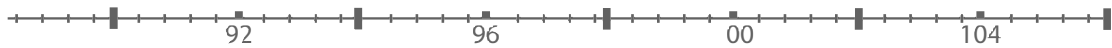


Community radio station management does not begin and end with your station manager. There are many other departments in a community radio station where management and organisational skills are necessary. For the purposes of this chapter, we will look at the most important departments in a station, and what is needed to successfully manage these to ensure a cohesive flow in your station. We'll look at:

- the board of directors
- the station manager
- the programming department
- the news department
- the music department
- the finance department
- the administration department
- marketing and sales
- the technical department
- volunteers.

# MANAGING A COMMUNITY RADIO STATION

## HOW SHOULD A COMMUNITY RADIO STATION BE MANAGED?



Community radio stations may either be non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations (CBOs), trusts, voluntary associations or Section 21 companies. It is up to your community to decide as to what type of organisation they would like to register the station.

However, bear in mind that the station does not exist for the purposes of profit. What this means is that the sharing of dividends among shareholders is not allowed. In fact, there are no shareholders at all. Any money made by the station is ploughed back into it, to pay for staff, equipment, upkeep, etc.

**dividends**  
part of profits  
paid to  
shareholders

Community radio exists for 'the common good' and, in most cases, relies on donor funding, or raises money on behalf of and for the community it serves. Above all, it has to be representative of the community it is said to represent.

### THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### What is the purpose of a board of directors?

A board of directors ensures that your community radio station is fulfilling its mandate and mission to the community. This means making sure that it is doing what it has set out to do.

#### Who is the board of directors?

Board members are elected at your community radio station's Annual General Meeting (AGM). The community must be present as they are entitled to nominate and vote for new members. Remember that:

- The board needs to be representative of the community it serves (it must fairly represent all the different languages and different people in your community: women, children, youth, the disabled, the aged, etc.)
- Each board member should have a 'portfolio'. This is an area with which they will be concerned during their term of service. For example, one board member may be concerned with women or gender issues, another with disability, HIV/AIDS, or even training at the station. It is important that board members have a direct interest in their portfolios.
- Board members are not paid for their services.

#### Board meetings

Board meetings are usually held every three months. At these meetings, the station manager reports on staff, programming, finances, and other developments at the station. Important decisions concerning the direction and future of the station are made at these meetings. At other times of the year, emergency board meetings may also be called if necessary.

## The relationship between staff and the board

The board of directors appoints a station manager. The station manager, in turn, appoints the rest of the staff. The station manager – not the board of directors – controls the day-to-day activities of the station, but the board may be called in to mediate when there are staff disputes.



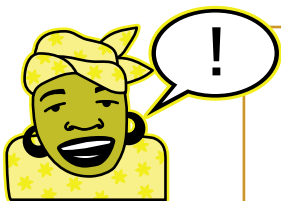
### CHECKLIST

The roles and responsibilities of board members are to:

- outline and define what the station’s mission statement will be
- make sure that the mission statement is being followed
- oversee the overall operations of the station, but not necessarily the day-to-day management (this is up to management)
- be accountable to the community
- ensure financial control and accountability
- ensure that the station fulfils its mandate to the community
- provide public support for the station.

As a board member, you should:

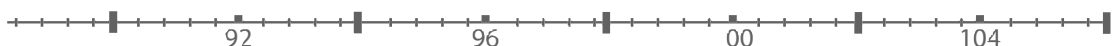
- have enough time to dedicate to your position and to take an active interest in your role
- not have any conflicting interests (e.g. be on the board of a competing organisation)
- know and understand at all times what is expected of you
- not be an office-bearer of any political party (you may belong to a party, but you cannot be an official representative of a political party).



### THINK ABOUT IT!

- Does your board change from year to year? You need to ensure effective board selection and regular turnover. Make sure that `new blood´ is introduced annually and that the `dead wood´ is removed.
- Do you have annual board training and development sessions? This should take place after the annual general meeting and must serve as induction for new members. This gives them the opportunity to sharpen procedures, develop the skills of existing members and to bring everyone up to date on industry trends.
- Are standard procedures followed at board meetings? Is an agenda set up for each meeting? This should include attendance, matters arising from previous meetings, and regular reports (on management, programmes, financial matters, etc.). Ensure that the minutes that are taken are prepared and circulated as soon after the meeting as possible.

## THE STATION MANAGER



### WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE STATION MANAGER?

The station manager is the person who oversees all day-to-day operations in the radio station. He/she takes responsibility for staff, programming, training, financial and marketing decisions. The station manager is the first and last port

of call in any decisions affecting the station in its daily activities. He/she should have the ability to juggle these tasks.

### The qualities of a station manager

As a station manager, you need maturity, good people skills – and you should love radio. You'll need to be:

- mad about radio (eat, think and drink radio 24 hours a day!)
- objective and fair
- responsible
- good at making decisions
- accountable
- able to motivate staff and volunteers
- able to work with large amounts of money, draw up budgets, etc. (in other words, you need a fair amount of financial knowledge)
- a very good leader!

### Being a good leader

A radio station needs a good leader. Without good leadership, staff members feel at a loose end, the station is directionless and things could fall apart. With strong leadership, your station has direction, your staff are motivated, there is passion and belief in the work they are doing, and any conflicts that may occur are handled in a professional and considerate manner. If your staff has faith in the station manager, they are motivated to offer the best possible service to their community, and in doing so, the community has faith in the community radio station. But you must always show that you love radio and that you are passionate about the quality of your station.



### CHECKLIST

As a station manager, your job is to:

#### 1. Plan, plan, plan

- Keep the station headed in the right direction.
- Make sure that the station is fulfilling its mandate to the community and its mission statement.
- Work together with your staff in developing new projects, whether these are radio programmes or outreach projects and events for the community. Remember that your station exists to inform and educate.

#### 2. Manage your staff

- You may have other managers in control of various departments, but these department heads still report to you. You will need to delegate roles and responsibilities correctly.
- Allocate tasks correctly and ensure that these tasks are done.
- Be confidential and do not discuss private matters that staff request to remain confidential. Remember, a good leader also has the trust of his or her staff members.

#### 3. Hire or recruit new staff and volunteers

- Recruit the right people for the job. Ensure that the recruitment process is set up correctly, that new people are interviewed, CVs are submitted, references are checked, etc.

- Devise job descriptions for all existing and new staff members. A job description is a written statement that lists the functions, tasks and responsibilities for each position.
- Be responsible for the orientation of all new staff members and volunteers.
- Draw up contracts for staff and volunteers – remember that new staff can be put on ‘probation’ for a certain period, after which the decision can be made as to whether they stay on at the station or not.



### NOKUPHILA FM UPDATE!

Nokuphila FM has an ‘induction pack’ that it gives to all new staff members and volunteers. The pack is simply a file containing documents that include a history of the station, its mission statement, vision, code of conduct, the demographic profile of the station and the station’s geographic footprint. The induction pack also includes the employee’s job description, his or her conditions of employment, what meetings he or she should attend and when these are held.

#### demographic profile

indication of number and type of population in a region

#### geographic footprint

The distance in kilometers that your station can broadcast to where its frequency reaches in distance

#### 4. Motivate staff

- Ensure harmony among all staff and volunteers.
- Keep a high staff morale.
- Encourage a spirit of teamwork.
- Make sure all departments work in a unified manner with one another.
- Keep staff and volunteers informed about developments and the direction in which the station is headed.
- Mediate in staff conflicts.
- Try to have incentive schemes or recognition for jobs well done (for example, Volunteer of the Month, Staff Member of the Month).
- Provide clear feedback to staff on the jobs they’re doing. (Remember that criticism is vital for growth, but you need to know how to deliver it in an appropriate manner.)

#### 5. Discipline staff when necessary

- Take the correct action and procedure when a staff member or volunteer steps out of line.
- Be knowledgeable about the country’s labour law. You don’t want to violate anyone’s labour rights.
- When necessary, call on the board in disputes.
- Deal effectively with conflict with staff, volunteers, the board and the community .

#### 6. Make crucial decisions

- Decide how money is to be spent, what it should be spent on, and when it is necessary to spend it.
- Draw up budgets and ensure that budgets are strictly followed. As the station manager, you will be held accountable if any money is used for fraudulent purposes.
- Hand over responsibility for certain projects to the correct people when necessary.

- Decide about programming, marketing and staff working at the station.
- Select the correct people for promotion and training.
- Take full responsibility for the decisions you make concerning the station.

#### 7. Develop policies for the station regarding:

- job descriptions
- codes of conduct
- induction policies
- hours of work, and rest periods (e.g. lunch, tea time)
- overtime work (Do you pay overtime salaries, or grant staff a day off for extra time worked?)
- access to studios, equipment, resources, station vehicles.

#### HANDY HINT!

Don't forget that community radio is about development. Nurture the talent in the station. Give staff opportunities to attend training courses that will help them increase their knowledge and skills. Allow room for growth and development.

#### 8. Network

- Get your station's name out there! Speak about the station to anyone and everyone who will listen to you.
- Develop links with other stations. Who knows, you may be able to share resources with another community radio station nearby?
- Meet with potential clients, funders and donors. You may also be responsible for fundraising for the station if you don't have a marketing or sales department.
- Connect with organisations such as the NAB, NCRF, AMARC, and other forums that provide lobbying and advocacy on behalf of the community radio sector. Have your station signed up as a member and attend as many conferences and AGMs as you can.

Finally, the station manager must ensure that the station doesn't lose its focus or direction, and that community involvement is upheld.

#### HANDY HINT!

Monitor the regulatory environment. More than one community radio station has lost its license just because it neglected to renew it or didn't follow the correct reporting requirements. It is necessary to be current and up to date with regulatory issues and organisations.

#### regulatory environment

The legislative environment in which a community radio exists

## THE PROGRAMMING DEPARTMENT



If you imagine a radio station to be like the human body, the programming department could be said to be the heartbeat of that station. Here, all programmes are created, irrespective of whether these are live, or pre-recorded (packaged ones). The programming department is responsible for whatever goes out on air.

## THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PROGRAMMING DEPARTMENT

### The station's programming format

A 'programming format' refers to the style and type of programming that can be heard on your station. Do you broadcast music only, or a mix of music and talk programmes? Most community radio stations follow a formula of 60% talk to 40% music. Many commercial stations are known as 'music radio' because of the amount of music they play, yet some are known as 'talk radio' because they broadcast only talk shows, interviews, call-ins and discussions.

#### live reads

Live reads are advertisements that are read live on air by a radio presenter as opposed to recorded ones

#### billboards

Brief jingles at the beginning (opening billboards) and end (closing billboards) of a sponsored programme.

#### public service announcements (PSAs)

carry a message that is not profit-driven, but instead 'advertises' the services of an NGO or CBO.

### Devising a programme schedule

The programme manager or coordinator is responsible for devising the programming schedule. This is a weekly and daily account and description of all the programmes to be broadcast, what time they will be aired and their duration. Ideally, the schedule should also give a brief description of the content of each programme.

The programme schedule also needs to be kept fresh. You need to know when certain programmes are losing their impact and should come to an end, and also when to rebroadcast certain programmes, introduce new programmes, or rework old programmes. Advertisements, live reads, sponsorship billboards and public service announcements (PSAs) also need to be scheduled in collaboration with the marketing department (➤➤ see Chapter 3). A calendar of national public holidays and religious festivals (not only Christian ones) is essential so that programmes relevant to that day are prepared in advance.

### Addressing individual programme format and content

If you're the programme manager, you would also oversee the content and format of individual programmes, and assist producers in coming up with new and fresh programme ideas, as well as ideas for interviews. You would also take charge when it comes to the ethical content of programmes (➤➤ see Chapter 4), and take the lead when it comes to scheduling certain important interviews.

#### HANDY HINT!

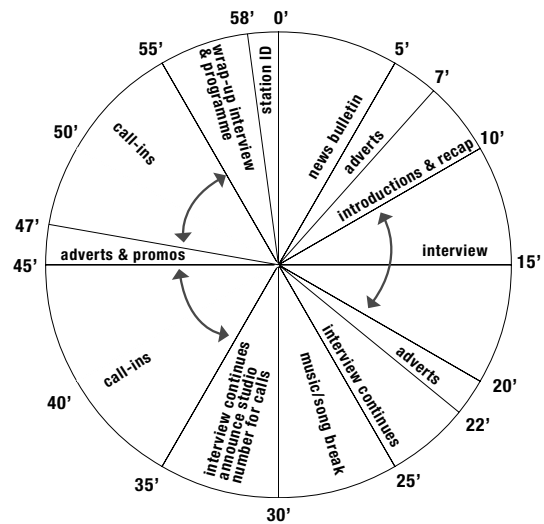
Use the 'hot clock'! The programming manager advises producers and presenters on their programme format and content, and how to divide their programme time in the most economical (in terms of time spent on air) and creative manner. Most stations use a device called the 'hot clock', which divides a programme minute by minute, into segments. This makes it easier for people to listen to the programme. The hot clock also allows for proper planning before going on air, and ensures that your presenter and producer know at all times what will be happening next.



### NOKUPHILA FM UPDATE!

Here's an example of the hot clock Nokuphila FM used for their weekly hour-long programme called 'Labour Law Live'. This features a representative from the Department of Labour who is in the studio to take calls and comments from listeners.

### NOKUPHILA FM HOT CLOCK



### CHECKLIST

Remember what we said at the beginning of this section about programming being the heartbeat of the station? Well, here's a checklist of some of the most important things to remember in order to **keep the pulse**:

- Are programmes scheduled at the correct time and day?
- Are you assuming what it is that your listeners want and need to hear? Or is your knowledge of this based on research?
- Are you broadcasting in languages that are accessible to your listeners? It's no use broadcasting in English if the majority of your listeners speak isiXhosa.
- What is the percentage breakdown of the music-talk ratio, and does this meet ICASA requirements? (Keep in touch with ICASA to keep up to date with requirement changes.) (➤➤ see page 107).
- Are you keeping the listeners up to date with current events and happenings that are of concern to them or impact on their lives?
- Are you open and available for comment on programmes by the community? Are you open to criticism?
- Are the programmes ethically in keeping with your station's mandate? (➤➤ see Chapter 4)
- Do you try to keep the programming fresh and interesting? Do you encourage new programme ideas from producers?

#### Programme managers have to:

- Devise a weekly and daily programming schedule.
- Fill out a 'log sheet' that lists the minute-by-minute content of the programming broadcast each week (➤➤ page 109 for a photocopyable *Community Radio Programmes log sheet*). This is an ICASA requirement.
- Make sure that videotapes record every single moment of broadcast each and every day, and that these tapes are available for ICASA should they request it.
- Oversee the content, format and language of every programme on air.
- Schedule advertisements, live reads, sponsorships and public service announcements (PSAs) in collaboration with the marketing department.
- In certain instances, train new presenters, programme producers, volunteers or staff.
- Provide presenters and producers with positive feedback regarding their programmes.



### KEEP IT LEGAL!

The law demands that all stations record their broadcast for each day. Videotape is the cheapest way for a community radio station to record every minute of its broadcast day. Set the machine on long-play mode, and use a four-hour tape, which on long play can record up to eight hours – and don't forget to replace the old one with a new tape when it is done. ICASA may request copies of your tapes at any time. Make sure that the tapes are all correctly labelled and that they are kept in a safe place.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF AUDIENCE RESEARCH

Audience research is important to every department in the station. However, it is particularly relevant to the programming department as they design the programmes that must appeal to their particular audience.

You cannot 'sell' your community radio station to advertisers if you don't know who your listeners are. It is important to know who is listening, what time they listen, and what it is that they want to hear. This way, you can give prospective clients a detailed profile of your audience.

### Don't assume you know what your audience's tastes are!

The South African Advertising Research Foundation (SAARF) releases annual audience research surveys for both commercial and community radio in the country. This data is called RAMS.

**RAMS**  
Radio  
Audience  
Measurement  
Survey

RAMS has often been criticised for not accurately reflecting the listenership of community radio. It only gives an idea of the number of people listening, but shows no trends in terms of their economic status, spending capacity or power, nor lifestyle trends. However, that said, it is widely used and relied upon by the advertising industry as an indicator of radio listenership in the country. This is why it cannot be ignored. It is best for your station to find another way of conducting audience research as well as using the RAMS figures.

The biggest mistake we often make is to assume that we know exactly who our listeners are and what it is they want to hear. Don't ever make this assumption, as you'll be quite surprised when you find out the truth! Open the lines and invite comments from callers; encourage listeners to write letters or to visit the station. This plays an important part in the link between a station and its community. (➤➤ see page 115 for a photocopyable *Programme Research sheet*)

### An audience for advertisers

Audience research is particularly important in selling your station to potential advertisers. Clients want to know that they are 'placing' their adverts correctly, and not spending huge amounts of money reaching the wrong audience. This is why your sales team needs to have a proper profile of who listens, when they listen and what their favourite programmes are. Most importantly, the client will want to know if your listenership has spending power – in other words, money to buy its product.

Audience research is also used in developing your programming, news, and music to what your community wants and needs to hear. You'll be giving your audience a better service, which will meet their needs and keep them satisfied.

**HANDY HINT!**

Remember that listenership patterns change all the time. Research needn't include costly surveys. Team up with the local municipality to get an idea of the demographic profile of the people living in your area. The municipality almost always does its own surveys and should have this information available. Ask visitors to the station to spend a few minutes filling out their details on a form, which you can then keep in a database. Also encourage your presenters and volunteers to talk to everyone they know about the station. This feedback will also help you work out what the station's peak and off-peak listening times are.

**NOKUPHILA FM UPDATE!**

Nokuphila FM keeps a database of listeners who call the station. A book is kept in the studio, and one at reception, which allows for their names, addresses, age and occupations to be recorded. This helps the station estimate what type of people are listening to the station. In addition to other research surveys, Nokuphila uses this information when presenting advertisers with a profile of the station's listeners.

**THINK ABOUT IT!**

Community radio is owned by the community. It serves the needs of the community. Remain accessible to the people listening to your station. The community has a right to talk about their interests, how they are portrayed on the radio and how your station could better service them.

Have open days on which civil society organisations, businesses and the government could be invited to see the station and learn more about its mission, vision and values. If the community feels involved, they'll be proud to be associated with the station and will also contribute financially or in other ways.

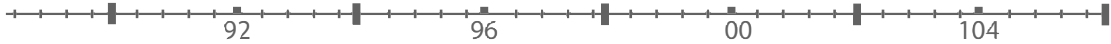
**CHECKLIST****A quick checklist for audience research:**

- Do you have forums such as listeners' clubs, focus groups and programming committees who meet to discuss the content and messages of programmes?
- How open are you to criticism regarding the programmes?
- Do you make changes based on the opinions of your community?
- Are volunteers allowed and, in fact, welcomed?
- Is your station accessible via public transport, or within walking distance of some suburbs? Are you open to suggestions, comments and criticism from the community?

**HANDY HINT!**

Monitor the station! Listen all the time – during working hours, after hours, whenever you can. Encourage members of the community to listen and report when they hear technical faults or programming mistakes. Have a radio playing in more than one office in the station, including the reception area, for guests to listen to while they wait to be attended to.

## THE NEWS DEPARTMENT



### WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE NEWS DEPARTMENT ?

All news bulletins are generated in the news department. In most radio stations, news is broadcast `every hour on the hour`, while some radio stations also feature `news headlines` half an hour before the bulletin is read, to give listeners a foretaste of what to expect in the bulletin.

### The structure of the news department

Your news department should have:

- **a news editor** who oversees and maintains editorial control over all news content
- **news reporters** who work in the field and are `on the beat`, collecting news stories in their community
- **newsreaders** who read each news bulletin live in the studio at specific times during the broadcast day
- Some stations also have `**stringers**` who feed stories to the station from the community. Stringers may be paid on a part-time basis, or may be paid only for the stories they file. They often do not form part of the station's permanent staff, and may even be volunteers. In your community radio station, you may find that your newsreaders are also news reporters, or that your editor also reports from the field and reads bulletins.

### News or current affairs programmes

The news department is usually the best equipped to produce a current affairs programme. Those working in this department have first-hand knowledge of current news issues that are important to your community and your audience.



#### ! THINK ABOUT IT!

What languages are your news bulletins broadcast in? Are you providing your community with news in their own indigenous languages?

#### FAST FORWARD ➡➡

For further information on news, how it is generated, community radio news, editorial responsibility and ethical challenges and many more other topics, turn to Chapter 4 on page 55 .

## THE MUSIC DEPARTMENT



### What is the role of the music department?

All music that is played on air is scheduled by one or more people known as music compilers. The music compiler sets up schedules called `music play-lists` for every programme that will be broadcast. The play-list is simply a list with track numbers and CD numbers, music titles and artist information, and the order in which every song should be played.

## Why bother to play-list?

A play-list is necessary for the station to maintain control over the type of music being broadcast. Just as a station has a programming format, it should also have a music format. There are important decisions to be made about what type of music your listeners will hear on your station.



### CHECKLIST

#### A quick checklist for music:

- What kind of music does your station play? Gospel, kwaito, pop or rock music?
- Does the station have a `sound` of its own? Can listeners easily identify the type of music you play if someone ever asked them?
- What percentage of local music versus international music do you play?
- Have you done your research? What is it that your listeners want to hear? Remember, it's not only up to your personal taste; it needs to be something with which your listeners will identify. In your research before setting up the station, you should find out what it is that your listeners want to hear.



### KEEP IT LEGAL!

According to ICASA broadcasting legislation, community radio stations must play a total of 40% local music and 60% international music.

#### royalties

fees paid to record companies or artists

## The South African Music Rights Organisation

The South African Music Rights Organisation (SAMRO) exists to ensure that all music royalties are paid to copyright holders, both locally and internationally. If you are a music compiler, it is your duty to:

- have all presenters record certain information about the music they play on music log sheets
- send this information to SAMRO to ensure that music royalties are paid to the artists who write and perform the music you play
- distribute to all presenters a music cue sheet (➤➤ see page 112 for a photocopyable *Music Cue sheet*) on which they need to fill in the artist's information, song title, copyright information, publisher's information, etc.

**copyright**  
ownership of a written text or music piece

### NOKUPHILA FM UPDATE!

The music department at Nokuphila FM works closely with the station's programming department. There needs to be cohesion between the types of programmes the station broadcasts and the music they play. Therefore, the music compiler and programming manager discuss what programmes are lined up for the week and jointly decide on the most appropriate music to play after, before and in between programmes. As the programme manager says, `You don't want to be interviewing someone challenging gender stereotypes and then play a song supporting men working and women not, do you?`





**KEEP IT LEGAL!**

SAMRO will inform your station as to what it owes in fees for music each month. The law requires that you pay these fees, and inform SAMRO of the music you play. Not returning your music log sheets to SAMRO could cost you your licence!

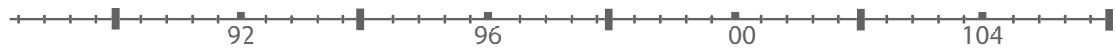
**genre**  
style, kind or type (the Western and Sci Fi are film genres, for example)

**Your music library**

Catalogue all music according to its genre (for example, R&B, jazz, gospel or kwaito) and assign every compact disc a reference number. This way, you'll be able to pick up quickly if something is missing. Make sure your music compiler sets up a data base of all the CDs your station owns and files this either on a computer or on hard copy.

**hard copy**  
A printed or hand-written version of text.

**THE FINANCE DEPARTMENT**



**WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE FINANCE DEPARTMENT?**

The finance department is one of the most important components in any business as it is this department that controls the flow of money through and into the station.

**The importance of financial policies**

When your community radio station is being established, the board of directors needs to put in place certain financial policies that will guide the station on how to operate with money.



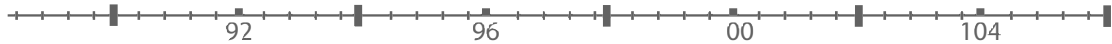
**CHECKLIST**

**A quick checklist for financial considerations:**

- Who are signatories of the bank accounts? In other words, who is able to withdraw money, write cheques, etc?
- What bank will be used?
- Who develops budgets? Who takes the responsibility for money being spent according to these budgets?
- Who manages the petty cash?
- Under what circumstances will petty cash be granted?
- What procedures do staff need to follow when requesting petty cash?
- Who writes funding proposals?
- What is the policy on staff loans? How do staff qualify for a loan, what is the amount, what is the repayment period, and how often can one apply for a loan?
- Are travel allowances made available to staff and, if so, under what circumstances?
- Who can use the company vehicle and under what conditions?
- Does the station manager understand basic financial management?
- Is there a proper review of the financial statements and an audit? Is this regularly reported to the board of directors?
- Do you prepare monthly income and expenditure statements?

- Do you know what your regular monthly expenses are? These are expenses your station must meet to pay the staff and keep on air. These would be staff costs, telephone charges, electricity, rent, transport costs, payments to SENTECH (if your station does not have its own transmitter) etc.
- Have you employed a chartered accountant to provide annual audited financial statements? (When registering your station for the first time, find out whether you will need to have annual audited financial statements. If your station is already on air, and you're applying for the renewal of a licence, ICASA will require that these be provided to them.) Only an annual financial statement will (a) certify actual income and expenditure and assets and liabilities; (b) certify that your station's finances have been managed with responsibility and integrity; and (c) convince outsiders (donors, community leaders, etc.) of your station's financial sustainability and integrity.

## THE ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT



### WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT?

It is the administration department that helps keep the radio station going. It helps ensure that the day-to-day functions of the station run smoothly, and provides back-up services for other departments of the station. The receptionist, administrator, bookkeeper or accountant and human resources manager all form part of the administration department. However, most community radio stations could never afford to employ all these people. So, for the purposes of this book, we will concentrate on three only:

- the administrator
- the bookkeeper
- the receptionist

### The administrator

The administrator controls the ordering, safekeeping of documents and payments. He/she is responsible for:

- controlling and correctly managing the station's petty cash
- filing all invoices and receipts, contracts and letters
- paying accounts (such as rent, electricity, rates, telephone) on time
- paying staff salaries
- keeping track of all money coming into the station, via advertising, sponsorship, funding, membership fees or donations
- maintaining proper and accurate financial records
- keeping a record of staff contracts, leave forms, sick leave, and retrenchments
- ordering office requirements such as stationery, cassettes, compact discs, minidisks and maintaining other office essentials.

**The bookkeeper**

At some stations, the services of an outside bookkeeper may be employed. This often happens when an administrator doesn't have much experience in bookkeeping or accounting. Your bookkeeper may be hired on a part-time or freelance basis. He/she is responsible for:

- maintaining accurate financial records
- keeping track of the station's financial status at all times
- providing accurate and detailed financial reports to the station manager and board of directors.

**The receptionist**

A receptionist is the 'front-line' person of any company. She or he is the first person people meet when they walk through the door, and portrays the voice and the image of the company.

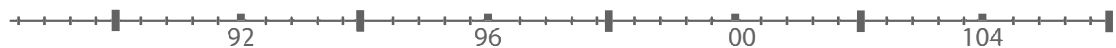


**CHECKLIST**

**Your receptionist must:**

- be presentable
- have a professional telephone manner:
  - answer the telephone clearly and correctly
  - must properly identify the station when someone calls
  - know who to direct calls to – a call intended for the station manager should not go to a presenter
- be friendly and helpful
- seat guests in the reception area
- identify to staff those who need to see or speak to them.

**THE MARKETING AND SALES DEPARTMENT**



**WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE MARKETING AND SALES DEPARTMENT?**

This is the department that controls all promotional activities and advertising for the station. While sales is concerned with the selling of airtime to advertisers, marketing advertises the station to listeners and clients. Do not make the common mistake of confusing marketing and sales. A good way to remember the difference between the two is that marketing is the 'bed' or 'foundation' for sales: without a clear and thorough marketing strategy, there will not be profitable sales. Because of the lack of resources, many community radio stations pool the two. This is fine – as long as you remember the different functions of the two activities.

**corporate identity**  
The way your station identifies itself through its logos, signage, letterheads, business cards, etc.

**Why does our station need a marketing and sales department?**

The marketing department promotes the station and its image to the public. This department generates the station's 'corporate identity' and designs the business cards, banners, leaflets, etc. It also arranges outside and field broadcasts and other promotional campaigns.

A strong sales team could mean financial sustainability for your community radio station. The more airtime that is sold, the more money comes into the station. The sales department generates money and income for the station by selling airtime, generating sponsorship and using on-air promotions, competitions and trade exchanges, etc.

### **Branding**

The marketing department has to work on building the image of the station, and how the station is seen in the eyes of its listeners. This is known as the station's brand identity. All on-air promotion and branding material – such as flyers, stickers, T-shirts, banners, business cards, websites, rate cards and any other promotional material – should be developed by the marketing manager and marketing team to ensure a uniform appearance for the station.

#### **HANDY HINT!**

Put up a big sign outside your station's building, displaying its name, frequency and logo – this tells people that it is there. Put up other signs along roads that show which road to take to the station. Billboards are expensive, but they are eye-catching. Put cards and posters in taxis and buses that serve your area – and don't forget the bus stops where people wait. What about bumper stickers? All these increase your station's brand awareness.

### **Rates**

The marketing department is also responsible for devising a 'rate card'. This is a table of the station's broadcast times, indicating peak and off-peak listening. Each period has a price attached to it. This price indicates the cost of flighting or airing an advertisement during this time. What this means is that you can see how much it would cost to advertise on your station at a certain time during the day. Costs are usually quoted per 30 seconds, as this is the standard time for advertising on radio.

Offer your customers rates that are competitive and good value for money. At the same time, however, don't undercut your station's rates too much by providing airtime that is too cheap. Find out what the rates are for other stations in your broadcast area. (➤➤ see page 117 for a *Sample Rate Card*)

#### **HANDY HINT!**

Radio stations are their own best promoters. Stations need to promote themselves in order to keep their listeners interested and tuned in. Give your station a good 'tag-line': 'Station X, the station for the people' or 'Station Y, the station that cares'. Make your tag-line, or slogan, memorable so that the community begins to know it. Listen to other stations to hear what their tag-lines are.



**CHECK LIST**

- Examine your **station's brand identity**.
- Emphasise on-air branding.
- Promote the station.
- Invest in station merchandise.
- Ensure programme consistency.
- Syndicate your programmes.
- Produce programmes for other organisations.
- Rent out your studio.
- Set sales targets.
- Don't discount – add value!
- Work directly with clients.
- Build partnerships.
- Explore the possibilities of trade exchanges.



**station's brand identity**

Like the corporate identity, provides listeners and clients/funders with an image of who you and what you stand for.

**Examine your station's brand identity**

Who are you? And what are you about? Is this correctly communicated? Is your branding consistent?

**signature tunes**

recognisable music that identifies a programme or a station

**Emphasise on-air branding**

Produce catchy and creative signature tunes, and programme jingles. Presenters should also regularly give proper station identification on air.

**Promote the station**

Hold regular outside or field broadcasts to make your station visible to the community it serves. Have presenters make special guest appearances at community events. (This is also an easy way for them to make extra money!) Visit schools, clinics, shopping centres in your community, and announce this to your listeners beforehand. Create some hype around your station and its activities. People always love to meet the people they listen to on the radio. Also encourage staff and volunteers to keep talking about the station to everyone they meet.

**hype**

Excessive publicity to create excitement about something.

**Invest in station merchandise**

It may cost a bit of money as an initial outlay, but T-shirts, bags, books, mugs and stickers printed with the station's branding may be sold to listeners. You could also use these in competitions and giveaways.

**Ensure programme consistency**

Advertisers book space during certain times and for certain programmes for particular reasons. Stick to your commitments, and keep the programming consistent.

**syndicating**

Distributing a programme between many stations, usually for a fee.

**Syndicate your programmes**

Consider the possibilities of syndicating a well-produced programme to other stations. Even if they are not able to pay market-related fees, it will certainly help put your station on the map.

### **Produce programmes for other organisations**

Produce advertisements or educational programmes for other organisations. You could then charge for the actual production, a sound engineer, producer, studio time, and materials used, such as tapes, compact discs and/or minidisks. Don't forget to factor in your music cost (remember that you have to check beforehand how much you'll be paying for a certain piece of music, and commercial music is more expensive than library music). If you are fortunate enough to have access to good scriptwriters, consider writing scripts for radio advertisements or public service announcements.

### **Rent out your studio**

If you have a well-equipped production studio, you could rent it out to production companies that produce advertisements, or rent it to people wanting to record demo tapes, or make it available to other radio stations. But make sure that only your own technical staff work in the studio – you wouldn't want unskilled people working with your costly equipment.

### **Set sales targets**

Set sales for each month/quarter, and keep the sales staff motivated. If you can, pay them a basic salary and offer a commission structure. Have a Salesperson of the Month award and offer incentives to encourage sales staff to bring in great deals.

### **Don't discount – add value!**

It is easy to offer prospective clients a discount on advertising rates. However, instead of cutting yourself short, rather add value. Give clients a deal they cannot refuse. For example, offer a few extra live reads or advertisements if a client signs a contract for an extended period of time.

### **Work directly with clients**

Employ a sales team to sell directly to clients. This cuts down on the high costs of an advertising agency or advertising broker fees. The local spaza shop, supermarket, mechanic, funeral home, or even sangoma may be interested in advertising on your station.

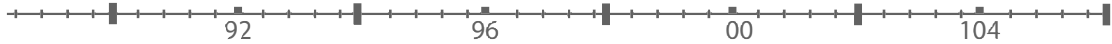
### **Build partnerships**

Build partnerships with community newspapers that are circulated in your community. Never regard them as competitors, but rather as partners! You could develop a trade exchange, by advertising in the publication and allowing them to advertise on your station. This would then be a straight swop of airtime and advertising space.

### **Explore the possibilities of trade exchanges**

Instead of selling advertising only to businesses, consider trade exchanges. You could offer airtime in return for something your station could use, such as stationery, for example.

## THE TECHNICAL DEPARTMENT



### WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE TECHNICAL DEPARTMENT?

The technical department incorporates your sound engineers and technicians. These are the people who make sure that all equipment and studios are in proper working order, that equipment is kept clean and serviced regularly, and that the station remains on air.

The technical department is often grossly under-staffed in community radio. This is due to a number of factors, including the lack of qualified sound engineers in a community, and the lack of money to pay a qualified engineer a market-related salary.

### The role of the technical or sound engineer

The technical or sound engineer should:

- deal with the maintenance of equipment
- fix basic technical problems
- be responsible for the maintenance of studios, outside broadcast equipment and field recording equipment
- maintain control over all equipment used by station personnel
- train staff in the use of field recorders, production equipment (such as editing systems), broadcast and production studios, edit suites, and editing software.

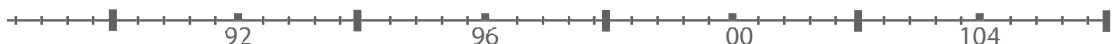
### The right person for the job

Finding a qualified person for the position of technical or sound engineer is often difficult. Many stations have one person with some basic technical training, but send equipment to professionals for service and repair, and also call in professionals to deal with studio maintenance. If your station is far away from the nearest commercial hub, you could wait weeks for assistance. Furthermore, problems often occur at the most inopportune times, and your problem may be a basic one, but could prevent you from going on air. It would be useful to have some of the staff trained in technical matters – even if their jobs overlap with other departments – so that you always have someone technically qualified on the premises.

#### FAST FORWARD

For more information on the technical aspects of radio stations, see Chapter 5 on page 71.

## VOLUNTEERS



Community participation is vital to community radio, as without it you would not be operating as a community radio station! This section tackles the role and place of volunteers in your station.

## BUT WHAT IS COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION?

The best way to explain community participation is that it means involving local community members in the decision-making and operation of your station. It is about ownership of the station by the community, and about addressing the needs of the community via your radio station.

Community participation does not only take place at the beginning stages of setting up a community radio station. The community is not only there to support your station by providing signatures and petitions for getting a license – it also needs to be consulted on the direction the station will take, and should ensure that the station is meeting its mandate by keeping the best interests of the community at heart.

Achieving this is very tricky. On the one hand, the community needs to be confident that those running the station are able to handle all the day-to-day operational and management decisions, but the community also needs to be involved. Remember that once a station has stopped consulting with its community and stops meeting its needs, it has no reason to exist.

## Who are volunteers and what do they do?

Aside from paid or salaried staff, you may have a host of volunteers at your radio station. They could be presenters, producers, fund-raisers or board members. Volunteers may also be people participating in listeners' clubs, focus groups, programming committees, field or outside broadcasts, road shows and other special events.

## The selection process

Incorporating volunteers is important, yet it's often hard to find the right people. Many stations have found themselves in a position where they have the wrong volunteers at the station, who only seem to be hampering the station's progress.



### CHECKLIST

Here's a quick checklist to ask yourself about your volunteers:

- How many volunteers are there at the station? Do you have too few volunteers or too many? Remember that a full-time community radio station cannot be run by volunteers.
- Are you recruiting the right type of people to volunteer at your station?
- Are you clear on which positions need to be filled by volunteers and which by permanent staff?
- Are your volunteers representative of your community?
- Are your volunteers interviewed before they are accepted? Do you request CVs and references, and do you have application forms?

## Developing a policy

It's a good idea to develop a 'Volunteer Policy'. Although volunteers aren't paid staff members, it is always good to have certain procedures in place concerning their involvement in the station. Ask yourself:

- Do you have contracts drawn up to suit the requirements of volunteers?
- Do you have a clear definition on what the length of their term or service will be, and what the scope of their involvement will be?
- Do you have proper induction programmes in place?

- Do volunteers understand what station resources are available for their use (telephone, fax, Internet, e-mail use, access to equipment, etc.)? Are they aware of the scope of their work; the terms and conditions surrounding leave, the notice periods, the lines of communication and who they should report to?
- Do your volunteers take their work seriously?

### Tackling the issue of payment

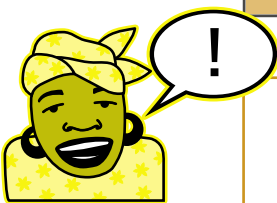
The only way around the payment issue is to ensure that from the very outset volunteers understand the conditions of their service at the station – and this takes us back to the necessity of a ‘Volunteer Policy’ document.



#### NOKUPHILA FM UPDATE!

The management of Nokuphila FM found itself in a tricky situation recently when several volunteers went on ‘strike’, demanding payment for the time they spent at the station. The board and management held an emergency meeting to discuss the situation. Although there is still more to discuss, the meeting resulted in the following agreements:

- Should volunteers be expected to travel for the station, they will receive travelling money. However, payment cannot be given in the form of salaries or wages.
- A timetable was drawn up that indicates the times and days when volunteers are required to be at the station. The timetable helped manage station and volunteer time better, meaning that if a volunteer wasn’t needed, there was no need for him/her to come in.
- Proper ‘job’ descriptions were drawn up and distributed.
- The station manager also stated that not enough recognition was being given and it was agreed that more volunteer outings would be held in the future.
- There are also plans in the pipeline to have monthly awards that recognise the best and most committed volunteer, which will culminate in a Volunteer of the Year award.



#### ! THINK ABOUT IT!

##### As a volunteer

Remember that, in keeping with the worldwide definition of volunteerism, when you volunteer, you give up your time willingly and freely to an organisation. As a volunteer, you do not (or should not) receive a salary or wages. The idea behind volunteering is to give up time outside of your ‘normal job’ or giving up your spare time to work with others towards a common goal. For example, many people volunteer in non-governmental organisations, such as children’s homes, hospitals and old-age homes. This is also the case for community radio, because it does not exist for profit.

##### As a station manager

Remember that, by law, you should not pay for voluntary work. Some organisations are in a better financial position to pay volunteers for their travelling or to give them a stipend, but this is not compulsory and cannot be enforced by law. Do not, however, expect volunteers to do the same amount of work as those people who are paid members of staff. This would be exploitation and a violation of their rights.

### **Appreciation motivates and encourages loyalty**

Remember that once a community radio station stops existing for purposes of serving the community, it has lost its mandate, and need no longer exist. As volunteers are an important link to the community, do not underestimate the value they add to your station. Make sure that they feel valued and that their contribution to your station is appreciated.

Come up with creative ways to thank and show appreciation to volunteers. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Small gifts and incentives, such as T-shirts, mugs and bags with station branding on them, may be given from time to time.
- Have a 'Volunteer Hall of Fame' – a wall with photographs of all the volunteers who've passed through your station.
- Have a Volunteer of the Month/Year award where the community can elect and vote for their favourite volunteer, someone who – via their work at the station – has made a difference in the community.
- Grant volunteers training opportunities as well, not only at the station, but also off-site training.
- Send regular newsletters and hold volunteer meetings, where they can be informed of station activities and developments, and inform them of outside broadcasts and special events.
- Certificates of appreciation and service should be given. Volunteers will have this as proof that they have served the station and that they are proud to have done so.
- Invite volunteers to staff parties and arrange outings – these are great ways of thanking volunteers for their services and building team morale. Get a sponsor to cover your costs, or have everyone bring lunch to the station to share!

### **WRAP UP!**

**In an ideal world, your community radio station would have all its departments fully staffed and staff would have all the appropriate skills needed to do their jobs.**

**However, in reality, one of the greatest challenges facing community radio is the high turnover of staff. Many community broadcasters leave community radio to further their careers in the public and commercial broadcasting sectors.**

**The challenge is for community radio stations to work within and around this, as there are no concrete solutions to solving this problem. You need to adapt the suggested policies and responsibilities given here to suit the management of your station and its individual departments. This will give you a foundation for and a clear vision of your future expansion.**

