

CLUB **CONNECT**

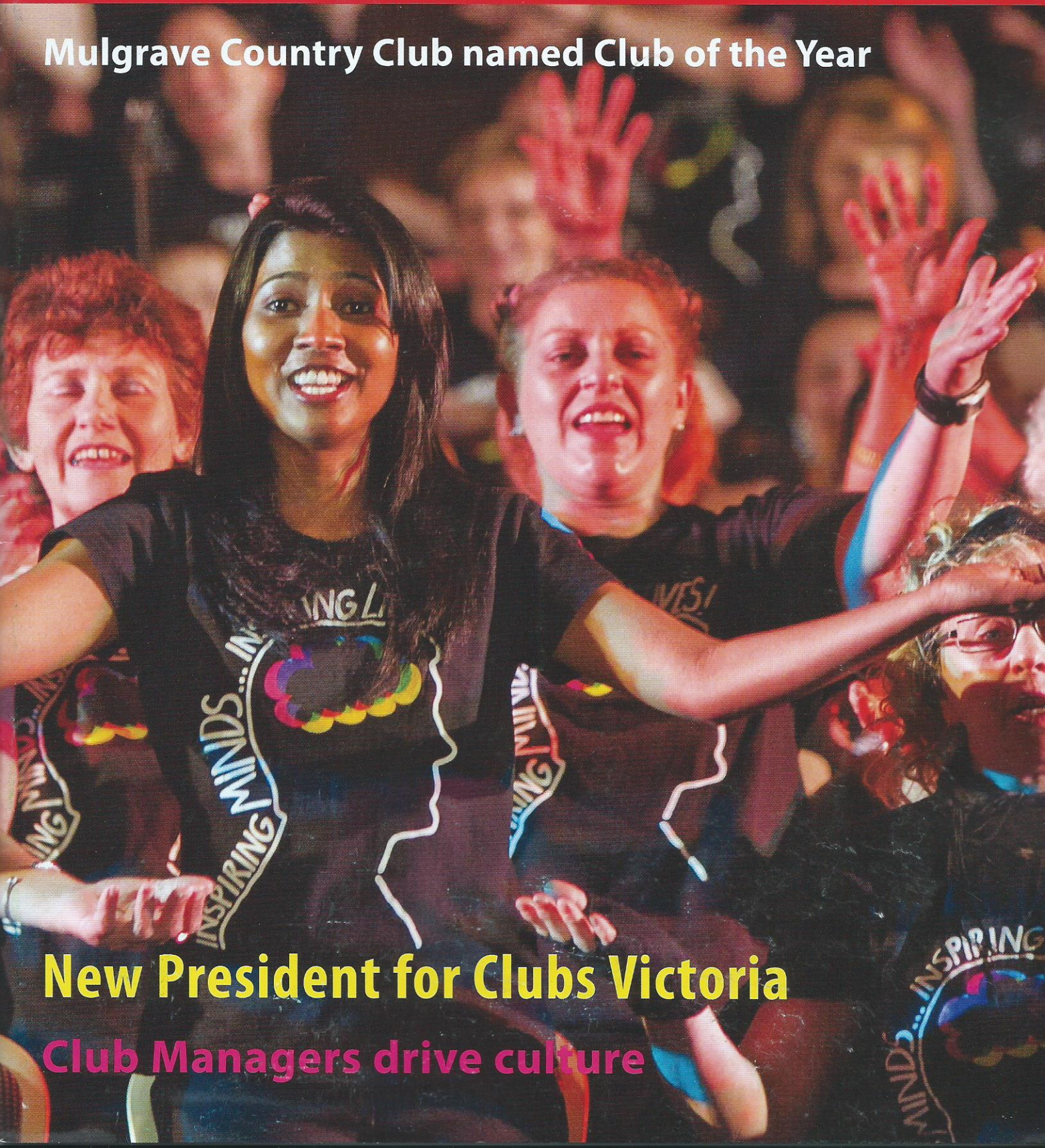
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Community Clubs Issue

Mulgrave Country Club named Club of the Year



New President for Clubs Victoria

Club Managers drive culture



By Steven Bowman

Club Managers Drive Culture

A truly conscious club is one where the Club Manager chooses to embrace a culture of consciousness and aims to operate consciously across the broad spectrum of the business concerns – from strategic planning, to recruiting, to operating systems and processes, to developing the vision that guides the club. This article describes five practices that conscious Club Manager can implement to create a balanced integration of club vision, strategic and operational realities by encouraging and nurturing higher levels of conscious behaviour and attitude among staff and stakeholders such as members.

1. Describe Your Desired Culture

This is not a group effort, rather an understanding by you of what you wish to create, consciously. As a Club Manager, first and foremost you must recognize and acknowledge what the culture is like now.

- Why is it the way it is and how you have allowed it to be that way?
- What impact is it having on your business performance?
- What is driving it to be that way?
- What is it going to take for it to change?

Next, you need to be able to describe what kind of culture you want, and how does this connect to your business strategy and vision.

In describing the culture you wish to create, there are five key areas that you should consider that will facilitate a deeper understanding of this culture

Vision, values and strategy: Take your club's Vision statement, and ask yourself,

- What is the conscious culture I wish to create that will drive the Vision of the organisation?
- What is the culture I wish to create that is in keeping with my values, and what I perceive to be the most expansive for my club?

Be aware of the strategic direction of your club, and again ask yourself the question, "What is the culture I wish to create that will drive the strategic plan of the club."

Accountability and Transparency: Ask yourself

- What messages do I want to put out regarding accountability and transparency?
- What disclosure will I provide regarding processes, procedures and assumptions?
- What am I willing to commit to?
- We have found many instances where leadership has not held staff to account for clear performance outcomes, and standards are variable due to lack of individual accountability.

Internal Relationships: Often sadly lacking in many clubs, what is the culture around internal relationships that you wish to create? Is it about silos, team work, do you want staff to treat other staff as if they were customers?

External Relationships: What type of relationships do you wish to facilitate with external parties such as members?

Creative Edge and Innovation: How much innovation do you wish your staff to show? How important is being at the creative edge to you and the club? We have worked with clubs where staff have taken a fixed point of view on how the world is in relation to members and guests, competitors and their job and therefore cannot see anything that does not fit these fixed points of view. They don't seem to connect the idea and the notion of innovation with their responsibilities and position.

2. Lead with Questions

A tool for you to begin to create your culture with awareness is to live in the question. Conscious leaders use questions to encourage full participation and teamwork, to inspire creativity and encourage outside-the-box thinking, to empower others and to solve problems resourcefully etc. When you learn to live in the question, rather than being besieged by the problems or become vested in finding answers and solutions, you are able to create your culture more consciously.

Club Managers, through asking questions, can cultivate a culture in which questions are welcomed, assumptions are investigated and new possibilities to solve problems are explored. Questions promote an inquisitive way of life in a club, and such inquisitive behaviours build an innovative climate, a culture of accountability and a truly conscious club.

3. Consciously Model the Way: Mindset, Behaviour, Symbols and Processes

As a Club Manager you will have to become a role model of what you would like the culture to be created. This can be done by establishing

mind-set, behaviour, symbols and processes with regard to the way staff, stakeholders, and members should be treated and the way club objectives should be pursued. Your behaviour and your decisions send a message to your staff about how people are expected to behave, which in turn sets the cultural standard for others to follow. To consciously model the way, continually ask the following questions...

- What mind-set is guiding my actions as a leader? What mind-set do I want my staff to adopt?
- What would it take for me, through my behaviour, to create an environment that promotes this culture?
- What would it take for me to create symbols that support this culture?
- What would it take for us to develop processes to support this culture?

4. Promote a Common Vision

Conscious leaders create and articulate vision and strategy, which can provide the cohesion that enables all people to, at the very least, understand why they are doing what they do. Conscious leaders share this information freely and articulate the vision of the organisation to those who have an interest in the organisation. Continually ask the following questions...

- Do I communicate my values and vision in the things I do, how I spend time, and what I consider important?
- What would it take for me to articulate a vision of the organisation when things are unpredictable?
- What would it take for me to share power and information and still maintain accountability?

5. Foster Collaboration and Build Spirited Teams

Conscious leaders actively involve others and empower staff and stakeholders to embrace infinite possibilities and function in a state of creative expansion that lets them go over their limits every day. Fostering collaboration and building spirited teams can be initiated by:

- Willingness to receive all points of view by welcoming and hearing all perspectives, without resisting or reacting.
- Supporting staff to envision that there is no limit to what they could create by facilitating change constantly and encourage staff to discover more expansive and innovative ways of doing things

Steve Bowman is a specialist in helping Boards maximise their potential and can help clubs improve their governance processes. Steve can be contacted on 9509 9529 or email: steven@conscious-governance.com or check out his comprehensive website www.conscious-governance.com

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