

Credit: Sport England Club Matters - <http://www.sportenglandclubmatters.com/club-people/members-participants/club-experience/understanding-your-members/>

If your club is looking to keep or attract more members and participants, you will need to understand their motivations.

Why do your members join? What makes them come back? What do they want from your club?

The more you get to know and understand your current and potential members, the greater chance you have of providing them with a positive experience.

Everyone who plays sport, participates in physical activity, coaches or volunteers does so for different reasons. There is lots of research around why people take part in sport. Once you understand these motivations (and there can be several for one person) you can start to create a positive environment that people want to be part of.

Likewise, by identifying what might prevent them from participating in your sport or joining your club, you can start to address these barriers and make your club a more welcoming place that they want to be part of.

General Motivations

The following are common motivations for you to consider:

- **Participate in competitive sport.** The opportunity to train, be part of a team and compete is an important motivation for many joining a sports club. Although you can't guarantee sporting success or trophies, there are a number of things you should aim to offer you participants to maximise their experience and keep them coming back. These include:
 - a full and active programme designed to help all your participants reach their potential and enjoy your sport
 - fully qualified and well trained coaches and volunteers to help participants develop and reach their potential
- **Socialising with friends.** For others, the ability to socialise with friends at the club may be the main motivation. Introducing a 'Bring a Friend for Free' deal for sessions for example could help.
- **Making new friends.** Regardless of age many people use sport and physical activity to make friends through a club atmosphere. Consider different types of social opportunities that you might put on throughout the year to provide for this need.
- **Keeping busy.** You may find that people will join your club to keep active and keep busy. They may not participate in the sports activity but be on your committee or help out in another volunteering capacity. For more on volunteers click [here](#) .

- **Keeping fit.** Often a common motivation people will be looking for opportunities to take part in physical activities that will improve their health and fitness. Think about opportunities to provide a version of your sport for fitness purposes rather than competition.
- **Enjoyment.** A common motivation is simply the enjoyment of taking part, playing or being around a sports environment. It is therefore important that you make the activities you provide fun and enjoyable with a friendly atmosphere.

Age:

People's motivations for taking part in sport can change over time. Sport England research shows that young people (14-25) take part in sport/activity for more functional or lifestyle reasons. For example to keep fit, look good or socialise. On the other hand, important motivators for the recently retired include fun, enjoyment of exercise and the social side.

If your club is looking to attract younger people find out more [here](#) and download the [youth insight pack](#).

Women:

Women are less likely to participate in sport than men and their motivations for participating are often different. For more information about engaging with women visit our specific [Women and your Sports Club page](#).

Market Segmentation:

Sport England has carried out a great deal of research in this area and created a number of tools and insight packs. The [Market Segmentation toolkit](#) breaks down potential participants into nineteen segments and looks at the attitudes, motivations and barriers for each. This tool can help you identify:

- What motivates people in different market segments
- The specific sporting activities that work in your local area
- Barriers preventing participation
- Suggestions for how to get people involved and how to reach them