate if needed.

Downside: Voice can sometimes have more of a time lag, however most applications work visually even on dial up connections – the presenter just needs to be aware of the size of presentations, pictures etc – a simple word document or excel spreadsheet for example works fine even on dial up. If users have slow speeds, teleconferences can be used for talking while everyone is logged into the room for the visuals.

Videoconferences

Videoconferencing can be used to share documents, computer-displayed information, and whiteboards, through the digital compression of audio and video streams in real time. There are two types of videoconferencing systems:

- dedicated systems: all components are in a single piece of equipment, usually a console with a high quality remote controlled video camera;
- desktop systems: add-ons to normal PCs, transforming them into videoconferencing devices. Videoconferencing is commonly used when:
- a live conversation is needed;
- visual information is an important component of the conversation;
- the parties of the conversation can't physically come to the same location; or

- the expense or time of travel is a consideration.

Downside: The use of videoconference is not as widely adopted as a standard form of communication for the following reasons:

- complexity of systems. Most users are not technical and want a simple interface;
- perceived lack of inter-operability: not all systems can readily interconnect;
- bandwidth and quality of service: it can be difficult or expensive to get a high quality connection that is fast enough for good-quality video conferencing;
- expense of commercial systems – a well designed system requires a specially designed room;
- participants being self-conscious about being on camera, especially new users and older generations;
- lack of eye contact.

Teleconferences

A teleconference is the use of audio communication technologies between multiple participants and locations. It is a meeting among two or more participants, linked by a telecommunications system, involving one or both ends of the conference sharing a speaker phone. To hold a teleconference, an account is needed from a conference call service provider. When you have signed up, to begin a teleconference participants need only dial a telephone number, enter a PIN and start talking.

Service providers include:

Hot Air Conferencing,	1800 157 313	www.hotairconferencing.com.au
Eureka Teleconferencing	1800 857 079	www.teleconference.com.au
Express Teleconferencing	1800 266 337	www.teleconferencing.com.au
allconferencecalls	(02) 9037 2451	www.allconferencecalls.com.au

Skype

Skype is a software application that allows users to make voice and video calls over the internet. Calls to other users within the Skype service are free, while calls to both traditional landline telephones and mobile phones can be made for a fee using a debit-based user account system. Conference calls with three or more people as well as instant messaging, file transfer and screen sharing are all possible with Skype. All you need is a computer, an internet connection and a webcam. To install Skype, visit www.skype.com/intl/en/home.

WebEx

WebEx is an online web conferencing service that allows you to connect with anyone, anywhere, in real time. WebEx combines desktop sharing through a web browser with phone conferencing and video, so everyone sees the same thing while you talk.

It offers the opportunity to collaborate in real time by using whiteboard note-taking, and annotation tools to mark up documents as you go.

Cost: $65/month for one host account. This allows you to host unlimited meetings with up to 25 participants. Participants can 'dial' in using a phone line, or over internet on mobile devices. They don't need to have access to a computer to be involved in the conversation, only to view the content being shared.

For more information visit www.webex.com.au

Google Hangouts

Google+ Hangouts is a free video chat service from Google that enables both one-on-one chats and group chats with up to ten people at a time. While somewhat similar to Skype and Face Time, Google Hangouts focuses more on "face-to-face-to-face" group interaction as opposed to one-on-one video chats, and utilizes sophisticated technology to seamlessly switch the focus to the person currently chatting.

Google Hangouts can be accessed via computers as well as mobile devices. In addition to video chatting, Google Hangouts users can share documents, scratchpads, images and YouTube videos with other users.

For more information visit www.google.com/hangouts

Google Drive

Google Drive is a file storage and synchronization service provided by Google which enables user cloud storage, file sharing and collaborative editing.

Google Drive is the home of Google Docs, an office suite of productivity applications that offer collaborative editing on documents, spreadsheets, presentations, and more. Google Docs allows users to create and edit documents online while collaborating in real-time with other users- for example documents can be shared, opened, and edited by multiple users at the same time. Documents are automatically saved to Google's servers to prevent data loss, and a revision history is automatically kept so past edits may be viewed.

For more information visit www.google.com.au/drive/about.html

DropBox

Similar to Google Drive, Drop Box is file hosting service that offers cloud storage and file synchronization. Dropbox allows users to create a special folder on each of their computers, which Dropbox then synchronizes so that it appears to be the same folder (with the same contents) regardless of which computer is used to view it. Files placed in this folder also are accessible through a website and mobile phone applications. The service provides 2 gigabytes (GB) of storage for free.

For more information visit www.dropbox.com

Prezi

Prezi is a web-based presentation and storytelling tool that uses a single canvas instead of traditional slides. Text, images, videos and other presentation objects are placed on the infinite canvas and grouped together in frames. The canvas allows you to create non-linear presentation that allows you to zoom in and out of a visual map. The interactive presentation that can be shared with others via the web as YouTube clips. Cost approx $70 AUD/ year for private presentation and use of your own logos.

For more information visit http://prezi.com

SurveyMonkey

SurveyMonkey is an online survey tool enabling people with no knowledge of survey design to create their own surveys quickly and at low cost.

Through Survey Monkey you can:

- copy an existing survey;
- use a survey template from a selection of existing examples; or
- create a new survey from scratch with dozens of questions to choose from (eg. multiple choice, rating scales, drop-down menus);
- collect responses;
- provide a report and analyses of your responses.

Cost: A short survey of up to 10 questions with no more than 100 responses is free! Just register a login (your email address) and a password and click on Create Survey. If you need to create a larger survey, SurveyMonkey charges $200 (US) per year for unlimited use.

To view tutorials, create surveys and collect responses in detail or in summary visit www.surveymonkey.com.

Wikis

A wiki is a website allowing the exchange of information between invited participants. A wiki makes it easy for anyone to swap ideas and information on projects, literally getting everyone 'on the same page'.

This website is helpful and offers the basic wiki page for free:
www.wikispaces.com

Database Management, Bulk Emailing and SMSing

Itomic and Inbox

Itomic Pty Ltd is a professional internet services company with offices in Perth. While they mainly supply, design and upgrade websites, they also provide a bulk emailing service called Inbox.

Once Itomic has created the newsletter template, entering information into the newsletter is very simple. Inbox has advanced tracking statistics to allow you to see who opened your email and when, what topics they were interested in, who forwarded it to a friend, subscription rates, bounce backs, and more.

Cost: $5 per email plus 1c per recipient. Any design needed on the newsletter is charged at an hourly rate through Itomic.

For more information on Itomic and Inbox, visit www.itomic.com.au

Message Media

Message Media is an email SMS service that allows you to send bulk SMS messages from your email. It can be a good way of sending out event and meeting reminders and invites.

For more information visit www.message-media.com.au/

Mailchimp

MailChimp is an internet service that helps you create customised email newsletters. It provides step by step instructions on how to build a mailing list, create a template, send your email campaign and track your results (how many times it was open, who clicked links etc). If you have fewer than 2,000 subscribers, you can send up to 12,000 emails per month for free.

For more information visit www.mailchimp.com/

Doodle

Doodle is a free online scheduling tool that can be used quickly and easily to find a date and time to meet with multiple people. Suggest dates and times for your event participants to choose from, and Doodle will create a polling calendar that can be sent to participants for feedback. As each participant selects the dates and times from the polling calendar that he or she is free, Doodle aggregates the responses and tells you which option works best for everyone.

For more information visit http://doodle.com

Using the media to spread your message

One of the most effective ways to communicate with your target audiences is through the mass media. Once you know the right way to approach the media and know what they are looking for, you can gain some publicity for your community's group or activities.

What is publicity?

Publicity is free coverage of an organisation, its products, services or activities through the mass media, such as media releases, interviews and other communication activities designed to broaden knowledge and achieve positive recognition of an organisation, its staff and its activities.

Publicity is regarded as more credible than advertising as it is viewed as an impartial judgment on the media's behalf. However, the coverage received is at the discretion of the media outlet and could be unfavourable. No matter how much information is distributed from your community group, it is the media who control how the message is portrayed and whether it will be published, so establishing a good working relationship with the media is essential to help gain positive publicity.

What is news?

News is something new, up to the minute, unusual, sensational or something which will affect many people and is therefore in the 'public interest'. News value differs between press, radio and television. Since the selection is always the outlet's choice, you must become familiar with what that particular media group wants and is looking for. Some principles of newsworthiness:

- new or unusual information;
- an event that makes impact;
- a response to a current news event or statement;
- the response and statements of a prominent person;
- a human interest story;
- a bizarre or extraordinary person or event;
- closeness, occurring in the local area.

Writing for the media

Journalism is a strictly disciplined form of writing, to conform to space restrictions, often under tight time schedules, and following a certain format, leading with the most important an interesting points first. The 'mechanics' of writing for the mass media entail presenting stories in such a way that parts can be eliminated – sometimes arbitrarily by sub-editors because of

space restrictions – leaving a story that will still stand up and convey the most important facts.

Writing a media release

A media release is one of the best ways to notify the media of an important issue. Media groups receive loads of media releases each day, so it is important that the one you write is topical and catches the editors and audiences' interests. If the media release doesn't grab the editor's attention in the first couple of sentences, there is little chance of it getting a run. Alternatively, when in the right style, it can be used by the media word-for-word and you will achieve what you set out to do; that is communicate key messages to your target audiences.

Tips for an effective media release:

- **Concise:** Get to the point. Use short sentences and paragraphs. Concise writing mainly consists of identifying unnecessary words, phrases and even sentences, and cutting then from your story. Use a short word rather than a long one, use a word rather than a lengthy phrase.
- **Simple:** Your message has to be understood by the average person. Use plain English and avoid jargon, clichés and acronyms. Don't use technical terms without explaining what they mean.
- **What, Where, Why, How, When, Who? Your story must tell, simply:** WHAT happened; WHERE it took place; WHY it occurred; HOW; WHEN; And TO WHOM.
- **Angle:** Every story has more than one approach or more than one 'angle'. Look for angles that will interest the greatest audience of people, or your target audience in particular. For instance, field days are reasonably frequent, but the angle may be a particular guest speaker or new trial.
- **Timing:** Know deadlines for the media and time your material appropriately. Be sensitive to editorial deadlines, and ensure your event is covered in the appropriate timeframe.
- **Headings:** The heading should summarise the story. It should be catchy and grab people's attention so that they want to read the story.
- **Identify the spokesperson:** Media releases have to be attributed to someone, such as a group president or well-known researcher, to add authority and credibility to the story and by making clear the opinions are those of the source.

Media Release Writing Handy Tips

- Ideally, there should be one sentence per paragraph;
- Lead with your most interesting point;
- Use active voice, not passive;

- Expect the only first two or three paragraphs will be read;
- Quote someone important by the third paragraph;
- Keep the media release short, less than one A4 page length;
- Attach a background paper or fact-sheet containing further information;
- If appropriate, organise a photo opportunity to accompany media release;
- Proofread over your work, checking dates, times, venues, spelling of names and phone numbers;
- Have your contact details at the bottom of the media release.

Photographs

As well as providing photo opportunities, send the media a couple of photographs that illustrate the media release's subject.

- Photos should be taken in real environments and with people;
- They should focus clearly on the issue, product, image, or person that your community group wants to emphasise, without irrelevant, visually distracting clutter in the foreground or background;
- Photos should be eye catching, using angles creatively;
- Photos must express a viewpoint;
- Photos must make a visual impact;
- Provide a caption for the photo which summaries the news.

Communications roadmap

How you communicate your messages to the community needs to be considered and planned, to inform people about who your group is and what you do.

1. Planning – what's your message?

Communications plan

A detailed communications plan should cover the organisation's mission, who your service is targeted towards, what your organisational objectives are, how you're going to meet those objectives and your budget. A communications plan should be linked in with the business plan. For example, if you identify in your business plan that one of your organisational objectives is to increase membership for the year, then your communications plan should also concentrate on how you are going to communicate this message. When considering the communication needs around this message, take into account the internal communications with staff and volunteers; publications; and media liaisons. Communications plans need to be reviewed regularly. After each campaign, check if it's been successful and if not, you may need to change your communications plan.

Advertising or publicity

A communications plan may include both advertising and publicity for getting your message out to the community. Both are very effective methods to create awareness for your organisation. Advertising is the content you pay for (radio, TV, newspaper, banner advertising, etc) and that you have control over. Publicity on the other hand, refers to free content that appears in the media but is uncontrolled.

Consistency

Branding is another powerful way to identify your organisation. Review your current publications, do they have a consistent look or feel, do you have a logo that's used consistently or colours that represent your organisation?

2. Who's your audience?

Who are the people you are targeting with your communications? Who do you want to attend your events, and who do you want to know about your group? What messages do you want to convey about your organisation and who exactly are you trying to reach? What's the best way to reach your target audience? Targeted communications is about promoting your research, event or activity to a particular audience. Why spend more time and money with a general scatter approach when you can often be more effective by knowing who you're trying to reach and why?

3. Let people know who you are

Use the media – write a media release

Maybe your organisation is new, maybe you've got an event coming up, possibly you're starting a new program, maybe it's your 10th anniversary, these are all things you may want to let the community know about. Using the media to communicate these messages can be effective.

Use photos

Take as many photos as possible, and organise photo opportunities for media at your events.

Distributing your media release

After deciding which media outlet you would like to distribute your media release to, contact them and ask for the name of the person you need to send the media release to and send it to the correct staff member. A media release from an unknown organisation or unknown source is likely to be binned so it's important to build a relationship with the media or a journalist. If it's the first time sending out a media release, it's worth contacting the journalist first and letting them know the copy is coming. Once it's been sent, contact them a day or two later, check if the release was received and if any further information is required.

Do you have a website?

Many people will search for information on services and organisations via the internet, and it's worth creating a simple website to have a presence on the internet. If your group has the resources, you can engage a website designer to create a website. If you don't have the resources but you do have the skills and/or time of members, there are countless options for free website hosting and content management systems, and many are no more complex than Microsoft Word. See page 49 for more information on website setup.

Flyers, brochures, posters, newsletters

Most organisations have some sort of flyer or brochure that promotes their organisation or program, a take home message about the group. Depending on the skills and expertise within your organisation and the resources available, this is something that can be done internally or with a graphic designer.

Networks

Get involved in local networks, including the Grower Group Alliance and other industry bodies which add value to and promote your organisation.

Review your communications plan regularly

If you've just undertaken a campaign to recruit new volunteers, you need to check that it's been successful. If the desired outcomes weren't achieved, review the plan and try to understand why it didn't work. Check in with major stakeholders or your target audience. Ask them what they think about your current communications and publications. Based on their feedback, make appropriate changes or updates. Annual or regular research could be valuable in assessing your communications. If changes can be tracked over time, you could track which campaigns and what type of communication has been most successful.

Email newsletters

Editorial

Keep it relevant and timely

Because of the speed and sense of immediacy that comes with email communication, people expect an email newsletter to carry the latest information on the topics they're interested in, along with information on how they can take immediate action.

Abbreviate

Limit your newsletter to about five to ten items (depending on their length) and start with headlines for those items at the very top – if readers are interested in an article, they can scroll down. Perhaps include a page which summarises the contents of each article in your newsletter, with links if people want to read further.

Interact

Engage readers as much as possible and don't encourage passivity.

- If you tell readers something, don't just throw the information at them; tell them what they can do about it;
- Give them the opportunity to respond in a number of ways – it could be to write to a politician, sign up as a volunteer, renew their membership, express interest in an upcoming special event, donate money or suggest ideas and improvements.

Contact details

Make sure your newsletter includes all your organisation's contact details. If someone gets the newsletter passed on and think what you do is great, your group wants to make sure it's as easy as possible to get them involved.

Technical

You can send out an email either in the mail program itself – 'simple mailing' – or as an attachment in another format like Microsoft Word, PDF, or HTML.

- Simple mailing is effective if you're just sending straight text, and it has the advantage of being quick and uncomplicated, but the other formats offer new possibilities;
- Most people's mail programs can cope with basic HTML, and HTML newsletters get a higher response rate, because many people will click through to linked web sites;

- Test your system. Perform a test run to make sure it's formatted properly, and send a test copy to different addresses that are using a range of email systems.

Managerial and production

Maintain or attract new addresses

- Continually check and maintain address lists. People's addresses are constantly changing, and if you just sit on your lists they will wither away;
- Offer the newsletter on your website; possibly through a 'sign-up for a free newsletter' button that is placed prominently on your home page;
- Encourage readers to forward the newsletter on to people who might be interested in it, and then make it easier for those people to subscribe.

Respect your readers' privacy

Ask for permission to send e-newsletters to potential readers, and make it easy for readers to unsubscribe if they no longer wish to receive your email newsletter. People get enough spam in their inboxes each day without your organisation adding to it.

Archiving

Ensure you archive past editions of your newsletter. Label these archives well for ease of referencing and to make it easy to access them when needed.

Don't be:

- **Spam:** Because of the continuing and growing problem that spam emails create, your email newsletter cannot be seen as spam – so it can't aggravate or annoy people;
- **Without interest:** The aim of your email newsletter is to convert people who have a mild interest in your organisation into people who have a solid, active interest of your organisation;
- **Too pushy:** Sending an email that's unsolicited is unacceptable;
- **Too large:** Don't send an email that clogs up modems or goes over download limits;
- **Too often:** If your newsletter comes out more than once a month, or if it goes out more often than there's real news, people will start deleting your email newsletter as spam;
- **Too demanding or irrelevant:** Remember, you're publishing a newsletter. So if all the so-called news is just a set up to a call for funds and isn't interesting in its own right, people are going to feel that their time is being wasted. Result – your email newsletter will be discarded as spam.

Getting started with a free e-newsletter through Microsoft Word

While very convenient, going through bulk emailing services to send out your newsletter can be costly. Microsoft Word provides newsletter templates which are fairly simple to set up and a mailing service for no charge. To create a newsletter through Microsoft Word, consider the following points:

- To download a basic template from Microsoft Templates, select new document, choose installed templates and pick one preferably with a linking contents section. If you don't like any of the installed templates, you can download free templates from the home page on office.com by visiting http://office.microsoft.com/en-au/templates/.
- If the template doesn't have a linking contents section, they can be easily added via the reference section of Microsoft Word. More details on how to link the contents with the rest of the newsletter can be found in the help section by searching 'create a table of contents'.
- To send the newsletter, use the mail merge component by going into the mailings tab and clicking on 'start mail merge' and starting up the 'step by step mail merge wizard'.

MailChimp

MailChimp is a free internet service that helps you create customised email newsletters. For more information refer to page 39.

Acknowledgements: Our Community, www.ourcommunity.com.au

Websites

What a website can do for your grower group:

- Transmit your message to many more people than older forms of outreach;
- Attract new members;
- Conduct surveys;
- Take registrations and donations via credit cards and secure servers;
- Display documents such as directories or proposals;
- Keep current information accessible to the public;
- Display employment opportunities;
- Include valuable resources in one area (i.e. related links);
- Help you build communication and community among your members, clients, the general public.

How much overhead is involved in creating and maintaining a website?

It is important to be aware of the staffing needs of a website before you develop one, particularly the time taken to maintain a current site. People tend to revisit a site if there is new information on it, so be prepared to update it regularly. If you plan to develop a website without planning its maintenance, you will have a site that will soon be out of date. If you have any time-sensitive information, this is critical.

- Development tasks need to be planned and scheduled;
- Content must be developed, organised and edited;
- Site needs to be marketed;
- A design firm should be employed for initial coding and graphics;
- Content must be updated to keep the site relevant and interesting (this will most likely involve modifying the entire flow and ownership of information in your organisation, not just making it the responsibility of the webmaster).

If you do want to proceed with a website:

You should have an idea of what you want and what you don't want. Your website can become not just a face for your organisation, but a portal of activity that can enhance online community collaborations and the mission of your organisation. Try to keep it simple. Follow the 80/20 rule; 80 per cent of content is static, 20 per cent is updated on a consistent basis.

Think easy, efficient exposure

A website should ultimately function as an efficient and easy means of exposure. There is no efficiency in having a website with out-of-date information, or a website that doesn't load properly. Determine before making the production leap who will be responsible for the maintenance of the site. If kept simple, it shouldn't take a lot of your time or money.

Your website MIGHT include the following:

- An organisational mission statement;
- Highlights of events;
- Staff or contact information;
- Services;
- Volunteer information;
- Achievements;
- Funding information;
- Bulletin board/news update section;
- Subscription option available;
- Related links.

Your website MUST include the following:

- Information to attract people who share a common interest or need;
- Information to help new users feel connected to the site and to encourage return visits;
- A sense of membership to attract support, obtain subscribers and induce loyalty for the future of the organisation;
- Easy-to-find contact details.

Site builders and content management systems

Site builders are web applications that allow you to set up a website easily through a user- friendly interface that often resembles a Word processor. Most of these tools come with free design templates, which you can usually customise to a certain extent. Site builders are about $5 to $10 a month.

An advantage to using a site builder is that you don't need to know HTML or any other web development languages to use them. Nor do you have to own your own server hardware; with a site builder, you access your account and all of the administrative functions through your web browser.

Site builders include:

- Google sites: sites.google.com
- Itomic Web Design: www.itomic.com.au
- Online Creations: www.onlinecreations.com.au
- Wordplay Media: www.wordplayweb.com.au
- BirdBrain Logic: www.birdbrain.com.au; or
- Ocean Website Design: www.oceanwebsitedesign.com.au

Grassroots.org offers community organisations a free web builder, DoodleKit, to create their own website. Visit www.grassroots.org/services/free-web-builder for more information.

Blogging software

When most people think about a blog, they envision an individual, personal publishing platform. However, more and more organisations are also using free blogging tools such as WordPress and Blogger as their primary web presence.

Most blogging tools allow more than one author, meaning many people from one organisation can work on them. You don't need to know HTML to use them, and, as with the site builders, you don't have to host the site on your own servers. Blogging tools may also provide easy-to-use design templates with the option of some customisation.

WordPress's features, for example, include a wide variety of free design templates (for $30 a year you can modify the templates with your own code); widgets from several third-party providers let you embed calendars, photos, videos, and more. Blogger is a little easier to set up and configure than WordPress and it offers more third-party widgets, but it also provides fewer design templates to choose from. Both Blogger and WordPress will provide you with a free subdomain — meaning that your site name would appear in the URL line alongside the blogging tool's name — but also allow you to purchase your own domain name so that people can find you directly through your own unique address. Domain names cost $10 per year at Blogger and $15 per year at WordPress.

Visit WordPress at www.wordpress.com, or Blogger at www.blogger.com.

Acknowledgements: Help sheet: Planning your site, techsoup.org. Help sheet: A Nonprofit's Guide to Building Simple, Low-Cost Websites, techsoup.org

Improving annual report writing

Your group's annual report is one of the ways to communicate your achievements and plans, as well as specifying relevant financial details from the previous year.

Preparing your annual report

- The report is an extension of your organisation, and those who read it are going to draw conclusions about you from it. If it's competently done, well presented, clear, accurate, clearly focused and containing vision and passion, people will see that as representative of your group generally;
- If people can see their support and money at work and what you have been able to achieve, it is easier to convince them to continue that backing;
- If your report lists and thanks people who have helped your group throughout the year (donors, sponsors, volunteers, supporters, members, etc) it shows the importance your group places on the human side of the organisation and the way you value contributions from those involved in your group;
- Your group also needs to look at the content of its annual report and how it is presented to ensure that it contributes to your group's overall marketing effort.

Obviously there is a certain structure that annual reports traditionally adhere to – for example, the inclusion and placement of chairperson's reports, audited financial reports/balance sheets, director's attendance at meetings etc.

There are ways that traditional report content can be presented and inclusions that can be made, that improve the marketing impact of your annual report. Some of these include:

- Clear statements of your group's aims, or vision;
- List of your group's achievements. This will market your group as one which successfully backs up its vision with action; a can-do organisation;
- List of your group's activities/programs;
- Case studies that demonstrate the practical results of your work. Case studies demonstrate the outcomes of your work and shows the human face and end results of your group's philosophy, policy and planning;
- 'Statement of intent'. Having a statement of intent or explanation of your group's future vision presents you as a forward-thinking organisation with an eye to future success. Such a statement can be contained in the chair or CEO's report;
- List of names of sponsors/supporters and helpers/board and committee members. To those reading your report, these lists of names (especially of supporters) add a sense of legitimacy to your group and what it is doing;

- Dealings with media. This shows your group as one whose activities are newsworthy – further marketing your group to existing or prospective stakeholders;
- Your group's contact details, including, phone, fax, email, website, mailing address;
- Keep it simple, concise, easy to understand.

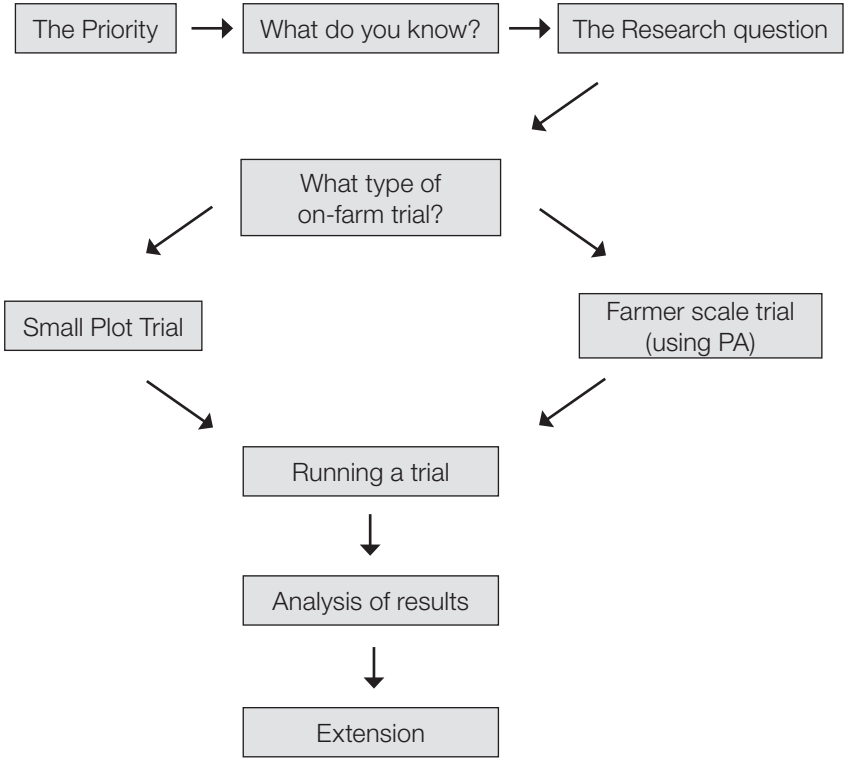
Who should it go to?

- Group members;
- Stakeholders – sponsors, donors, supporters, volunteers, fundraisers, any business or community partners or bodies, etc;
- Applicable local councils or local government bodies;
- Applicable politicians (State and Federal) in your geographic or interest areas, as well as appropriate State or Federal Ministers;
- The media – local, state or other.

How to run an on-farm trial

Conducting trials and demonstrations is a key component of grower groups' activities. It's important to understand the main steps in planning, running, analysing and communicating your on-farm research trials to ensure your group is making the best investment possible.

A properly run and executed trial can be informative, while a poorly run trial can give misleading results that if implemented on farm could be costly. It is important to understand all aspects of carrying out an on-farm trial to ensure it is successful and generates useful results.



Setting the priority

There are many issues that have an impact on farm profitability, but determining which of these issues will be the main priority(s) for a grower group or individual grower is often difficult. It is also important to set priorities to avoid trying to test too many 'ideas' in the one on-farm trial.

In the case of a grower group it is essential to assess 'ideas' and set priorities according to how it meets the goals of the group that are relevant for the members.

The research question

Defining the initial research question is most critical part of the trial process and it is important to recognise that the development of a 'good' research question takes time. Start with the general research issue, then progresses through the initial thoughts and ideas to find the final research question(s) – what you really want to find out.

- Avoid including too much in the research question. Focus on the issue and the variable of interest (eg Nitrogen).
- Break down your statement into specific questions.
- What constitutes 'a yield improvement' e.g. More grain yield, more biomass, better plant establishment, greener leaves, more tillers, fewer head deaths?
- What aspects of the environment are we talking about? e.g. Season type? Soil Type? Crop Type? Time of Sowing? Stubble treatment?
- What time period are we talking about? Only wet years, only dry years, every year?

What type of trial?

On-farm testing can be carried out at different levels of sophistication from paddock scale comparisons to replicated small plot trials. Both designs require a clear research question and thought. A small plot trial allows you to make a more detailed diagnosis of why you found differences between treatments by being able to measure attributes such as soil water balances, plot level nutrients, disease status and more. In paddock scale trials, you can technically still measure these things, but it would take a lot of work, hence why you may often place more confidence in the outcome of a small plot trials over paddock scale.

Running a trial

It is important when running an on-farm trial that the appropriate site is selected, roles and responsibilities are set for those involved, the right tools and equipment required to manage the trials are available, and all data is collected and recorded.

The GGA and member groups have developed a set of guidelines/checklist for groups to follow when running a trial.

- How often do you need to talk to the group, host farmer and trial owner? Is it regular enough? Is the communication two-way?
- Are there any financial or in-kind expectations of the trial coordinator and the group? (Trial costs, labour, data collection and analysis, extension and communication.) Have these been put down in writing?
- What are the ownership obligations of the trial results? Who gets access to them, the group only or the entire agricultural community? Is there an agreement in place for when results are not favourable to the trial owner?
- Who does what?
  - Who is responsible for trial design, site selection and set-up? What level of rigour does the trial have? Is there a buffer zone required, and who is responsible for this? What are the expectations for biosecurity or weed control? Are these instructions as clear as possible?
  - What equipment is needed for the trial, and who will get it/set it up? I.e. Fencing, seeders, sprayers, trial markers, mouldboard ploughs, fuel, chemical etc.
  - Who is responsible for monitoring and harvesting the trial? Are clear instructions in place for this?
  - Who is responsible for analysing results? Have they been involved from the beginning with trial design?
- When visiting the group or farmer during the year, is there a process in place? For example:
  - Who will contact the farmer prior to visiting?
  - Is there help on hand to set up the trial for presentation (markers, banners etc.)?
- Has the trial owner/coordinator been invited to the group's events and field days?

Analysis and interpretation of results

Analysis of results and interpretation in relation to the initial research question(s) is important as it gives a purpose to why you have done the trial – you will have found out whether or not your question was supported, or whether it needs further research. There are many options available for analysing trial results; do it yourself using programs such as Excel or GenStat, use the assistance of a more qualified project partner, contract a specialist statistician or utilise your local DAFWA office. Make sure you understand how analysis will be conducted right from the planning stage, to ensure you have the right level of rigour, and might measurements being taken, to achieve a meaningful result.

Extension

Did you learn something from your trial? Make sure you share the results with your group and the wider community. For a background in extension, visit the GGA Quick & Easy Extension Guide, available on the GGA website.

Visit the GGA website for more information on running a successful on-farm trial for your group.

How to run a field day

Field days are the premier event for your group to showcase trials, activities and achievements. Content and management of a field day are factors that turn a good event into a great event. The following tips have been adapted from The GGA Events Handbook. For a full version of this resource, visit www.gga.org.au.

Before the day

- Draw up a timeline for the organisation of the day;
- Organise a convincing topic(s) of practical value to present to the local community;
- If there is a minimum number of people required to make the event a success, have a cancellation plan if numbers are not reached;
- Select a date that does not clash with other state events by checking the GGA Calendar;
- Invite a keynote speaker or key local farmers to present on the day;
- Check you have public liability insurance;
- If requiring a bus, book early;
- Ensure there's enough – but not too much – material to present.

Logistics

- Position the audience so that they are in the shade and look down on the speaker (if possible);
- Ensure adequate toilet facilities, especially when touring on a bus;
- Provide three breaks during the day (morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea). Ensure ample time for eating (around an hour for lunch) and networking;
- Provide name badges showing first and second names for all attendees. Sticky tags and a marker are an easy way to put names to faces;
- Have an alternative plan in case of adverse weather conditions;
- Provide an opportunity for sponsors and supporters to organise a display before the event, and ask presenters to provide handouts or samples to compliment poster displays;
- Provide a power generator for urn, lighting etc;
- Use a second power generator for computer for back-up;
- Hire a UPS to protect computer and data projector from power surges;
- Provide a whiteboard for presenters to use.

Group committee members

- Easily identify committee members by getting them to wear a uniform jumper or shirt;
- Allocate committee members to look after special guests;
- Organise a Master of Ceremonies (MC) for the day.

Field plots

- Ensure field plots are wide enough by mowing a pathway around each trial plot for people to stand in;
- Have a portable microphone for presenters;
- Dig a soil pit or organise a soil core sample with pH measurements to show soil type under field site;
- Omit trials that don't show visual results and realise you might not have time to visit every trial. Link trials to your event goals;
- Locate machinery demonstrations away from presentations to reduce noise;
- Consider organising a memorable demonstration, such as aerial spraying or GPS treasure hunt.

On-site

- Consider how you'll tour the site. Concurrent sessions? Self Guide? Guided tour? Remember to test the timing before the day;
- Ensure the registration point is within sight of the car park;
- Organise field day direction signs and an air horn (or similar) to notify participants of timing during the day;
- Arrange an area for parking and parking attendants (if necessary);
- Ensure payment for field day entry runs smoothly. Credit card options? Member and non-member fee? Also ensure you have a list of sponsors and other non-paying guests at the door;
- Remember to complete a biosecurity risk plan for the day.

Publicity

- Consider publicising the event through the newspaper, radio and television;
- Organise for someone to take photos during the day for later publicity;
- Allocate someone from the group to be the key contact person for the media;
- Arrange for the media to interview the host farmer or key farmer from the group.

Trial booklet

- Use a standard page layout, format and font throughout the book;
- Include a table of contents with all trial sites and corresponding page numbers;
- Link table of contents to site map;
- Include programme, site or tour map, local rainfall and soil statistics;
- Provide space or a page or two for notes;
- Provide a who's who section with photos of grower group staff and executive committee;
- Include presenter's name next to topic in programme (people sometimes choose topic based on presenter);
- Only include trials on view during the day. If necessary, put additional trial results or information at the back;
- Consider including a page for each sponsor to advertise;
- Consider spiral binding the booklet for ease of use and try to reduce the number of loose inserts in the book;
- Organise an evaluation of the day, and consider prizes or beer tickets as reward for completing evaluation. You may also consider facilitating an evaluation session to ensure it happens. For an example evaluation template, see page 80.

On the day

- Start on time;
- Use a registration desk to issue name badges, trial booklets and evaluation form;
- Provide a map for latecomers to catch up with the tour;
- Consider charging a flat fee for larger or interstate groups to attend;
- Use a Master of Ceremonies to outline the day and welcome guests;
- Ensure presenters are kept to time limit;
- At each field site presentation use a committee or group member to:
  - introduce the presenter;
  - refer to relevant page number in trial booklet;
  - ask mobile phones to be switched to silent and any conversations to be completed well away from the presentation;
  - keep time during presentation;
  - repeat questions for all audience to hear;
  - give a vote of thanks.

- Ensure to check the microphone volume is at a sufficient level to discourage conversation – but not too loud;
- Provide poster display over lunch or locate next to machinery display.

After the day

- Hold a quick debriefing session straight after the event with the organising committee;
- Make sure to thank all those who assisted;
- Analyse the successes and problems of the day and plan for next year while it is still fresh in your mind;
- Prepare media releases for press and radio if journalists did not attend.

How to plan a project

Understand the project

There is a natural tendency to begin project planning with choosing the method of data collection, but often better to focus on clarifying the purpose for which it is being evaluated before choosing the methods.

Identify goals and outcomes: Planning a project first requires you to identify the goals and outcomes of the project. It is essential to have a concrete understanding of what the project is trying to achieve before getting started.

Consider the next users and end users: Next users are the people you try to influence in order to influence the people you want to see change with, the end users.

Surface the program logic

What is program logic?

Program logic is the rationale behind a program or project – what are understood to be the cause-and-effect relationships between project activities, outputs, intermediate outcomes, and ultimate outcomes.

While there are many derivations of program logic, the core of the framework is the development of a flow chart or process that represents the cause and effect relationships, or expected consequences, that are assumed to link program inputs to activities and eventually outcomes.

Program logic can be applied at the project, sub-project or even initiative level. There are various methods of program logic and each method has a slightly different emphasis. Program logic frameworks can also be applied while a program is underway, to examine what impact certain activities are assumed to have on a long term outcome (bottom up) or it can be used at the start of a program to tease out what activities to invest in to achieve a desired outcome (top down). One advantage of program logic is it maps out a pathway to an outcome which may not be realised for many years after the investment, so progress can be monitored at the steps in between investment and outcome. Targets can be set at each step and methods of evaluation established.

Different flavours of program logic

Program logic varies widely in terminology, with some using the terms 'program theory', 'program logic' and 'theory of action' interchangeably. Those commonly used in agriculture include:

- Bennett's Hierarchy – an example of a generic program theory model for agricultural extension. Using seven steps, it describes how extension projects are thought to bring about change.
- Program logic – (or spaghetti logic) – this is a diagram to represent the intermediate outcomes of your project. It starts with a blank sheet of paper, and the team develops a non-linear model based on group knowledge of the project.
- Logical frameworks or 'log frames' – a special matrix that asks questions at each level of a simple outcomes hierarchy. In addition to describing the outcomes at each level of the matrix, log frames also include a column for measurable indicators.
- The people-focused program logic model – is a program logic model with a focus on who we intend to engage with. It is described as people-focused, based on generic theories of change, is eminently flexible and is goal based.
- MAKAT: a MAKAT is a simplified version which teases out the things that have to happen between activities and practice change.

Why do program logic?

There are two main reasons for developing a program logic model:

1. To evaluate or clarify the logic of the project intervention – often when the project is in a stage of development or re-development.
2. To provide a framework to evaluate the performance of a project.

Bennett's Hierarchy

The most commonly used theory of change is that of 'voluntary behaviour change' and is represented in Bennett's Hierarchy. For example, a project may be designed to result in changes in people's knowledge, skills attitudes, aspirations or confidence. These changes may enable an individual to change the way they do things (practice change). If these changes happen then this may also contribute to achieving significant and lasting changes in social, economic or environmental conditions.

Bennett's Hierarchy for agricultural extension projects

Outcome Hierarchy		
7	SEE conditions	Social, economic and environmental conditions achieved through use of improved practices and technologies.
6	Practice Change	Participant adoption of improved practices and technologies.
5	KASA	Change in participant knowledge, attitudes, skills and aspirations associated with participation in extension activities.
4	Reactions	Participant ratings of their involvement in the extension activities and the potential benefits.
3	Next Users (Extension participants)	Scope, duration and intensity of participant involvement in the extension activities. Who participates: what are their characteristics and requirements?
2	Activities	Strategies, methods and scope of the extension events and the communication efforts.
1	Resources	Time, money, and staff (including volunteers) used to plan, promote, implement, and evaluate programs. Also, research-based educational materials, organisational maintenance, communication technologies, and transportation.

MAKAT

To complete this program logic

Develop the 'generic' outcomes for the program/project. For example:

Outcomes

Growers and advisors using processes (or tools/packages) to do something, equipping them with the skills/ability to manage risk/their farm business/a part of their enterprise and generate profits. By:

- Improving something
- Increasing something
- Optimising profit through something.

Identify issues that if addressed would contribute to the desired outcomes.

For each issue, identify one practice for farmers/advisors to change. If farmers/advisors did this it would contribute to the outcome.

A MAKAT analysis is required for each practice. To undertake a MAKAT analysis construct a simple table with the five points for consideration (motivation, attitude, knowledge, ability, tools/technology).

In the second column describe the current situation in relation to motivation or attitude or knowledge. Dot points will do. Then in the next column describe what the motivation, attitude, knowledge … needs to be like to so farmers undertake the practice

Motivation

- The reason(s) for action
- What compels action (eg need, desire, hope, ambition, competition etc)
- The stimulus or incentive
- The circumstances that trigger action

Attitude

- A way of thinking or doing
- A state of mind
- A personal point of view (opinion or perception) that shapes behaviour
- A perspective

Knowledge

- Information in the hands of the user
- Information they need to know to adopt a practice
- Understanding information
- Adding value to information (data)

Ability

- The capability to do something you want
- The capacity to apply knowledge
- Competency
- Expertise
- Skill
- Experience

Technology / tools

- A tool to achieve a practice change
- A methodology to achieve a desired outcome
- A process
- The application of a process.

MAKAT	Where are we now in relation to the practice	Where do we need to be to get the practice adopted
Motivation		
Attitude		
Knowledge		
Ability		
Tools/technology		

Once this is completed, it needs to be turned into a 'story', so when you read it you get an appreciation of where we are now and where we need to get to.

To get the activities you look at the MAKAT and identify what activity would 'bridge the gap' from now to what it needs to be like. We don't need to do this until the MAKAT is done.

NB: Don't die in a ditch over whether the thought is an attitude, or ability or knowledge thing. These are only prompts to make sure we consider lots of different aspects.

Definitions used in program logic

Outcome

- The change that occurs from adopting a practice
- The result of changing practice
- The impact of changing practice
- The effect of changing practice
- The change in the current state

Time is an important consideration

- Aspirational outcome (typically a 20 – 50 year timeframe)
- Outcome (typically a 10 – 20 year timeframe)
- Intermediate outcome (typically a 5 – 10 year time frame)

Practice

- an action
- a behaviour
- a process
- the use of a tool or technology
- a social structure

In program logic this level is often referred to as practice change, suggesting there is a need to change from one type of practice (possibly doing nothing) to another. However in some circumstances the appropriate actions may already be practiced, so it may be important to ensure this practice is maintained.

Evaluating your project

Consider evaluation audience and their evaluation questions:

It's important to find out what the evaluation audience requires from an evaluation framework by:

- Identifying the evaluation audiences;
- Engaging with the evaluation audience to identify if they have any additional evaluation questions or requirements;
- Identifying if your team has any additional evaluation questions.

Choose methods

In choosing methods, you should consider the purpose of the evaluation, cost, time, skill availability, resources and the various biases of the methods.

Design and data analysis

It is important to think about when to collect the data, who to collect the data from, the sample size and sampling approach, if comparisons are needed and the audience requirement for rigour.

Monitoring, utilisation and learning strategies

To evaluate the project, consider the following questions:

- Who will conduct fieldwork to address the evaluation questions?
- What additional resources are needed? Eg. Budget, time, training, external help etc.
- Who will develop the final evaluation findings/recommendations?
- How will the results of the final evaluation be presented/reported?

Using the results from the final evaluation:

How will you ensure that the findings get used by your project team and others?

Acknowledgements: Clear Horizon, Agribusiness Training Program Planning for Evaluation, 2009

Template: Submission writing

Grants are provided by government (local, state and national), charitable trusts, and by community organisations (eg Lotteries, Rotary, etc). Each grant has a specific purpose, objective and target group.

Writing successful grant submissions can require much time and effort, so it is essential to quickly and efficiently determine if a grant will suit your group. Be prepared. Have draft project activity ideas that can quickly be tailored to match available grants. Suggestions for quickly scanning grants for suitability include:

Look first at the grants factsheets or guidelines

First identify –

- What the grant is for, ie. their needs.
  - Do they match your needs or can you tailor a project to suit?
  - Does the grant help you achieve your strategic plan?
  - Are the timelines appropriate?
- Look at what they will fund (and won't fund).
  - If they don't fund salaries, do you really want to proceed?
  - If they don't fund administration, travel, etc. do you really want to proceed?
- Remember a small grant (eg. $5000) may take just as much time to complete as $50,000 submission.
- Any amount over $50,000 – $200,000+ will require much more reporting and governance.

Second, review the criteria

- Do you meet the eligibility criteria? Be realistic.
- Can you quickly devise a rough plan/project that would meet all the criteria?
- Do you have the time and resources (besides the money from the grant) to complete the project?
- Do you require committee approval to proceed, or will the project directly contribute towards achievement of the strategic plan?

Review the entire guidelines and submission documents. Make notes, and highlight words and sentences that you may want to include in your submission, as you go. This will assist you later when writing the submission.

- Prepare a rough project plan.
  - The more thoroughly you have thought through the project, the easier the submission will be to write (eg. what, how, who, when, costs, etc.)

Reasons why applications/submissions aren't successful include:

- Wrong bucket: the project doesn't match the targets of what the government wants to fund.
- Didn't meet criteria:
  - Didn't answer the question/criteria (even if you think you did);
  - Often too much detail is provided about the how, but not the why – or vice versa;
    - Remember to write your submission using the language, and background information, that the grant details discuss;
  - Their needs are not achieved by your project, ie. you must tailor your project to what the government want;
    - This may include expanding the project so what you need becomes a component of a larger project that also provides what they need.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Title

The title should suggest what the project is about, and be clear.

Project summary

The submission should begin with a brief overview of what the project will do, who the target audience is or who it will benefit, and when (ie. what needs will be satisfied?). It is recommended to complete the summary after completing the submission.

Problems

What problems will be solved, or benefits or advantages will be achieved through the completion of this project.

Objectives

What does the project hope to achieve? What are the outcomes?

- List the tangible products the project will produce (new technology, new methods, training program, brochure, etc);
- Provide real measures to demonstrate the success of the project;
- Discuss risks, and how the project will reduce them;
- Identify any flow-on effects (ie. additional benefits, advantages).

Justification of need

Why should anybody fund this project? It is essential to demonstrate a real need and to justify that need (ie. to solve problems or create change).

- Has the project been attempted before, or elsewhere?
  - Why did it succeed, or fail?
- Who will benefit? Demonstrate and illustrate the benefits;
- Any statistics or data to validate your claim?
- Are there any long term benefits?
- Include letters of support from supporters and advocates;
- Source referencing: use quotes from other reports to validate that your project matches their needs (especially reports prepared by the grant body/department):
  - use other reports (eg, government action agendas) providing data or information that aligns with your project (ie. supports the need and demand);
  - use quotes that support your idea/project but not too many quotes, enough to show you know what they want, and know the literature;
  - Web search the funding body to access jargon, priorities and objectives.

Project plan

- Describe the project activities (project design and plan) in detail, that is, how you propose to implement the project and how it will be coordinated;
- Describe the sequence and flow of the project (any equipment, facilities, etc);
- Present activities that can be accomplished in the time frame;
- Describe the time frame;
- Who is involved in the project? You may need to attach separate information.

Evaluation and measurement

How will you demonstrate or prove that your project (once completed) has achieved its objectives, and solved the problem or provided great benefits?

- Who will evaluate?
- What criteria or measures did you build into the project?
- Can you budget for an evaluation?

Budget

How much the project will cost, and the relative value needs to be clearly outlined. Many grants may have specific financial reporting frameworks or structures.

What will the grant fund? Useful budget categories include:

- Staff, including EO salary (as project manager), administration officer,

research officer eg. six hours per week x length of project (also include the same amount as 'in-kind');

- Other consultant costs;
- Administration costs (postage, stationary);
- Travel costs:
  - Telephone and communications;
  - Printing – includes photocopying, agenda/minute production, etc;
  - Equipment;
  - Marketing and promotion for communicating the results/outcomes of the project (eg printing a brochure/flyer);
  - Venue costs (for meetings, include catering costs);
  - Insurances;
  - Audit costs Don't over estimate the costs. Funding bodies (especially government) require very clear financial reporting as the project may need to be audited.
- What in-kind resources can you access? For example, a steering committee of volunteers would include eight people at $100 per hour for five meetings of three hours is $9,600 in-kind support. Other examples of in-kind support include:
  - EO costs/wages;
  - Administration staff costs;
  - Rent support and venue support – if meetings are held in your building you don't have to pay for venues.

Attachments to submissions

Letters of Support: the ability to provide letters of support for any project are very well received by grant providers. The more significant the support, or the supporter (eg. industry leader, politician), the better. It demonstrates that you have communicated with the community, sought to research the need; that you have a good idea and others think so too and that you have industry/ community confidence in you (ie. less risk to grant body). Also include organisational brochures and/or marketing material, anything that demonstrates your success with other grants or projects and brief CVs to demonstrate competencies and experience.

Do's and Don'ts

- Do learn about the funding body;
- Don't expect to make money;
- Do expect to be very accountable;
- Don't over or under estimate the budget;
- Don't expect emotive writing to help you;
- Don't expect to influence the application process;
- Do tailor your applications to each funding body, and grant;
- Do present a clear and well written submission;
- Don't expect to be able to do what you want, when you want, there are always very specific time frames and accountability frameworks.

Acknowledgements: David Nissen & Associates on behalf of the Grower Group Alliance, ourcommunity. com.au

Template: Strategic plan

Strategic plans should encompass the next one to five years, and encourage the group to ask – where are we now? – where do we need to be? – how will we get there? – how will we know we got there? They should also be:

- Realistic, that is, achievable with the current resources in the specified time. Analysis needs to be conducted to ensure the ability to implement the strategic plan;
- 'Big picture', and cover the organisations vision, the most critical issues facing the organisation. The objectives should address the mission or core business of the organisation;
- Performance measures should be real and able to be assessed and measured, to easily see if objectives have been met:
  - Real measures include – %, $, time, number, total, quantity, reporting, ROI [return on investment];
  - More difficult measures include – value, impact, relevance.

It may be necessary to develop more detailed operational plans for each key activity identified. The strategic plan template will help your group clarify its vision, purpose, objectives, strategies and tactics towards those strategies. Use the strategy template for every strategy developed.

Start up Strategic Plan

Vision

Purpose

Objectives					

Strategies					

Tactics					

Start up Strategic Plan

	Tactic	Actions – how will we go about it	Who we need to involve/ consult	What resources do we need/cost	Responsibility
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					

Template: Risk Management

Risk is a normal part of developing and delivering a service. One of the key functions of the committee and staff is to understand the risks faced by the organisation, and to facilitate the management of these risks. In order to manage risk you need to conduct risk assessments on a regular basis in accordance with a risk management procedure. To begin, fill in the Risk Management Checklist, rating the risks to the following categories:

- Potential: A (almost certain), B (likely), C (Moderate), D (unlikely), E (rare)
- Impact: A (catastrophic), B (major), C (moderate), D (minor), E (insignificant)

Use the Risk Management Matrix to plot the 'Potential' and 'Impact' scores.

For risks identified in the matrix as 'Crucial' or 'Action Advised', prepare risk management strategies for them. The following are some suggested strategies that may be adopted to manage these risks. List the crucial and action advised risks in a table and match them with a proposed management strategy, such as:

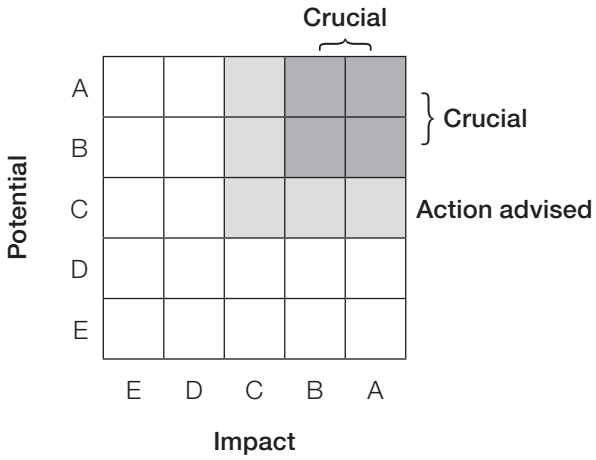
1. Policies and procedures on matters such as management, director recruitment and selection, code of conduct, volunteer management, grievance procedures, privacy policy, OH&S, discrimination, delegations of authority;
2. Job descriptions and guidelines;
3. External review/audit of operations;
4. Continuous improvement procedures;
5. Checklists to assist in identifying the risk of a project;
6. Suggestions on techniques for complying with contracts;
7. Compliance schedule of possible legislation and best practice compliance measures;
8. Work instructions;
9. Professional development;
10. Risk identification and reporting procedures.

Risk Management Checklist

Financial Risks	Potential	Impact
1. Liquidity and cash flow risk: not enough funds to cover expenses at any point in time		
2. Revenue source risk: overly reliant on funding one source of funds		
3. Fraud risks: staff or volunteers misappropriating funds		
Strategic Risks	**Potential**	**Impact**
1. Changes in funding body rules for distributing funds for programs		
2. Inadequate management by managers leading to unclear strategic direction		
3. Inadequate managerial role in risk leading to little emphasis on risk management		
4. Drop in member numbers		
5. Lack of support at events		
6. Burnout of committee/staff		
7. Old/no strategic plan		
Hazard Risks	**Potential**	**Impact**
1. Occupational Health and Safety risk		
2. Facility risks with old and or unsafe facilities not suited for your activities		
3. Security of participants		
Operational Risks	**Potential**	**Impact**
1. Lack of succession planning for staff		
2. Lack of accounting and financial control practices		
3. Risk of non-compliance with contracts, especially funding contracts		
4. Risk of non-compliance with legislation that affects your organisation		
5. IT and data loss risk		
6. Employee termination leading to disputes		

7.	Not transferring knowledge to other staff so cross skilling can occur		
8.	Intellectual property and copyright risk of losing control over materials you have developed or use		
9.	Privacy risk leading to a breach of privacy		
10.	Harassment risk		
11.	High turnover of staff		
12.	Inability to pay competitive wages		
13.	Inadequate insurance and public liability covers, no board insurance		
14.	No job descriptions and guidelines for staff		

Risk Management Matrix



Template: Evaluation

Below is a template for evaluating the success of your event (tailor the questions to suit your event). The event planning questions can be asked either pre- or post-event, as these can form the basis of your preparations for an upcoming event, or for the next time you hold an event. Ensure you also gather information about the people attending your event:

- Gender
- Age bracket
- Occupation
- Number of people who came with them
- Accommodation used, etc.

Questions to ask	Suggested question type	Additional suggestions
Event planning (pre or post event)		
Rank what is most important to you in attending an event.	Rank items numerically.	Depending on your event planning needs, you might include answer choices such as: • Convenience of event location • Cost • Availability of parking • My interest in the scheduled speakers • Topics covered are useful to me • Timing of event fit into my schedule • Availability of networking time
What day/time do you prefer to attend an event?	Single-select multiple choice, *OR* Multi-select multiple choice.	If you want respondents to choose their top choice for a day/time, make the question a single-select question. If you want to know all of the days/times that they would be able to attend the event, make the question a multi-select question.

How far are you willing to travel?	Single-select multiple choice.	
Do you prefer networking before, during or after an event?	Single-select multiple choice, *OR* Multi-select multiple choice.	
Rate your preference of an event on the following topics.		
Do you have any suggestions for topics? If so, what?	Single-select multiple choice.	Use 'Yes' and 'No' for the answer choices, then include a comments area to capture the suggested topics.
Do you have any suggestions for speakers? If so, who?	Single-select multiple choice.	Use 'Yes' and 'No' for the answer choices, then include a comments area to capture the suggested speakers.
Event satisfaction (post event)		
How satisfied are you with the event?	Rate one item on a scale.	Include a comments area to find out why respondents rated the event as they did. Your rating scale might be: • Very satisfied • Somewhat satisfied • Neutral • Somewhat dissatisfied • Very dissatisfied

Please rate your satisfaction with the following parts of the event.	Rate items on a scale.	You might want to include rating scale answer choices such as: • Very satisfied • Somewhat satisfied • Neutral • Somewhat dissatisfied • Very dissatisfied You might list sessions and/or speakers from your agenda or you might ask readers to rate the following more general attributes of your events: • Cost • Location • Exhibits/sessions • Ease of transportation or parking • Length of event • Topic/theme • Profile of other attendees • Food and beverages provided at breaks
How likely are you to recommend this event to a friend or colleague?	Single-select multiple choice.	Include a comments area in the question to find out why respondents rated the event as they did.
Why did you attend our event? Select all that apply.	Multi-select multiple choice.	Be sure to include an 'other' choice. Answer choices might include: • For networking • Interest in event topic • To support the organisation • You know the organisers or participants

How did you learn of our event? Select all that apply.	Multi-select multiple choice with open-ended text.	Answer choices might include: • In the media (newspaper, magazine, trade journal, billboards, etc) • Business network • Membership announcement • Through a friend • On the internet • While passing the event location Be sure to include an 'other' choice so you can capture data from people who learned of the event from a source you did not anticipate.
What were your greatest take-aways from the event?	Open-ended text.	
Was the duration of the event:	Single-select multiple choice.	Answer choices might include: • Much too long • A little long • Just right • A little short • Much too short
Was the price of the event:	Single-select multiple choice.	Answer choices might include: • Very expensive • Somewhat expensive • Priced right • Somewhat inexpensive • Very inexpensive
Which of our other events are you aware of?	Multi-select multiple choice.	
Please provide suggestions for improving our future events.	Open-ended text.	Give respondents as much room as possible for answering open-ended text questions.

Acknowledgements: Guide No. 12 How to Evaluate Your Event, www.wagga.nsw.gov.au/eventsguide; Sample Survey Questions, Answers and Tips, www.constantcontact.com.

Template: Job description for an executive officer

Job Title: Executive Officer

Appointed by: Committee/Board

Accountable to: Committee/Board Supervises: Staff (list or identify)

ROLE STATEMENT

The (grower group) is a progressive and vibrant grower driven group from the (shires).

We are seeking a highly motivated and enthusiastic executive officer to ....

The executive officer will work under the supervision of the (grower group) committee/board to.....

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES (edit to suit group/role)

Working under the guidance of a management committee the successful applicant will be required to:

Committee/Board & Secretariat Management

- Coordinate and manage all aspects of secretariat:
  - Act as Ex-Officio – non-voting (and other roles as determined eg. Treasurer/Secretary);
  - Establish and use appropriate protocols;
  - Coordinate the preparation of all reports to committee/board;
- Provide leadership in the development of organisational objectives, mission, goals, plans, budgets and projects;
- Interfaces between committee/board and all staff;
- Ensure all organisational members/committee/staff follow the organisation's protocols;
- Coordinate and manage all sub-committees and activities (through delegation and reporting).

Program, project and service delivery

- Ensure the development and implementation of strategic plans, operational plans, project plans and management, performance measures and budgets.

- Efficient coordination, facilitation, and management of the organisation's activities and operations.
- Makes recommendations to committee/board as required (or as opportunities arise):
  - Analyse industry data, reports, etc;
  - Communication with stakeholders;
- Coordination and delivery of other objectives as required (ie. events).

Financial management

- Maintain and coordinate financial management protocols and practice;
- Provide committee management meetings with financials to-date or other reports as required;
- Develop budgets for the organisation, projects and organisational activities;
- Review approved plans and budgets as required;
- Identify potential sources of revenue;
- Be responsible for all project acquittals (and final reports).

Staff management

- Effectively manage all staff relations;
- Establish and maintain appropriate human resource management policy and practice;
- Ensure staff appraisal and performance measurement is conducted;
- Determine staffing requirements for all organisational projects and activities;
- Manage all projects, through delegation;
- Ensure appropriate communication systems are in place for all staff (eg. staff meetings, project reporting, etc.).

Member, community and public relations

- Ensure the organisation (objectives, mission, projects, etc.) is consistently presented in a strong and positive manner to all stakeholders;
- Identify and articulate (through projects and activities) the needs of members, subcommittees and all relevant stakeholders;
- Establish and/or maintain the necessary relationships/contacts with essential stakeholders;
- Establish and/or maintain consultative networks within key industry stakeholders and groups;

- Formally represent the organisation as required;
- Develop appropriate information, public relations and communication methodologies (eg newsletters, media releases, website, etc.).

Accessing funding

- Research funding sources;
- Establish plans and methodologies for accessing project funds and operational funding;
- Coordinate and manage all submissions;
- Identify further funding opportunities:
  - Sponsorship
  - Sales and marketing (products/ services)
  - Membership fees
  - Member subscriptions
  - Membership categories
  - Event management (ie. further paid events)

PREREQUISITES: (Minimum requirements fundamental and indispensable to the duties, e.g. Certificate of Secondary Education).

Degree in Agricultural Science; Diploma of Agriculture; or Certificate of Agriculture

General knowledge of Australian broadacre farming system, products and technologies

Ability and experience in leading and managing teams; organisational management; decision making and problem solving

A high level of proficiency of computing skills including: website construction and maintenance, word processing, publication creation, spreadsheets, databases, and email.

Current “C” class drivers licence.

SELECTION CRITERIA: (Including additional qualifications, training, abilities, knowledge, personal attributes, skills and/or experience that would make highly effective performance of the job more probable).

Ability and experience with financial resource management (eg. Planning, budgeting, financial reporting)

Superior coordination skills (time management, organised, systematic etc.)

High level of communication skills at all levels within the industry and the wider community

High level of negotiation skills

High level of group facilitation/management skills

Marketing skills (eg promoting the organisation, outcomes/results)

Ability to interpret, analyse and evaluate research data and industry reports

Proven ability in developing and implementing strategic and operation plans

Attention to detail

Ability to work independently, be self- motivated, show initiative and work productively as part of a team

Flexible and able to manage multiple tasks

Strong drive and motivation

Demonstrated affinity for working with farmers

NOTE:

- This template is for groups to modify and suit to their requirements;
- Recruitment and selection should include interview questions that identify the required skills and competencies (ie. prepare detailed interview format).

Template: Job description for an project officer/R&D coordinator/extension officer

Job Title: Project Officer

Appointed by: Committee/Board/Executive Officer

Accountable to: Executive Officer

ROLE STATEMENT

The (grower group) is a progressive and vibrant grower driven group from the (shires).

We are seeking a highly motivated and enthusiastic project officer to coordinate research and development (R&D) projects in the (grower group) area.

The project officer will work under the supervision of the (grower group) executive officer to coordinate, implement, monitor and document the (grower group) trials and demonstrations. The project officer will also be required to assist the executive officer in extending these results to (grower group) members and partners through R&D program events, workshops and publications.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

Working in conjunction with the executive officer and under the guidance of a management committee the successful applicant will be required to:

Prioritise grower research needs and develop an R&D plan by linking growers and other industry representatives (such as Department of Agriculture and Food, Elders, Landmark, CSBP, UWA, CSIRO). This will involve coordinating local industry research, investigating new technologies and conducting on-farm validation with growers.

Conduct farm visits pre-season to determine grower on-farm research priorities.

Coordinate and manage the Spring Field Day and Crop Updates.

Coordination of main trial site, satellite sites and all other production and NRM based projects developed by growers.

Be responsible for preparing research reports for all trials and demonstration sites. Prepare project reports, papers and presentations for publication as a co-author and present project findings to seminars and conferences and when appropriate submit relevant articles to farming publications.

Attend and actively contribute to R&D Committee meetings.

Develop and maintain responsive statewide networks and alliances, keeping abreast of current trends and information to ensure project stakeholders are kept up to date.

Other duties as required.

PREREQUISITES: (Minimum requirements fundamental and indispensable to the duties, e.g. Certificate of Secondary Education).

Applicants who fail to meet prerequisite requirements will not be interviewed.

Degree in Agricultural Science; Diploma of Agriculture; or Certificate of Agriculture.

General knowledge of Australian broadacre farming system, products and technologies.

A high level of proficiency of computing skills including: website construction and maintenance, word processing, publication creation, spreadsheets, databases, and email.

Current "C" class drivers licence.

SELECTION CRITERIA: (Including additional qualifications, training, abilities, knowledge, personal attributes, skills and/or experience that would make highly effective performance of the job more probable).

Knowledge of or experience in scientific methods and analytical procedures appropriate to agricultural research.

Knowledge of research trial management – experience in research trial management and monitoring is desirable.

Experience in the writing of scientific reports.

Experience in liaising and coordinating with contractors and service providers.

Excellent time management skills and ability to work effectively under pressure during peak seasonal periods.

Highly developed organisational skills and demonstrated ability to set priorities and to meet deadlines.

Ability to work independently, be self- motivated, show initiative and work productively as part of a team.

Highly developed written and verbal communication skills.

Demonstrated affinity for working with farmers.

NOTE:

- This template is for groups to modify and suit to their requirements;
- Recruitment and selection should include interview questions that identify the required skills and competencies (ie. prepare detailed interview format).

Template: Sponsorship proposal and agreement

Tips on developing the sponsorship proposal

- Keep it simple and concise;
- Focus on your groups objectives;
- A guide to your proposal:
  - An overview;
  - The group or event;
  - Target audience. Clearly identify the opportunity, the demographics of your group's members;
  - Marketing plan;
  - Description – how the event will fit into the sponsor's marketing plan;
  - List of benefits (value and time period). Clearly identify the benefits – and make sure they are tangible and attractive.

Explain why you have singled out that company as a candidate for the position you are pitching (thus, show some knowledge of and empathy for the company, their products and their target audience.

Depending on the circumstances and the nature of the company being pitched, it may be useful to include the level of business your members do with that company or better still, expand on the potential new business the opportunity represents to that company.

The sponsorship agreement

Draw up a sponsorship agreement setting out exactly:

- Who the agreement is with;
- Who the contact people in each organisation will be;
- What is required of both the sponsor and the group and when it is required;
- How long the sponsorship goes for (does it just cover an event, run for a year etc?;
- How any logo or branding can be used by either the company or the group;
- Whether approval is needed for any media release, advertisement or use of images/logos etc;
- How any disputes will be settled;
- Ownership of trials and intellectual property.

Be generous when it comes to thanking and acknowledging your sponsors on stage, in newsletters, in programs, in speeches etc. Invite and include them in other activities not necessarily associated with their sponsorship.

Group name

Organisation name

Sponsorship agreement

This document formalises the major/minor/event sponsorship agreement between XXX and YYY, for the period of DD/MM/YY to DD/MM/YY.

The sponsorship comprises cash/knowledge/information/materials etc provided by XXX to YYY.

Group/Event Background

Including demonstrated ability to deliver results.

Membership and Partnerships

Who is your group made up of? Who will be attending your event and how many will you reach? Who else are you associated with? What makes your group and the sponsorship so unique? Why was this sponsor selected?

What does the group get?

What will the money be spent on ie. delivery of professional events, access to information etc. What is the sponsor offering you? When, and for how long?

What does the sponsor get?

- Access to xxx farmers, xxx arable acreage, xxx tonnes delivered in area;
- Attendance at meetings, free attendance at events, opportunities for presentations;
- Articles and advertisements in newsletters;
- Banners at events, items to give away, display space;
- Membership/attendance at board/committee meetings;

and so on.

Payment Structure

- Major sponsor, $XXXX (including when paid);
- Minor sponsor, $XXXX;
- Provision of materials etc.

Intellectual property

The results of all trials, demonstrations, seminars, workshops and any other activities coordinated by the group and supported or carried out by the sponsor, are the property of the group.

Key contacts

For the group and the sponsor.

Signed by sponsor.

Signed by group representative.

Template: Incorporation

The process to incorporate an association is relatively simple. The major steps are:

- check the availability of your intended name;
- advertise your intention to incorporate;
- develop a set of rules for the good management of your association;
- apply for incorporation on the prescribed form; and – once your application is approved, a certificate of incorporation will be forwarded.

Each of these steps, as applicable in Western Australia, is described in more detail below.

Advertise

Before you advertise, contact the Department of Commerce and request confirmation that the intended name of the association would be available for registration under section 8(1) of the Associations Incorporation Act (1987). Submit an enquiry on Form 8 – 'Enquiry as to Availability of an Association Name') which can be downloaded at www.docep.wa.gov.au/consumerprotection/PDF/Associations/AssociationsForm8.pdf, and faxed back to DOCEP on 08 9282 0948.

A person applying for incorporation of an association must place an 'Advertisement of Intended Application for Incorporation' (Form 2) in a newspaper circulating in the area where the association is situated or conducts its affairs. The advertisement must be published not less than one month and not more than three months before the application is lodged with the department. A copy of the advertisement from the newspaper is to be attached to the application. Form 2 is found at www.docep.wa.gov.au/consumerprotection/PDF/ Associations/AssociationsForm2.pdf.

Develop a set of rules

The Act requires an incorporated association to have its own set of rules which govern the day-to-day management of the association. A copy of these rules (often referred to as a constitution) must be lodged with the department. The department has developed a model set of rules taking in all the requirements specified by the Act.

These model rules may be downloaded from the DOCEP website:

www.docep.wa.gov.au/consumerprotection/Content/Business/Associations/model_rules-Incorporation.html

Make application

Complete all details on Form 1 – 'Application for Incorporation of an Association', downloaded at www.docep.wa.gov.au/consumerprotection/PDF/Associations/AssociationsForm1.pdf. Make sure that the name of the association concludes with the word 'Incorporated' or the abbreviation 'Inc.' and that the name is shown in exactly the same way in the association's set of rules. Lodge the completed form with the department; ensure that you attach/include:

- a copy of the newspaper advertisement;
- an endorsed copy of the association's rules; and
- the application fee plus any other fees payable.

Your certificate

Once your association is incorporated a Certificate of Incorporation will be issued. This is evidence of the association's corporate status and should be kept securely. It will be needed in order to open bank accounts or to access grants from certain funding agencies.

ABN – do I need one?

The ABN is a unique 11 digit identifying number that businesses use when dealing with other businesses. For example, you generally need to put your ABN on your invoices, or other documents relating to sales that you make. If you don't, other businesses may withhold 46.5 per cent from any payment to you. You also need an ABN in certain dealings with the Tax Office and other areas of government.

Registering for an ABN is not compulsory, but you will need one to register for the GST and to apply for funding.

Reasons to have an ABN:

- helps you claim goods and services tax (GST) credits;
- lets you claim fuel tax credits you qualify for;
- if not quoted to businesses you deal with, may result in amounts being withheld from payments to you under pay as you go (PAYG) withholding;
- allows businesses to easily confirm your details for ordering and invoicing.

Applying for your ABN online:

Go to www.abr.gov.au and click on 'Apply for Australian Business Number (ABN)'. Provided your details can be validated, you will receive your ABN immediately. Written confirmation of your ABN registration will follow. An ABN is free.

GST – should I register?

If your not-for-profit organisation has a GST turnover of $150,000 or more you must register for GST and you'll need an ABN to do this. If your business has a lower GST turnover, it's up to you whether you register.

Visit www.abr.gov.au and click on 'Apply for Goods and Services Tax (GST)' to register.

Generally, registered businesses:

- include GST in the price of sales to their customers
- claim credits for the GST included in the price of their business purchases.

So while GST is paid at each step in the supply chain, businesses do not actually bear the economic cost of the tax. The cost of GST is borne by the final consumer who can not claim GST credits.

Your GST turnover is your gross business income (not your profit). If you are not registered for GST, you must check regularly whether you have reached the GST turnover threshold. If you reach the threshold, you must register for GST within 21 days to avoid penalties and interest.

For more information, visit:
www.ato.gov.au/businesses/pathway.asp?pc=001/003/103.

Useful links

Need more help? Try these useful websites:

Department of Commerce:
www.docep.wa.gov.au/consumerprotection/Content/Business/Associations/index.htm

Our Community: www.ourcommunity.com.au

WA Small Business Development Corporation: www.smallbusiness.wa.gov.au

WACOSS: www.wacoss.org.au

Grants link: www.grantslink.gov.au

Research organisations:

GRDC: www.grdc.com.au

CSIRO: www.csiro.au/clw

Department of Agriculture and Food WA: www.agric.wa.gov.au

Faculty of Science, UWA: www.science.uwa.edu.au

Institute of Agriculture, UWA: www.ioa.uwa.edu.au

Murdoch University: www.murdoch.edu.au

Curtin University (Muresk): www.curtin.edu.au

Grower group websites:

Ag Excellence Alliance: www.agex.org.au

Corrigin Farm Improvement Group: www.cfig.asn.au/

Evergreen Farming: www.evergreen.asn.au/

Facey Group: www.faceygroup.asn.au/

Fitzgerald Bioshpere Group: www.fbg.org.au

The Grower Group Alliance: www.gga.org.au

Liebe Group: www.liebegroup.org.au

Moora Miling Pasture Improvement Group www.mmpig.org.au/

Mingenew Irwin Group: www.mig.org.au

North East Farming Futures: www.neffgroup.com.au

North Stirlings Pallinup Natural Resource Group: www.nspnr.com.au/

SEPWA: www.sepwa.org.au

Southern DIRT: www.southerndirt.com.au

WANTFA: www.wantfa.com.au

West Midlands Group: www.wmgroup.org.au