

Gun Club Philosophy

DEVELOPMENT

Club supervision: The club's management will be under the supervision of a board of directors or a club manager. In the case of the board, sometimes the club is run through volunteer help. Committees will be formed to handle certain duties. To insure success of the club, the board must be certain that they select motivated individuals to handle the area of club development. In some cases, the board will hire a manager to run the club. This is a paid employee who is responsible for the operation and promotion of the club. This person reports to the board and is responsible to them for all business involving the club.

In either case, for the club to be active and successful, the board and manager must look at the overall picture. Focus must be on the shooting activities of the club; whether it is skeet, trap, sporting clays, rifle, pistol or archery. Interests of the area will dictate which sport will draw the most. The club, however, must constantly strive to build excitement in all disciplines in order to survive.

GETTING PEOPLE TO THE CLUB

The shooting activities of the club will be dependent on two groups of people; club members and the general public who will make up your attendance roster. It is important to note that a shooting range itself will not draw people to your club. The atmosphere surrounding your club will be the key to success at any level. There are several key items that need to be considered in order to have a good atmosphere at the club.

- A. Clubhouse: This is an area where shooters and their families will spend a lot of time when visiting your club. The clubhouse is a place where shooters like to lounge and relax after a days shooting. Often, when the shooter's family accompanies him or her to the field, they will spend their time in the clubhouse. It should be cleaned on a daily basis and, if possible, have food and beverages served at the clubhouse. Food must be of good quality and at a reasonable price.
- B. Comfortable chairs and tables need to be in place along with a color TV for the shooters' enjoyment. Always remember that the shooter is only on the range for a short time. The remainder of his visit will be spent in the clubhouse, so make his stay pleasant.
- C. A pro shop where the shooter can purchase shooting related items is also a nice feature. Keep the prices affordable so the shooter can shoot more often.
- D. A bulletin board with club information is a necessity.
- E. The better the club, the higher the membership will be. Make your general public feel welcome and anxious to join.

- F. Club grounds: Keep the grounds in neat and attractive in appearance. Make sure the grass is mowed and trimmed on a regular basis. Keep empty hulls and garbage policed and make certain water jugs and cups are on the fields. Between rounds, sweep the broken pieces from the shooting stations.
- G. This may sound like trivial tasks, however, trivial tasks such as these are what shooters appreciate and will keep them coming back. The more a shooter feels he or she is being pampered, the more he or she will appreciate it.

CLUB EMPLOYEES

Whether it is the part-time puller, manager, cashier, or caretaker, each and every employee must demonstrate a **POSITIVE, HELPFUL ATTITUDE**. Hire people who are sincere and want to promote the game. Employees should be clean-cut, polite, and energetic. “Good morning sir, how can I help you?” “Thank you very much sir, please come back soon.” “Nice shooting sir, it was a real pleasure pulling for you” The above are examples of expressions that will cause more shooters to return to your club than would a blue light special at the pro shop. Interview each employee and be certain they are sincere. People can smell a phony a mile away. Employees must be willing to spend time with new shooters and answer questions for them. “What is Skeet?” “What is Trap?” “How much should I lead this one?” Sound familiar? All employees need to be given a complete training program and be completely familiar with the rules and safety regulations of the club. Hire people who understand gun clubs.

PRICING

Each general geographic area and the climate of wages therein, will dictate how much you charge and the volume your club will have. If your volume is small, your money will come from membership. All factors must be considered when setting your prices for targets and membership fees. As mentioned earlier, a club with a small volume will need to derive its operating capital from membership dues. One way to encourage membership is to offer discount rates to members. Make the discount significant enough to make a membership valuable. If you choose this route, you must “stick to your guns” and not sell non-members targets and other items at the member rate.

BUILDING EXCITEMENT

This is the most important area your club needs to work on. Without something to shoot for, they will quickly lose interest. Shooters who get bored will not be around long. You must be innovative and give the shooters something to practice for. Your area will determine what type and how often "Fun Shoots" are required. In some areas a "Turkey Shoot" may generate interest. Other areas may require skeet, trap, sporting games, etc. By experimenting and listening to the shooters, you will have a successful club. Depending on other clubs in your area, you will find that holding a "Fun Shoot" on a periodic basis will keep interest at the club; monthly, biweekly, weekly, whatever the members seem to be most attracted to. Another way to keep constant activity is league shooting. By running several leagues throughout the year, shooters are kept in touch on a regular basis.

In closing, remember the key to successful gun club management is the cooperation of the management and the board of directors. This is the backbone of any club.



Fun Shoot

June 23-25 2000

**Don't
Miss Out!**

- Door Prizes
- Steak Cook-out
- Food
- Fun

Come on out and Shoot!