

The Leader

The president is the organisation's leader and ambassador.

While the president has important responsibilities, this does not mean that they are the boss of the organisation or must do all of the work. As the management committee collectively is the accountable decision-making body of the organisation, the president, as a committee member, holds the same level of authority as any other member of the committee.

Key responsibilities of the president include:

Strategic direction

Help set the direction of the organisation, prioritise goals and oversee the delivery of outcomes, in consultation with relevant parties and consistent with the views of members.

Chair

Preside at meetings and preserve order.

Ambassador

Act as the organisation's ambassador in a professional, positive and appropriate manner.

Be a primary contact between the organisation and outside contacts like your peak body and Council.

Rules and policies

Have a good working knowledge of the organisation's constitution, rules and policies.

Drive the implementation of policy updates and good governance procedures

What does the president do?

Along with the responsibilities and duties of all committee members, the following roadmap shows the steps the president should take throughout the year.

At the start of the year

1. Familiarise yourself with the organisation's constitution and policies.
2. Meet people! Introduce yourself to members and stakeholders, like your sponsors, peak body and Council.
3. Learn about the strategic direction of the organisation and think about what you would like the organisation to achieve in the short and long term.

While you are in the role, start to think about which members may be good future committee members for your organisation and start to prepare them to take on a role.

During the year

1. Help other volunteers and committee members understand their roles. Delegate tasks as necessary and assist others to achieve the organisation's goals.
2. Meet frequently with members and supporters throughout the year to understand their vision and aspirations for the organisation.
3. Chair committee meetings and general meetings and ensure they run efficiently. Make informed decisions as needed to ensure the organisation is working towards its strategic goals.

At the end of the year

1. Prepare your president's annual report, including successes, messages of thanks and ideas for the future.
2. Present your annual report to members at the AGM, including recommendations for the next year.
3. Provide a handover to the incoming president and other committee members. Give them an overview of the strategic direction of the organisation and share what you've learned during your time in the role.

As president, your role is to provide strategic guidance, helping to delegate day-to-day operational tasks among other helpers. While it's tempting to jump in and say 'yes' to every job that comes along, it's important to remember that your time and energy should be focused on steering the organisation towards its strategic goals and making informed decisions for the future.

At the start of your term, communicate your role and its strategic nature clearly to the committee and members. By setting the right expectations from the beginning, you can ensure that operational tasks are handled by the right people, leaving you free to concentrate on bigger picture issues. This strategic approach will ultimately benefit the organisation as a whole and set the tone for effective leadership.

Essential attributes like vision, decisiveness and a strong commitment to the organisation's mission are paramount for a president. Like employees, skills and knowledge can be cultivated through training, but inherent attributes are foundational. Here are some key skills a president should possess or be ready to develop:

- Visionary leadership
- Decision-making
- Inspirational communication
- Strategic planning
- Problem-solving
- Conflict resolution
- Adaptability and flexibility

