



## Section 2.03 HIRING A CLUB PROFESSIONAL

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### General

The relationship between the club pro, the club executive and the members is an important determinant in the success of the programs and lessons provided at the club. When hiring a Pro it is essential to establish what the club's needs are, what the pro will be required to do to meet the club's needs and how the club or the pro will be compensated for what activities. Both the club and the prospective pro must be aware of each others' expectations and reach and document a common agreement of these expectations prior to hiring. This section provides information to help a club executive determine the needs, appropriate expectations and a process for hiring and managing a club professional



#### **A. Needs/ Preparing a Job Description**

1. Providing instruction or coaching for a fee.
2. Providing instruction or coaching as part of club programming.
3. Organizing and running club programs and events.
4. Supervision and maintenance of the facility.
5. Management and promotion of the club.

#### **B. Compensation Arrangements.**

1. Retainer/salary and Bonus
2. Fees for Service
3. Right to subcontract/exclusivity, expenses

#### **C. The Hiring Process**

1. Job Posting
2. Reviewing Resumes/Interviews
3. References
4. Establishing Agreement
5. Sample Contracts



## **A1. Providing instruction or coaching for a fee**

The tennis professional works best for the club when he or she is responsible for more than just lessons. However most pros depend on being allowed to charge for the group and private lessons they conduct at the club.

The club may wish to limit the hours a pro may teach, limit the number of courts can use, approve the fees the pro charges, limit to teaching club members. If allowing non-members – there should be a different rate of which club receives the difference in lieu of membership fees. Can the club pro sub-contract teaching to other pros? In this case the Club executive/member responsible might want approval rights.

Can the club allow other pros to give lessons or coaching?

Does the pro want to run summer camps? Will they be recruiting/training assistant pros and be sure they meet club standards. This again might require Executive approval (eg that a police check has been performed)

Does the pro or the club provide balls and equipment for lessons?

## **A2. Providing instruction or coaching as part of club programming**

- Beginner lessons, kids and/or adults
- Team selection and coaching,
- Rank/rate club players,
- Cardiotennis,
- Establish program content for all lessons - lesson plans, goals of students etc

## **A3. Organizing and running club programs and events**

Co-ordinate social events, Run club tournaments, special events (round robins, ladders, house leagues). Run and participate in opening events and closing events. Run OTA events, sanctioned tournaments, drop in evenings, select and coach teams (junior/adult) play on club teams.

## **A4. Supervision and maintenance of the facility**

- Implement and enforce tennis code of conduct, dress code. Write up daily reports on court usage/ programs run and participation.
- Help maintain and oversee maintenance of tennis facility. Collect guest fees/lesson fees. Organize or hire and train court monitors.



- Help erect, and take down tennis bubble, posts etc.

## **A5. Management and promotion of the club**

- Attend executive meetings, help with program design.
- Involvement in Ontario Tennis Association - liaison between the Association and the Club.
- Promote tennis within and outside the tennis club through newsletters, flyers, etc schools program at local schools

## **B1. Retainer/salary**

A club might also consider offering the pro a retainer/salary to ensure that miscellaneous and outlined responsibilities or important issues are taken care of. This will depend on the needs of the club and its financial resources and the level of involvement of club volunteers. A retainer (especially when paired with a bonus for fulfilling duties completing the contract) provides the incentive for the tennis professional to be responsible to the club executive members and to the club at large for specified responsibilities. Thus, the club pro is no longer just teaching lessons but serving other needs necessary to running a better club.

Of course, what you pay your pro will depend on the amount of time and the level of commitment and accountability you require from them, the available supply and the local demand.

## **B2 Fees for service**

Fees can be established on a per hour, per day, per program. Conducting Club Programs – per hour fee or per day – flat fee for a series of lessons including make ups in the event of rain. It may be a good idea to offer a bonus for participation numbers or positive feedback. Be sure to specify who pays for equipment etc. If there is an expense budget, it should be set with executive.

## **B3. Right to subcontract/exclusivity, expenses**

If the pro will be subcontracting, will they be given a budget to work with or will the subcontractors be hired by the club? Will there be expenses included in the budget.

## **C1. Job Posting**



**Advertise the position as early and broadly as you can.** Early advertising will allow consideration of a broader number of candidates as opposed to those who are still available. Advertising should include general information on duties, time frame, qualifications and qualities. A full job description should be available on request to candidates who meet initial screening requirements.

**Where to Advertise.** There are a number of vehicles which can be used for advertising the availability of a position. The OTA has such a service (Job Line) on its website where job particulars on those clubs looking to hire a pro are posted. A summer facility might consider circulating announcements to local indoor facilities. Indoor facilities historically have a far greater demand for pros in the winter season. Many of these people are actively seeking summer employment at an outdoor facility. Advertising in local media classified sections may also work although this is likely to be more expensive and less targeted than the other two possibilities mentioned.

## **C2. Reviewing Resumes / Interviews**

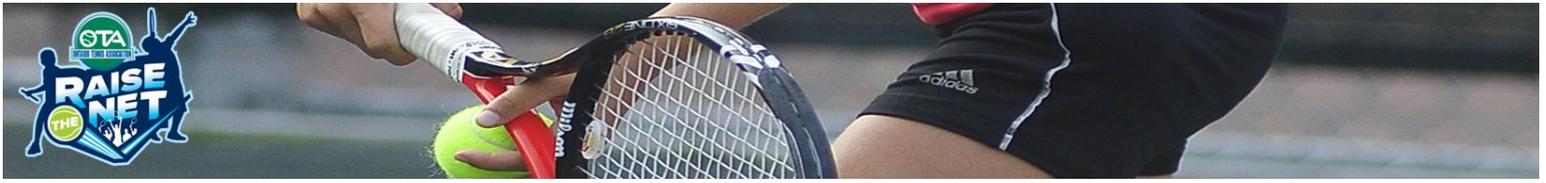
### **Establish Selection Criteria and Priority of Various Elements of the Job Description.**

**Collect resumes from the various candidates.** Do not rely on information conveyed to you in a conversation. A resume allows you access to accurately compare candidates. It also gives you some idea of the candidates' communication and organizational abilities. Things to look for in a resume are the level and nature of the candidates' certification as well as past experience. Both are important. The first will give you insight as to the candidates' technical knowledge while the second indicates their actual ability to instruct and program.

**Interview a number of candidates.** The interview is an important part of the hiring process. While the resume may be the key factor in deciding which, candidates are capable of performing the job, the interview will be a key factor in deciding which candidate you should hire. We would recommend that a number of people interview each candidate. If time is a problem, a group interview can be used. It is important to develop a brief, standard set of questions. You can follow up with other questions as the discussion continues. However, an effort should be made to address the standard questions with each candidate. If you have never seen the candidate teach, you may enquire whether you can watch him/her teach a lesson if they are currently teaching, or possibly set up a teaching situation for them so you may evaluate their skills.

## **C3. References**

**Check references.** A sincere candidate should have no problem supplying you with a number of references from past employers. We advise asking for names and contact telephone numbers so that you may talk with these people directly. Relying only on printed copies of form reference letters can have some risks.



### **Some Notes On Certification**

Assessing a candidate's real certification level is probably the most difficult task for a layman who is faced with making a hiring decision. Many people may have the expertise to assess the other three attributes listed above but certification can be confusing.

To begin with, there are a number of different certification processes in use in North America. You tend to see all of them in the Ontario market. As well, the various processes may have a number of different levels.

An outline of the new certification levels and the types of responsibilities a professional can and cannot perform can be found on the TC website: [Certification Levels](#). In conjunction with this system, Tennis Canada has prepared club level development programs and manuals for all levels of players from novices to high performance athletes. It should be noted that most summer clubs would find that a Tennis Instructor or a Club Pro 1 would meet their needs. More information can be found in the document **2.05 Coaching Certification**

### **Check Certification levels. Is Your Club Pro's Certification 'Active'?**

You can find the answer to this question by visiting the [TPA](#) website. From there, click on the 'List of Certified Coaches' link. All coaches who are currently 'active' will be listed there. In order to be 'active', the coach must have current certification as well as be a current member of the TPA.

Because a coach took a certification course several years ago does not mean his certification is now active. Every instructor or coach must do some form of professional development every 2, 3 or 4 years depending on the level of certification. If you look at the certified coaches list and find that your pro is not there, then this means he/she either does not have current certification and/or is not a current member of the TPA.

Keeping up to date on what is happening in the coaching side of our sport is very important for our professionals. Being 'active' ensures your teaching pro has made the ongoing commitment to be the best he/she can be!

**Police Check.** A police check should be run for anyone who will be working with children.

## **C4. Making a Decision**

**Apply the information you have now gathered to your criteria and make a decision.** You should now be ready to assess the candidates against the criteria you have determined in the first step. Ideally, at this point, the decision will be fairly easy.

Prepare a Detailed Contract, including job description, remuneration, reporting relationships etc. which should be signed by the selected applicant.



### **Some Things to be Aware of:**

Some key attributes of a good pro are:

- a)** Certification
- b)** Experience
- c)** Communication Skills
- d)** Organizational Skills
- e)** Interest and enthusiasm for the kinds of programming you want at your club