

What to look for in a tennis coach?

The tennis coach is the key to any tennis club/facility. Research shows that the most successful tennis facilities are those where there is a strong mutual respect between club/facility and coach, with the coach at the heart of club activities. At the same time, coaches need to be able to operate a successful business and, as professional business people, be appropriately remunerated for their services. Evidence suggests that club/facilities that have a wide variety of services offered by a qualified coach positively impacts on the growth of the club/facility.

With the tennis industry becoming increasingly commercial, greater emphasis needs to be placed on fostering healthy club/facility–coach relationships. In order to establish and preserve healthy relationships, there are a number of key factors that tennis coaches looking to establish themselves at tennis facilities, and facilities looking to appoint a coach, should consider.

Prior to going through the checklist it is important that the club clarifies the overall purpose and purpose of the coach's role, prior to looking at recruitment or the appointment process. (Refer to schedule one in the Tennis Australia Contract for Services template).

- ❑ Is the coach a Qualified Tennis Australia coach member? (All Qualified Tennis Australia coach members are qualified, screened and insured.)
- ❑ Qualifications: does the prospective coach have a recognised coaching qualification?
- ❑ Insurance: does the coach hold public liability and professional indemnity insurance to protect themselves against legal action?
- ❑ Screening: does the coach have a current working with children check card or a national police certificate?
- ❑ Experience: does the coach's previous experience reasonably match with the club's current and future expectations? The club needs to ensure that the potential coach understands and will suit their club's business plan and vice versa (ask the prospective coach what sort of coaching services they offer? Does the coach offer a wide range of services for all ages, standards – beginners through to High Performance).
- ❑ Does the coach have any additional skills or abilities? Business, sales and marketing qualifications are among those that can be advantageous to a coaching candidate, helping them to manage a successful business.
- ❑ Is the coach involved with club activities that will assist with club membership growth? Such as membership promotion (progressing young players into competition and therefore membership), selection of junior teams and open days.
- ❑ Is the coach interested in being a paid administrator and being involved with the operations of the club/facility?

Does the coach?

- ❑ Deliver and implement coaching programs for all target markets, including:
 - Striving to deliver the best coaching possible
 - Aim to promote a quality and enriching coaching experience for each pupil, in each lesson.
- ❑ Actively promote coaching services conducted at the club to students, club members and the wider community.
- ❑ Attend club committee meetings to provide an update on the coaching program developments, current activities and activities proposed for the future.
- ❑ Commit to ongoing education and professional development opportunities to increase skills.
- ❑ Liaise and have a strong relationship with the following identified key stakeholders: Club Committee, President, parents, students, school personnel, State/Territory Member Association?

Coaching business objectives

Provide a coaching and competition pathway for all juniors, such as:

Coaching

- q Provide modified skill development program (aged 4–7 years)
- q Provide MLC Tennis Hot Shots for children (aged 5–12 years).
- q Provide junior coaching (private and group lessons) (7–10 years)
- q Provide junior coaching (private and group lessons) (10–12 years)
- q Provide junior coaching (private and group lessons) (12–15 years)
- q Provide junior squad training (12–17 years)
- q Provide junior coaching (private and group lessons) (15–17 years)
- q Provide junior coaching (private and group lessons) (17+ years)
- q Provide adult coaching (private and group lessons)

Competition

- q Provide MLC Tennis Hot Shots for children (aged 5–12 years).
- q Provide other junior competition (if not provided by the tennis club)
- q Provide adult competition (if not provided by the tennis club)

- q All coaching and competition services are conducted with maximum participation, provided in a safe environment and meet the Tennis Australia benchmarks of coaching standards.
- q Objectives of the club and coach should complement the club's short and long term objectives.
- q Does the coach promote their business and qualifications through Tennis Australia branded signage?
- q Does the coach promote their business and coaching services through professional and consistent marketing collateral; e.g. brochures or newsletters.
- q The coach demonstrates the following: knowledge, skills, qualifications, memberships, competencies, behaviours and attributes.

Knowledge and skills

- q Proven tennis coaching experience working with all ages and abilities (e.g. pre-school through to adults)
- q Highly effective organisational and communication skills
- q Ability to be creative and innovative in designing and implementing coaching programs
- q Proven knowledge of technique and on-court decision-making strategies
- q Ability to manage, evaluate and relate to pupils, parents and tennis club members

Qualifications and Memberships

- q Tennis Australia coach member (essential)
- q Club Professional Coaching qualification (essential)
- q First aid certification (essential)
- q Tertiary qualifications in teaching

Competencies, behaviours and attributes

- q Ability to prioritise tasks
- q Maintain high levels of personal fitness
- q Ability to utilise available resources to maximise opportunities
- q Ability to communicate in individual and group environments
- q Ability to relate well to individuals of all ages and standards
- q Willingness to be flexible in regard to work schedules and working longer hours to ensure success of all programs
- q Creativity and a passion for growing the game of tennis
- q Cooperative working relationships with all associated individuals
- q Sound communication skills – both verbal and non-verbal
- q Well presented and professional
- q Reliable and punctual

Written contract

It is highly recommended that the coach and club have a signed written contract. The majority of disagreements reported to Tennis Australia could have easily been prevented by having a signed contract. Go to tennis.com.au/your-coach/appointing for the contract for services template, which outlines obligations of all parties, shared objectives, insurance and indemnity, disputes, options to renew, position descriptions. It is recommended that the club and coach clarify and negotiate the responsibilities of the coach, through a contract for service, in relation to a range of points, including:

- observing coaching students in weekend competition;
- attendance at casual meetings;
- conducting junior tennis competitions;
- the extent of involvement with one off club promotions; e.g. open days;
- Involvement with Club Championships; and
- The quantity of these per year

For further information, please contact the Coach Membership team on +61 3 9914 4191 or email coachmembership@tennis.com.au alternatively, you may contact your State/Territory [Coach Development Coordinator](#).