



# 5. How to prepare for meetings and finalising a deal



# What's covered in this chapter

Once you've made contact and the brand has agreed to a meeting, you know that they are interested in exploring a partnership. However, you need to work to turn initial interest into a final deal. This chapter provides on what to do and say in meetings and then how to enter into the final negotiation and agree a contract.





# Creating a presentation for meetings and what to say

If you have secured interest from a brand and have scheduled a meeting with an individual that is a great result. For the meeting make sure you are well-prepared and plan the meeting carefully. You should create a short (**max. 12 slide**) presentation to outline the opportunity and send a meeting agenda ahead of the meeting. The content of a presentation should include the following:

1. Introduction to who you are and your role with the club  
(**doesn't necessarily have to be within the document**)
2. An overview of the club, including an introduction to the main teams, which leagues they play in, how many members you have, how big the crowd is for each game and some interesting details on the club's history
3. The USPs, brand values and club objectives
4. Any relevant information, such evidence of media coverage, event calendar (**such as End of Season Dinners, Christmas Parties or Networking Events**)

5. What you can do for the brand – this is the most important element of this meeting: Tailored initial sponsorship package and an outline of the sponsorship model i.e. showing different levels
6. Activation ideas and/or examples of how a sponsorship can link to the brand's existing activities
7. Next steps and Timeframes

Ordinarily a first meeting should last between 45 minutes and hour BUT should allow for Q&As, so the presentation should last no longer than 30 minutes or so.

Whilst you don't have to include costings in the presentation, you should be prepared to talk about 'ballpark figures' – the final price will be based on the final package of benefits. Where appropriate, you should ask what their budget is, so you can build the right package for them.

**It is imperative to listen in the meeting and come away with a greater understanding of the brand's objectives, so that you can go away and develop an appropriate sponsorship package/proposal.**



# What to do after the meeting and creation of a proposal

If you have a good meeting, you will need to prepare a more formal proposal that outlines the opportunity. **Once again, having listened carefully in the meeting and understood their objectives, use this information to develop an appropriate proposal i.e. what benefits they do and don't want etc.**

## **This should include:**

- A summary of the club
- An overview of the ask i.e. Official Partner status
- A list of benefits/rights
- A sponsorship fee (**based on the rights**)
- An outline of next steps and timings

It is likely that your contact will use this document to 'sell' into their company colleagues, so it is worth asking what they require from you for them to make a decision.

It is fair better, rather than give them options, to focus on one package in your proposal (**based on feedback from your meeting**). If need be, you can adapt the proposal based on their feedback.

Whilst you can email the proposal through, if are able to present back in person it may help to speed the process along and allow you to answer any questions that the brand may have.

Once you have verbally agreed the terms you should look to develop a Heads of Terms, which can be used as the basis of a contract



# How to negotiate and finalise a deal

If you have got to the stage where you are ready to negotiate a deal with a potential sponsor, you are often on the home straight. By entering into formal negotiations, it is clear that the brand is interested in your club and what you have to offer.

However, it is important to remember that just because you are getting closer to signing a partner you don't need to give them everything they want in order to get them to sign as quickly as possible.

Using the Heads of Terms, it is important to spend time making sure that the detail is correct – e.g. that you are offering rights you can deliver and that the partner is only getting an equivalent level of rights for the investment they are proposing – this document will ultimately form the basis of the sponsorship for the term of the agreement.

A good deal is one in which both parties walk away feeling happy because they have both got what they wanted. This is the best way to lay a strong foundation for the partnership, which you can then build on as the sponsorship progresses. Finally, one of the most important things to remember during negotiations is you should never assume a deal is done until your sponsor has signed on the bottom line – things can always change!

**If you are able to secure the services of a qualified lawyer, then it is advisable to do so.**



# Developing a contract/agreement

You should start by drafting the key terms and benefits that you are offering to the sponsor. The agreement can be in plain English, it does not need to contain much legal terminology, so when drafting the list of proposed rights keep it simple so everyone can work from it. The important thing is to have a clear statement of what you and the sponsor have agreed, which you both understand.

The list of key terms and benefits should include:

## **Parties**

Who the sponsorship is between

## **Sponsorship description**

What the sponsorship is about

## **Category definition**

Which of the sponsor's brands, product and services are included within the sponsorship category and, if required, which are not included

## **Term**

How long is the sponsorship for, when will it start, when will it end, when do both parties have to start re-negotiating for renewal (consider including a right of first refusal clause, which means a sponsor gets the first option to renew the category sponsorship or offer to match an offer from a third-party)

## **Investment and payment schedule**

What is the agreed investment, when will payments be made and what are the payment terms (e.g. penalties for late payment)?



# Developing a contract/agreement (continued)

## Intellectual Property (IP)

An outline of all sponsorship IP that the sponsor will have access to via the agreed rights

## What rights will the sponsor receive

An outline of all of the key rights that have been offered and agreed with the partner. Be as specific as possible with agreed parameters on rights in order to avoid grey areas

## What is not included

This section is not always included, but in certain cases it is worth listing specific rights that are not included within the sponsorship agreement, for clarification and to avoid future issues

## What are the sponsor's obligations

An outline of what is required from the sponsor in return for the agreed rights, to include details on agreed marketing support and working processes.

## Approvals

What is the mutual approval system for use of IP and rights

## What are your obligations

An outline of what is required from you, the rights-holder, in return for the investment e.g. monthly partnership meetings, approving proposed partner marketing activity within five working days

## Any other information

Finally, list any other information that has been discussed and agreed and which you feel needs to be included within the agreement

**If you have the ability to work with a lawyer to formalize the contract, then that is recommended.**

A draft example agreement can be found here:  
<https://www.englandrugby.com/participation/running-your-club/funding/sponsorship>

# Task: Develop a draft template agreement

Using recommendations in this chapter, create your own draft agreement...

Use the considerations opposite.

**Clearly define the scope of the sponsorship, including the duration of the agreement and the specific activities or events that are being sponsored.**

**Identify the rights and benefits that the sponsor will receive, such as brand exposure, advertising opportunities, and access to exclusive events.**

**Specify the obligations of both the sponsor and the sponsored party, including any performance targets or milestones.**

**Include any restrictions or limitations on the use of the sponsor's brand or intellectual property.**

**Outline the payment terms and any contingencies for early termination or non-performance.**





# Chapter takeaways and top tips

Negotiating and finalising a deal can be a lengthy process and, if you're able to, it is advisable to seek professional legal support. However, if you are undertaking things on your own these are the top tips to remember:

## **Know your priorities:**

Before entering into negotiations, make sure you have a clear understanding of your goals and priorities. This will help you stay focused and make sure you don't give up something important in exchange for something less valuable.

## **Do your homework:**

Research the other party, the market, and the terms of the contract. This will give you a better understanding of the negotiation and help you make informed decisions.

## **Start with a fair offer:**

It's important to start the negotiation with an offer that is fair and reasonable. This will help establish trust and show that you are willing to work towards a mutually beneficial agreement.

## **Be flexible:**

Be open to making compromises and be willing to consider the other party's perspective. This will help move the negotiation forward and increase the chances of reaching an agreement.

## **Communicate clearly:**

Make sure to clearly communicate your priorities and concerns. Be open and honest about your needs and be willing to listen to the other party's perspective.

## **Get it in writing:**

Make sure the final agreement is clearly written and includes all the terms that were negotiated. This will help avoid misunderstandings and ensure that both parties are held to the same standards.

