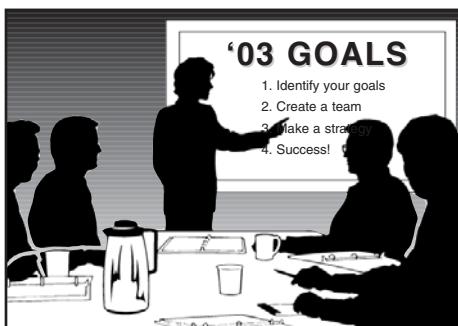


What Are Your Association's Goals?

By Brian Goodlander



Why set goals? Goals are important. They give you something to strive for, something to measure as success. Your officials association should have the same types of goals. These goals may include: "Lessen the yearly turnover rate of officials by 10 percent each year

for the next three years" or "Provide quality training once a month with a clear, professional presentation and clear objectives" or "Identify three new officials and enlist them with a mentor to improve their officiating experience."

Identifying your goals. Often the hardest part of setting goals is identifying them. That often seems like a silly process that will have a predestined outcome. However, you may be very surprised. The leadership of the association needs to drive that identification. That can be isolated to the board discussion or preferably discussed openly in an association meeting. A good choice is to open the discussion in the first major association meeting of the year. That can

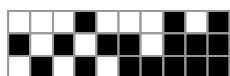
be public or private. Some people are more than willing to give their opinion on what the association should achieve. Others are not comfortable with voicing their opinions in an open forum. Discover new ways to extract those thoughts from your association. Use surveys or write-in comments. Limit the time spent for each idea to a set amount so no one drags out the meeting with a personal pet peeve. Keep the session constructive and lively. Do not allow any one idea to be ignored or shoved away as silly or ridiculous. Be respectful of everyone's concerns and ideas.

Make them achievable. If you discover you have more than you could possibly work on, consider a vote to

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Modern Association Management Part III Assigning Policies and Procedures

By Donald C. Collins



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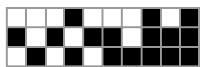
Last month, creating an educational climate conducive to associations and their members was covered. This month we look at how associations professionally handle assigning and assigning policies with its members.

Associations get warning signs when they're not handling members in a professional manner. We all know of local associations where the new members frequently say they're "working for you." Those new members believe the association is their boss. One day the

association may regret that — if the new member files an unemployment claim or a workers' compensation claim.

Associations may have members who are often heard saying things like, "I can't get those games because the assigner doesn't like me." If you hear those types of comments too often, you've got big problems. You may one day end up with gender and sex based lawsuits. You also may end up with lawsuits

(See Modern Association page 8)



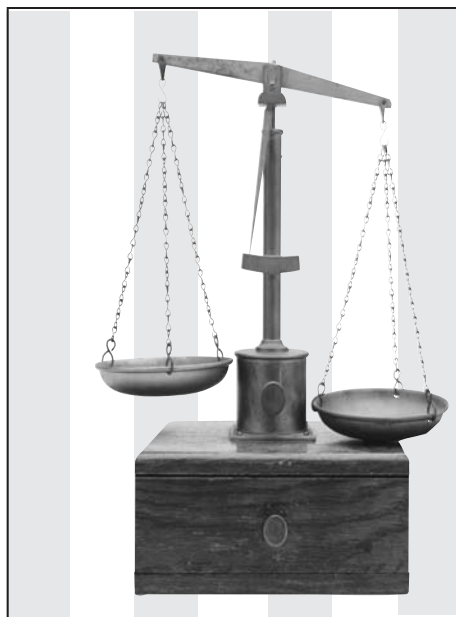
Modern Association (Continued from page 1)

challenging your disciplinary structure if you ever have to take action against those disgruntled officials.

The standards for associations are incredibly high since winning and losing plum game assignments are at stake. The perception that an association is unfair can lead to lawsuits. The perception of poor oncourt performance forces someone to be held accountable. Too often, that has happened at elite state championship games. When that occurs, state governing bodies come under an enormous amount of criticism. They have reacted by increasing regulation of and involvement in the management of officials associations and some leagues have even taken over the assignment process.

Regulation can't guarantee oncourt excellence, but it can ensure professional administration, thereby eliminating assignments based on the good old boy system or assignments determined by personal favors instead of professional merit. Regulation also reduces the likelihood of uninsured associations and even associations with highly inadequate recruiting programs.

California, for example, accredits associations. An association must provide a specified amount of insurance, training, rules and instructional meetings. An association must also link



assignments to evaluations and provide avenues for due process. California is interested in what associations are obligated to do, not what they say they do. Thus, California needs to see an association's contracts, bylaws and other binding documents. If an association follows that model, it will increase its chances of maximizing the ability level of its officials without depriving those officials of hearing rights down the road.

Texas has a statewide consortium of officials called the Texas Association of

Sports Officials (TASO), which provides significant guidance in local association management.

The Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) requires officials to pass a test. The MHSAA also provides substantial support and gives significant amounts of advice and information to local associations.

High school leagues in Milwaukee and Washington, D.C. have gone even further. Those leagues now assign a substantial number of games on their own, eliminating any chance of an officials association developing an entrenched good old boy system.

This is the final installment of the "Modern Association Management" series. Several topics have been covered concerning the happenings of associations. Your association's best bet to run smoothly is to "do what is right" for all members. Straying from that saying can be uneasy ground for associations to walk on. Keep your association on firm ground and headed in the right direction. Sound and practical management techniques will positively influence officiating as a whole.

(Donald C. Collins is the executive director of the San Francisco Section of the California Interscholastic Federation. He is a longtime basketball official and lawyer.) □

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