

The Private Club Advisor™

A PUBLICATION FOR THE DIRECTORS, OFFICERS, OWNERS, AND MANAGERS OF PRIVATE CLUBS

• THE ULTIMATE GM JOB DESCRIPTION •

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Clubs have significantly evolved over the last twenty years, which means the job duties of general managers have changed too. The *PCA* sought the expertise of Dick Kopplin, Kurt Kuebler and Tom Wallace and inquired what the ultimate job description for a general manager really looks like in today's club environment. These former general managers and long time industry advocates make up the executive search and consulting firm Kopplin Kuebler and Wallace. All three of them agreed that the most noticeable modification to the general manager position has been that the GM is no longer just an order taker; he/she now must be a true thought partner that acts in conjunction with the board of directors.

Kopplin Kuebler and Wallace identified five key areas of responsibility that are pertinent to GMs today:

- 1) Act as a business partner with the board and committees.
- 2) Manage the strategy and strategic scope of the club.
- 3) Maintain ownership of operations.
- 4) Be a great team leader and team developer.
- 5) Be a strong communicator.

Hundreds of tasks, responsibilities and skills required of a GM in the current club environment fall under one of these categories. This simplified and streamlined job description is intended to provide clarity and enhance focus.

Kopplin stated that the job of a GM has changed over the years but it has also stayed the same. "GMs today have to have business savvy and be able to run multimillion dollar businesses. They must be thinking about their club brands, strategic plans and be helping their employees constantly grow and develop," Kopplin explained. Yet engaged visibility and presence is as important as it ever was for general managers. "It's not enough just to be visible. You also have to engage the employees, members, vendors and the community," he explained.

• CONVERTING PROSPECTS INTO NEW MEMBERS •

If your club wants to convert more prospective members into current members, you may want to evaluate your approach. In his book, *16 Stories that Sell Memberships*, Gabe Aluisy explains that if you want to attract prospective members in droves, you've got to tell compelling stories about your club, your members and the experiences you create. President of marketing firm The Private Club Agency and author of *The Definitive Guide to Membership Marketing*, Aluisy says, "Stories are the ultimate way to attract the most valuable currency today: attention."

"We've found that targeting leads with certain stories at different phases can help transition prospects from cold leads, to warm leads, to hot leads and to ultimately joining the club. By telling the right stories at the right time, prospective members can move through the admissions pipeline more rapidly," he said. The book provides details and 16 thought provoking story ideas that are applicable at most clubs. Below are a few story ideas from the book:

1) The Hero's Journey: This is a great story structure to use to tell the club's history in a way that appeals to a wide audience, builds suspense and engages an audience. Why was your club started? What struggles did the founding member(s) go through? What challenge was overcome and what was the happy ending? "Tell an engaging story that