Player Retention Review

PLAYER RETENTION - COACH GUIDANCE

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WHY THIS RESOURCE MATTERS

A retention review helps a club look beyond individual departures and identify patterns in the overall player experience. Used regularly, it can highlight where communication, coaching, belonging, opportunity or organisation may be affecting whether players want to stay.

1 PURPOSE

Use the review to assess the factors that may influence retention across a team, age group or club. The aim is to identify themes early and make practical improvements before dissatisfaction becomes a reason to leave.

- Review trends rather than focusing only on individual cases.
- Use evidence from attendance, feedback, conversations and player movement.

2 WHEN TO USE IT

Use it at planned points during the season, particularly before registration or renewal periods, after significant staffing or programme changes, and whenever a team shows unusual levels of player turnover.

- Schedule regular reviews rather than waiting for players to leave.
- Compare similar age groups or seasons where appropriate.

3 HOW TO USE THE FORM

Work through each section using information from coaches, administrators and player feedback. Record what is working well as well as concerns. Avoid assumptions - note what you know, what you suspect and what needs further discussion.

- Look for repeated issues across several players.
- Assign actions to named staff members and review them later.

4 WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Look for declining attendance, reduced enthusiasm, repeated concerns about role or playing opportunity, poor communication, lack of challenge, limited social connection and any gap between what the club promises and what players experience.

- Distinguish controllable club factors from external reasons.
- Pay attention to quieter players as well as those who complain openly.

5 WHAT TO DO NEXT

Prioritise a small number of changes that the club can realistically influence. Communicate improvements where appropriate, monitor the effect over time and repeat the review so retention becomes an ongoing club-development process.

- Set a date to review agreed actions.
- Use future feedback to check whether the changes are working.

COACH TIP

Retention is not about keeping every player at any cost. The goal is to create a positive, appropriate environment that players genuinely want to remain part of.

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Why Players Leave Clubs

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WHY THIS RESOURCE MATTERS

Understanding why players leave helps coaches separate preventable club issues from normal life changes. A player may move because of enjoyment, coaching, playing opportunity, friendships, cost, travel, other activities or family circumstances - often more than one factor is involved.

1 PURPOSE

Use this resource to recognise common reasons for leaving, identify warning signs and start better conversations with players before a decision has already been made.

- Use the categories as prompts, not as assumptions about an individual.
- Consider the player experience from the player and family perspective.

2 WHEN TO USE IT

Refer to it when attendance or engagement changes, when a player becomes withdrawn or frustrated, during review meetings, before renewal periods, and when a player or parent suggests they may be considering another club.

- Do not wait for a resignation email to ask how a player feels.
- Use calm, private conversations rather than confronting the player.

3 HOW TO USE THE FORM

Use the form to record possible factors, warning signs and questions worth asking. Discuss concerns openly and listen without trying to defend every club decision. The objective is to understand the situation accurately.

- Ask open questions and allow time for an honest answer.
- Record external factors separately from things the club can influence.

4 WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Look for reduced attendance, lower effort, withdrawal from teammates, repeated frustration about role or playing time, negative parent communication, loss of enjoyment, competing commitments and frequent discussion about other clubs.

- A single sign does not necessarily mean a player intends to leave.
- Several changes occurring together deserve closer attention.

5 WHAT TO DO NEXT

Where the club can help, agree clear and realistic actions. Where the reason is outside the club's control, handle the situation respectfully and keep communication positive. Learning from departures can still improve the experience for other players.

- Follow up after any agreed change.
- Record genuine reasons for departure to identify longer-term patterns.

COACH TIP

The most useful question is often not "How do we stop this player leaving?" but "What is this telling us about the player experience?"

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Player Experience Questionnaire

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WHY THIS RESOURCE MATTERS

A short player questionnaire gives clubs a structured way to hear directly from the people experiencing the programme. It can surface concerns that players may not raise face to face and can also show which parts of the environment they value most.

1 PURPOSE

Use the questionnaire to understand how players feel about coaching, communication, belonging, challenge, enjoyment, opportunity and the general club experience.

- Use responses to identify themes, not to judge individual coaches from one comment.
- Keep questions age-appropriate and easy to understand.

2 WHEN TO USE IT

Use it once or twice during the season, before major programme reviews, after a period of change, or whenever the club wants a broader picture of player experience.

- Allow players enough time to answer thoughtfully.
- Consider anonymous responses where that will encourage honesty.

3 HOW TO USE THE FORM

Explain why the questionnaire is being used and how the feedback will help. Ask players to complete it independently where practical. Review both rating patterns and written comments, and avoid overreacting to isolated responses.

- Group similar comments into themes.
- Protect confidentiality where anonymity has been promised.

4 WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Look for strong patterns around enjoyment, feeling valued, relationships with coaches and teammates, clarity of role, level of challenge, opportunities to develop and whether players feel listened to.

- Notice differences between age groups or teams.
- Look at positive feedback as carefully as negative feedback.

5 WHAT TO DO NEXT

Share appropriate themes with staff, decide what can be improved and communicate visible actions back to players. Showing that feedback leads to sensible action encourages better participation in future surveys.

- Avoid promising changes that cannot realistically be delivered.
- Repeat the questionnaire later to see whether the experience has improved.

COACH TIP

Players are more likely to give useful feedback when they believe their answers will be read, respected and acted upon.

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End-of-Season Player Feedback

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WHY THIS RESOURCE MATTERS

End-of-season feedback captures the player's experience while the season is still fresh. It can help clubs understand what players enjoyed, what frustrated them and what changes could improve the next season.

1 PURPOSE

Use the form to gather a balanced reflection on coaching, development, communication, team environment, enjoyment and the overall season.

- Ask about positives as well as areas for improvement.
- Use the information to support planning rather than simply archive it.

2 WHEN TO USE IT

Complete it near the end of the competitive season, ideally before players and families fully disengage for the break or make decisions about registration elsewhere.

- Give players a clear deadline and simple completion process.
- For younger players, explain questions in age-appropriate language without leading their answers.

3 HOW TO USE THE FORM

Encourage honest reflection and explain that there are no "right" answers. Review ratings and comments together, looking for recurring themes across the squad rather than focusing on a single response.

- Separate constructive feedback from personal criticism.
- Compare feedback with information gathered earlier in the season.

4 WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Look for what players say helped them improve, when they felt most engaged, whether they understood their role, how they experienced communication and whether they intend to return.

- Pay particular attention to repeated themes across multiple players.
- Notice any mismatch between coach perceptions and player perceptions.

5 WHAT TO DO NEXT

Summarise the key lessons for coaches and club leaders. Use them when planning staffing, communication, training structure and player-development priorities for the following season.

- Close the feedback loop by sharing appropriate improvements.
- Keep a record so year-to-year trends can be compared.

COACH TIP

End-of-season feedback is most valuable when it shapes the next season - not when it simply confirms what staff already believe.

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Player Engagement & Retention Actio

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WHY THIS RESOURCE MATTERS

An action plan turns retention information into practical club improvement. Without clear ownership and review dates, even good feedback can disappear into meeting notes without changing the player experience.

1 PURPOSE

Use the plan to convert identified retention issues into specific actions, assign responsibility, set timescales and measure whether the change has made a difference.

- Focus on a manageable number of high-impact priorities.
- Define what success will look like before starting the action.

2 WHEN TO USE IT

Create or update the plan after retention reviews, player surveys, end-of-season feedback or whenever a recurring issue has been identified across a team or club.

- Use it as a working document throughout the season.
- Review progress at regular staff or leadership meetings.

3 HOW TO USE THE FORM

For each priority, describe the issue clearly, record the action to be taken, identify who is responsible, set a target date and decide how progress will be checked. Avoid vague actions such as "improve communication" without saying how.

- Make actions specific enough that completion can be verified.
- Keep responsibility clear - shared responsibility should not mean no ownership.

4 WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Look for actions that address root causes rather than symptoms. Good priorities may involve communication, coach behaviour, player role clarity, social connection, development opportunities, scheduling or parent engagement.

- Balance quick wins with longer-term cultural improvements.
- Check whether proposed actions are realistic with available people and resources.

5 WHAT TO DO NEXT

Review each action against its deadline, record progress and decide whether to continue, adjust or close it. Feed the results into the next retention review so the club develops an evidence-based improvement cycle.

- Celebrate improvements that have had a positive effect.
- Carry unfinished priorities forward with a revised action and deadline.

COACH TIP

A short action plan that is reviewed regularly is more useful than a long list of ideas that nobody owns.

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