

The Sporting Director Checklist

Questions every SD should be able to answer.

This checklist is designed for Sporting Directors to evaluate their approach in key areas essential to leading a high-performing football club. It emphasizes vision, culture, talent development, stakeholder engagement, and strategic adaptability—critical components for impactful leaders to drive success.

Vision and Strategic Direction: Drive purpose.

- Vision:** Have we developed a clear, inspiring vision that defines success and unites everyone in the club?
- Strategy & Competitive Edge:** Are we pursuing unique strategies to differentiate our club from competitors?
- Resource Prioritization:** Do we strategically allocate resources to our most impactful areas, even if it requires tough trade-offs?

Organizational Alignment: Build a competitive club environment.

- Cultural Identity:** Are we continuously pursuing to build a competitive, resilient and cohesive club culture?
- Organizational Agility:** Is our organization structured in a way that balances stability with flexibility, allowing us to adapt quickly to challenges without compromising our strategic goals?
- People:** Are the most value-creating roles in our organization filled with the right talent, and do they have a strong leadership pipeline?

Team and Leadership Development: It's all about people.

- Leadership Team:** Is my core team diverse and complementary by a 'club-first' mentality?
- Decision-Making:** Do we use data-informed dialogue to make impactful decisions collaboratively?
- Performance Rhythm:** Do we regularly evaluate performance to identify improvements?

Stakeholder Engagement: Connection matters.

- Key Relationships:** Have I built trust with my board members by being transparent and showing an interest in their views?
- Community and Fan Engagement:** Do we engage meaningfully with fans and partners, fostering a sense of belonging?
- Crisis Preparedness:** Have we built proactive strategies to deal with difficult situations?

Performance Optimization: Review-adapt-innovate-evolve.

- Analytical Approach:** Are we leveraging data and technology to enhance performance and recruitment?
- Player and Staff Development:** Do we use metrics to support growth and ensure every player and staff performs at their best?
- Continuous Improvement:** Are we committed to ongoing learning to keep the club competitive with a growth mindset?

Personal Leadership Effectiveness: Lead with integrity and resilience

- Time and Focus Management:** Am I managing my time and energy effectively to focus on strategic priorities that only I can handle as Sporting Director?
- Authentic Leadership:** Am I modeling club values while remaining adaptable to organizational needs?
- Growth and Development:** Do I approach my role with humility, helping others grow while continuously improving my perspective as a leader?