

ABF RESOURCE KIT

MATERIAL FOR PRESENTERS

This document contains information to assist in the development of presentation sessions for interested community groups by ABF affiliated club representatives.

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Our Vision:

Australians recognise bridge as a sport which helps build their communities. This will be achieved by excellence in management and investment in innovative technology.

Our Mission:

The Australian Bridge Federation administers, communicates, fosters and promotes enjoyment and participation in the sport of bridge throughout Australia.

Our Values:

- Being appreciative and recognising the efforts of our volunteers
- Being tolerant and respectful
- Being fair and professional in all our dealings
- Acting with honesty and integrity
- Consistency in decision-making and problem solving
- Being open and accountable

Our Key Challenges

- i. Enhance the profile of bridge within the Australian community
- ii. Maximise our use of technology to both attract and retain people in the sport
- iii. Develop and maintain effective relationships with key external stakeholders
- iv. Ensure regulations and policies are in place to enable players to have a positive experience at **all** bridge sessions
- v. Demonstrate and support the highest standards in good administration
- vi. Demonstrate and support excellence in financial management.

ABF STRATEGIC STATEMENT 2013-17

This strategic statement sets out our vision for the future. It is an aspirational statement describing our values and our key challenges for the years ahead.

This statement reflects the ABF's ongoing commitment to the bridge playing community within Australia.



TABLE OF CONTENTS		
	ABF Strategic Statement 2013-17	1
1	Presentations	3
1.1	Your Presentation	3
1.2	The delivery	4
1.3	ABF Promotional Material	5
2	About Bridge	7
2.1	A brief history	7
2.2	Today's Bridge	7
2.3	Health Benefits	8
3	Administrative structure	9
3.1	World Bridge Federation	9
3.2	Australian Bridge Federation	10
3.3	State/Territory Associations	11
3.4	Local Bridge Clubs	12
4	Knowledge and skills development	13
5	Ethics and etiquette	14
6	Bridge ranking	15
7	Bridge Quotes	16
8	Why take up Bridge?	18
9	ABF Research Material	20
10	Need help?	20

1. PRESENTATIONS

As part of your club marketing strategy for **2014**, consider identifying an appropriately skilled person within your ranks to organise, craft and provide information sessions to interested community groups.

Community groups are often on the hunt for interesting guest speakers. Contact a group in your area and offer to provide a speaker at one of their get-togethers. Ensure that you agree on details in regard to what / where/ who/ length of time and any equipment requirements.

Prospective audience groups could include:

- Lions Clubs
- Rotary Clubs
- Probus Clubs
- A Men's Shed group
- Retirement villages.

Your club may also wish to provide information sessions at any pre-retirement or self-funded retiree seminars being conducted in your area. Also, check with the HR Section of any large Local, State or Commonwealth Government Departments which may be located in your area to see if they would welcome a lunch-time information session for their staff.

This resource kit contains information which may assist in crafting a presentation. It may also be a source of current facts and figures should someone seek more detailed information about statements made during a presentation.

1.1 Your Presentation

When addressing a group of people, it is best **not** to read from a script. Some tips for preparation:

- i. Plan your presentation according to the **audience**, the **tone** of the presentation (*somber, serious, informal, humorous, and so on*), and its **duration**.
- ii. Craft an effective opening that gets your audience's attention, employing an anecdote, a joke, a quotation, or a thought-provoking question or assertion (*perhaps an interesting or amusing incident from your own bridge-playing experience*). You should be able to express your introduction in about thirty seconds or less.

- iii. Outline a handful of points to cover.
- iv. Organize the points so that they support and build on each other, and add or omit points as necessary to support your overall message or theme **and** to fit into your time limit.
- v. Just as you began strongly, be sure to conclude your presentation effectively by summarizing your points and finishing up with an additional question or comment for your audience to take with them.
- vi. Construct your presentation, and then evaluate it, working through as many drafts as necessary until you have honed and refined it.
- vii. When you are satisfied with the final draft, ask a couple of club members to review it for you and suggest any material in it that may not be appropriate for the occasion, any flaws in organization or clarity of thought, any problems with grammar or usage, and anything that is not necessary or is missing. Revise the draft as necessary based on the feedback.
- viii. Practice your presentation aloud to produce a final version that is interesting and engaging **and** to determine how long it takes to deliver.

1.2 The Delivery

a) Arrive early.

Check out the room. Test the microphone if you're going to be using one. Set up and test your audiovisual equipment if you are using it. Speak to the person who's going to introduce you and make sure they have any information they need to introduce you to the audience (eg name, Bridge Club, how long you have played, topic etc).

b) Adjust your attitude.

Remind yourself that your presentation could result in them trying bridge and discovering a whole world of enjoyment, new friends and mental health.

c) Smile.

Even before you begin your speech, people will be looking you over, checking you out. Look confident – even if you don't feel it – and excited – as opposed to fearful – and you'll start on the right foot.

d) Walk to the podium with confidence.

When you are introduced, walk confidently to the podium and shake the hand of the person who introduced you. Smile!

e) Establish your space.

If you're speaking from the podium, set your notes down. Adjust the microphone so it points to your mouth. Plant your feet. Take a breath. Look up. Take another breath. (This

sounds like a lot to do, but it only takes 5 or 10 seconds.) If you're speaking without a podium, walk to where you want to stand. Plant your feet. Take a breath. Look at your audience. Take another breath.

f) Connect with your audience.

Look at your audience one person at a time. Don't address the audience as a whole. Speak to individuals. Look at one person. Establish eye contact and speak to that person for 5 to 7 seconds. Then find someone else to look at and repeat the process.

g) Speak from notes or memory.

Do not stand and simply **read your text** and, if you are using PowerPoint, do not read your slides. You will bore everyone – including yourself – to death. Use the PowerPoint slides, an outline, handouts, or 3 by 5 cards to jog your memory. Remember, your aim is to communicate a message, not say each and every word you planned on speaking.

h) Speak as if you are holding an animated conversation.

Say "I" and "you." Anything else – "this speaker" or "yours truly" – sounds pompous. Speak in language, images, and terms that the audience readily understands. If you need to use jargon, define it immediately unless you are absolutely convinced that every person in your audience understands it.

i) Be yourself.

If you have a good sense of humour, use it. If you are a wonderful storyteller, by all means tell a story. Never imitate another speaker, even a good one. You'll sound – and feel – phony.

j) Convey yourself – your feelings and commitment – not just your content.

Dale Carnegie wrote, "There are three cardinal rules of public speaking:

- 1) Speak about something you have earned the right to talk about through experience or study.
- 2) Be excited about your subject.
- 3) Be eager to share your talk with your listeners."

1.3 ABF Promotional Material

Consider taking along some promotional material to help create a positive, professional image. A range of promotional material is available from the ABF website at <http://www.abf.com.au/abf-marketing/materials/>.

This site provides you with videos, radio podcasts, brochures, flyers, newspaper clippings and posters. Some of these could be displayed at the venue during your presentation or could be used to reinforce a particular issue. Leave a number of brochures with your club's contact

details stamped on the back for those who may wish to enquire about beginner classes at a later time.

The **Introduction to bridge videos** (4) can be accessed at <http://www.abf.com.au/teaching-and-learning/getting-started/>. These videos have been prepared and presented by the ABF National Teaching Coordinator, Joan Butts, and provide the viewer with a basic overview of the sport. Depending on the time available, these could be shown after your presentation.

Your club may wish to offer a couple of **gift vouchers** for a course of free lessons as raffle prizes at the meeting you attend. This could raise money for the relevant community group, thus creating goodwill and enhancing the '*brand*' of your club and the Australian Bridge Federation.

2. ABOUT BRIDGE

2.1 A brief history

The origin of playing cards was in China, where paper was invented, and dates back to around the year 1120. Originally, cards were used for fortune telling and gambling.

Bridge traces its origins to the British game of whist (*a call for silence*), first played in the 16th century. The game was popular by the middle of the 17th century, but it was not until 1742 that the first book devoted to whist appeared.

In 1886, a pamphlet was published in England on Russian whist or *biritch*, which may or may not be the origin of 'bridge'. Alternatively, it may be named for the Galata *Bridge* in Istanbul, which British soldiers crossed during the Crimean War of the 19th century to reach a coffeehouse where they played cards.

Whilst whist may seem crude in comparison to today's bridge game, its popularity spread to other parts of the world, most notable the Middle East. In Turkey, it is believed that whist evolved into one of the first forms of bridge in the late 19th century. The calls 'double' and 'redouble' were added to double and even quadruple any betting stakes, and the concept of a declarer opposite an exposed dummy also emerged at this time.

By the turn of the century, the game evolved into *plafond* ('*ceiling*') in France and auction bridge elsewhere in the world. *Plafond* was an offshoot that required each partnership to state the number of tricks they were going to take, while auction bridge introduced the element of bidding to determine which suit, if any, would be trumps.

The game that we know today was derived from auction bridge and *plafond*.

Bridge replaced whist as England's most popular card game and was first played in London at the Portland Club in 1894. The rules gradually changed and, in 1904, the game had developed into auction bridge.

In 1925 the game that we know today was invented by American Harold S Vanderbilt, who had some invaluable idle time on a steamship cruise. Vanderbilt's brainchild incorporated a number of new features, most notably a sophisticated scoring table and varying modes of vulnerability.

2.2 Today's bridge

The world's most challenging mental sport, bridge is a game of skill, communication and infinite possibilities. It's part science, part math, part logic, part reason and embodies cooperation, problem-solving and has even been linked to higher test scores among children.

Millions of people worldwide play at home, in clubs or on-line. Many advance to tournament or 'duplicate' bridge to enjoy its social and competitive aspects.

Bridge is a partnership game using a standard deck of 52 cards dealt equally among four players. These players are positioned at North, South, East or West. The players bid in a coded language or system (eg *Standard American, Acol, Precision etc*) to describe their hands to their partners and then play to make their contract. Generally, one suit is determined as "trumps," leading to the expression, "Play your trump card." Duplicate contract bridge, in which each competitor or team plays identical hands under similar conditions, is the main form of competitive bridge.

Bridge is one of the few games played today by people of all ages and nationalities.

2.3 Health Benefits

The medical profession is only now coming to realize that, as people are tending to live longer, remaining mentally fit may be as important as maintaining levels of physical fitness. More and more often chess, bridge, backgammon and crossword puzzles are being cited as excellent activities for keeping the brain exercised and stalling the onset of Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.

An excerpt from an article in the New Yorker by Patricia Marx called "Mentally Fit" states ...

"As recently as a few decades ago, most biologists thought that the brain was fully formed during childhood and was doomed to degrade thereafter. There's been a change among scientists, and now the feeling is that not only does the brain have a lifelong ability to create new neurons, it has endless capacity to build new roadways. Networks of linked neurones communicate chemically and electrically encoded data to one another. Fresh neural trails are generated whenever we experience something new. Repeat the activity and the pathway will be reinforced".

Bridge provides an excellent mechanism to improve a person's:

- logical thinking skills
- mathematical ability
- memory
- teamwork
- social skills
- concentration
- critical thinking ability; and
- communication skills.

3 ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

3.1 World Bridge Federation

The World Bridge Federation (WBF) was formed in August 1958 by delegates from Europe, the USA and South America. It is incorporated under the laws of Switzerland as a ‘non-profit’ organization: its headquarters being at *Maison du Sport International*, in Lausanne. A new set of by-laws was adopted in August 2000.

The WBF has shown strong and steady growth and its membership now comprises 130 National Bridge Organisations (NBOs) with about 700,000 affiliated members who participate actively in competitive bridge events – locally, nationally and internationally. Most of the NBOs belong to one of the eight geographical zones, each of which has its own zonal organization.

These eight zones are:

1. Europe
2. North America
3. South America
4. Asia
5. Central America
6. Pacific Asia
7. South Pacific; and
8. Africa.

Australia is in Zone 7, the South Pacific. These eight zones are then broken down into member countries, and Zone 7 is made up as follows:

1. Australia
2. French Polynesia
3. New Caledonia; and
4. New Zealand.

Each National Bridge Organisation agrees to fulfill certain requirements, such as opening its ranks to all its citizens and residents and upholding a standard of ethics acceptable to the WBF.

The WBF has a Congress to which each NBO is entitled to send one delegate. The Congress meets every second year, at Team Olympiads and at World Championships.

The WBF is administered by an Executive Council which is assisted by the various committees and consultants it appoints.

Activities of the World Bridge Federation include to:

- promote, foster and promulgate the game of bridge throughout the world
- provide the central organisation for coordinating necessary revisions to the laws
- conduct Championships on a worldwide basis
- circulate its own official medium, World Bridge News, which keeps officials and press throughout the world informed of WBF activities
- promote a Master Points scheme for recognizing achievement in World and Zonal contests; and
- maintain the necessary central records.

3.2 Australian Bridge Federation

The first organized bridge associations were formed in NSW and Victoria in the early 1930s. During that time a number of other States also formed associations. To coordinate the sport nationally, the States formed The Australian Bridge Council. This organization changed its name to the Australian Bridge Federation (ABF) in the 1960s.

The purpose of the ABF is to:

- promote the game of bridge in Australia and Internationally
- provide the services required by our 34,328 members at approximately 340 affiliated clubs around Australia (not including our 255 registered youth players)
- represent Australia in the World Bridge Federation
- facilitate the enjoyment of bridge
- make sufficient profit to remain financially viable
- meet the competing needs of our stakeholders that include:
 - ✓ constituent State associations
 - ✓ members
 - ✓ affiliated bridge clubs
 - ✓ directors and the Australian Bridge Directors' Association
 - ✓ teachers
 - ✓ conveners
 - ✓ sub-contractors (eg the Masterpoints centre)
 - ✓ suppliers
 - ✓ journalists and commentators
 - ✓ the bridge playing population including the 'entrepreneurial' clubs and members; and
 - ✓ the international bridge community (WBF, Zones and individual member countries).

The annual ABF affiliation fee, which is normally collected as part of your club membership fee, enables the ABF to:

- develop the policies and procedures for managing bridge in Australia
- run major events during the year including the Summer Festival of Bridge in Canberra, the Grand National Open Teams (GNOT), the Grand National Pairs (GNP) and many others
- ensure some events provide 'qualifying points' which allow players to qualify for a playoff event in April that determines which teams shall represent Australia at international world championships
- send teams to compete in world championship events like the Bermuda Bowl and the Venice Cup, which are held throughout the world
- represent Australia at meetings of Zone 7 and Zone 6 of the WBF, which consists of countries like New Zealand, French Polynesia, Cook Islands, Fiji and New Caledonia, China, Chinese Taipei, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Macau, the Pilippines, Singapore and Thailand; and
- provide a free bi-monthly ABF Newsletter to inform members about the latest in the bridge world, interesting hands, events and information from our valued sponsors.

3.3 State/Territory Associations

Each Australian State and Territory has a body whose responsibilities include :

- representing their State/Territory interests within the ABF
- promoting and fostering interest in bridge in their region
- developing and advertising an event calendar for their region - *in partnership with their clubs*
- supporting affiliated clubs (*including maintaining and displaying a club directory on their web home page*)
- supporting and encouraging establishment of new clubs
- education and training for players and directors
- administration of State and selection events
- providing results for Regional events; and
- providing member information.

Membership in our Regions, as at **February 2013**, is as follows:

State and Territory bodies	Approximate number of members
NSW Bridge Association	14,183
Queensland Bridge Association	7,764
Victorian Bridge Association	5,306
Bridge Association of Western Australia	4,316
South Australian Bridge Federation	1,736
Bridge Federation of the ACT	917
Tasmanian Bridge Association	810
Northern Territory Bridge Association	185
National Total:	35,217

In addition to this the ABF has **255** registered youth players, bringing the total to **35,472**.

3.4 Local bridge clubs

There are currently approximately **350** ABF affiliated bridge clubs in Australia. Whilst some of these clubs are privately owned and operated, the majority are managed and run by volunteers.

Each of these clubs conducts a number of sessions of bridge each week and information about club locations and session times can be found on our Club or State/Territory web site.

These clubs rely on active club members to contribute to the smooth functioning of their club, as well as making use of the facilities. We encourage our members to offer their talents and skills to help make their club run smoothly.

4 KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Should you make a decision to learn bridge, be prepared to enter a fascinating world full of all sorts of people, of all ages, with different card playing experiences, and from all walks of life. Bridge is the great leveller – it crosses all boundaries – and when you start beginner’s lessons, you will sometimes feel out of your depth. Don’t worry - this is normal. Whenever we learn something new, the brain travels along pathways it hasn’t been to before, and there is often some anxiety until the learning becomes familiar.

You will really need some lessons, and these are available at bridge clubs, sometimes at other social clubs such as golf clubs and on the internet. Do some research to find the best teachers and lessons. It will make your new learning a whole lot easier if bridge is explained clearly to you. Using the best materials will help too.

Between four and six beginner’s lessons should get you started. You will feel quite tired at the end of each lesson, because you’re expending a lot of mental energy. Don’t expect too much of yourself at first, and play as many bridge hands as you can between lessons. There is NO substitute for actually playing, and in class you should be taken over each hand after you’ve played it, with the teacher discussing the way it could be played.

Phew..... finally you finish your beginner’s course.....what now? We don’t tell you that a bridge course is not actually just 4-6 lessons, but really you’ve started on a path for a lifetime that will give you pleasure provided you keep at it. NOW is the time to put all your hard learned facts together and practice. Most clubs offer *Help with Play* or supervised sessions, where you are able to play hands and ask for help when needed. You will probably stay in these for a few months, and really you should play more than once a week. DON’T let experienced players confuse you if they start telling you too much. You only need what you’ve learned in beginner’s lessons at this stage, and you need to consolidate it.

Slowly but surely the fog will lift, and although sometimes you don’t feel you’re getting anywhere, you really are. Bridge is a big journey, to be taken in small steps. There will be people at the bridge club to help you along the way, but you and your bridge partner can work together a lot too. Understanding your partner at the bridge table (your best friend during the game) is the key to success.

There are many resources available to help you improve - in bridge club libraries and on the internet, as well as Improvers and Intermediate lessons offered at most clubs. Some people will become addicted to the game and want to play every day, and take as many lessons as possible. Others will be happy to play socially with friends after dinner, and leave it at that.

You will never regret your decision to learn and play bridge.

5 ETHICS AND ETIQUETTE

Bridge enjoys immense popularity partly because of the high standards of ethics and etiquette which are observed by the players who are expected to conduct themselves in a highly civilised manner.

Bridge is an extremely ethical game. All good players strive to ensure that their bridge ethics are impeccable and no more serious charge, other than outright cheating, can be made than to accuse a player of bad ethics. Unlike poker in which all sorts of mannerisms, misleading statements and bluff tactics are part and parcel of the game, bridge is played with a '*pokerface*'! Beginners are, of course, excused for their lapses and in social games nobody minds very much, but in serious competition your bridge demeanour must be beyond reproach.

Most experienced players go out of their way to make novice players feel at ease, so that they see bridge as a pleasant recreation, not a battleground.

6 BRIDGE 'RANKING'

In many sports individuals and teams are given rankings, generally by the sport's governing body. Golfers are ranked using a handicap system, snooker players are ranked using the Snooker world rankings and each member country of the Olympic Games is ranked based upon gold, silver and bronze medal counts.

Like other sports bridge has a ranking system to provide an indicator of an individual's level of skill and achievement. In most countries around the world, Masterpoints are used but the scheme is different in each country. Our Masterpoints system provides ABF members with a 'ranking' from Graduate Master (*2 masterpoints*) to Diamond Grand Master (*15,000 masterpoints*).

Whilst ranking systems can be flawed the ABF's Masterpoints system provides the best available indicator for an individual's level of play. The system is designed to encourage continuous enquiry, understanding and expertise to make our members aware that they are part of a learning community – *bridge is after all exercise for the brain.*

Masterpoints come in three colours.

1. Club session wins will gain **green** masterpoints (*how many depends on the size of the field*).
2. Placing in competitions and congresses run by your club and other clubs will gain **red** masterpoints. (*Each club is allocated a certain number of red point sessions per year.*)
3. National events, major congresses and club events such as the GNOT will attract **gold** points.

Approximately 70% of ABF members have between **0 – 100** masterpoints and 25% have between **0-5** masterpoints.

7 BRIDGE QUOTES

Many well-known people enjoy/have enjoyed playing bridge. It may be useful to use a specific quotation from one of the people mentioned below in a presentation (*it could be an opening or closing statement*).

Well known bridge enthusiasts include Winston Churchill, Dwight Eisenhower, Mahatma Ghandi, Deng Xiao Ping, W Somerset Maugham, Charles Schultz, Agatha Christie, George Burns, James Bond (*Moonraker*), Oprah Winfrey, Woody Allen, Omar Sharif, Bill Gates, Warren Buffett, Billy Jean King, Martina Navratilova **and** the band members of Radiohead.

Bridge is the most entertaining and intelligent card game the art of man has so far devised.

- **Somerset Maugham**

Bridge provides the kind of mental acuity that is handy for anything you want to do with excellence.

- **Bill Gates**

Next to bridge, all other forms of human endeavor shrink to insignificance.

- **General George S Patton**

Bridge is such a sensational game that I wouldn't mind being in jail if I had three cellmates who were decent players and who were willing to keep the game going 24 hours a day.

- **Warren Buffett**

Many games provide fun, but bridge grips you. It exercises your mind. Your mind can rust, you know, but bridge prevents the rust from forming.

- **Omar Sharif**

Old bridge players never die, they just lose their finesse.

- **General Douglas MacArthur**

Bridge is too important to take seriously.

- **Oscar Wilde**

No matter where I go, I can always make new friends at the bridge table.

- **Martina Navratilova**

There's more pressure playing a four diamond contract than playing in front of 2,000 people.

- **Radiohead**

8 WHY TAKE UP BRIDGE?

The following information is based on research undertaken with attendees at the Summer Festival of Bridge in 2011. When asked what they liked most about their sport (*listed in order of priority*) they responded:

1. The mental challenge
2. The competitive aspects of the game
3. Lots of social interaction with a broad range of people (*ages/ethnic background/ gender*)
4. The fact that you keep learning – *trying to master the sport*
5. It is an inexpensive sport
6. You can combine travel and bridge playing (*Regional/National/International*)
7. Opportunities for collaboration
8. It is a sport which you can share with your life partner.

As a member of an ABF affiliated club (*we have approximately 350 of them around Australia*), people can access a range of membership benefits including:

- Access to discounted personal, business and commercial insurance coverage through our National sponsor – Tony Bemrose Insurance Brokers. Our **extremely** popular personal travel insurance for members includes coverage for people with pre-existing medical conditions and applies for members up to **90** years of age. The annual policy runs from 1 March each year and covers **all** domestic and international travel undertaken during the year. Highly competitive fees apply – see below:

Up to age 60 years old	\$140.00
Age 61-65 years old	\$180.00
Age 66-70 years old	\$225.00
Age 71-75 years old	\$280.00
Age 76-80 years old	\$345.00
Age 81-85 years old	\$420.00
Age 86-90 years old	\$500.00

- Access to discounted hotel accommodation in Australia, New Zealand and parts of Europe through our arrangement with our sponsor, Toga Hospitality (*Travelodge Hotels, Vibe Hotels, Adina and Medina Apartments*).
- You will be a member of an organization which actively supports *Make-A-Wish Australia* and *Neurological Research Australia*.
- All our new members receive a '*New Member's Information Kit*' upon joining a club. This booklet covers topics such as :
 - ✓ *A welcome from the ABF President*
 - ✓ *Information about the game of bridge*
 - ✓ *Our administrative structure*
 - ✓ *Knowledge and skills development*
 - ✓ *Ethics and Etiquette; and*
 - ✓ *Your Bridge Ranking.*
- Thousands of new friends are waiting to meet you.

9 ABF RESEARCH MATERIAL

Follow the link to access '*intelligence*' from research undertaken by the ABF National Marketing Officer <http://www.abf.com.au/abf-marketing/abf-marketing-research/>. This information may also assist in the development of your presentation.

10 NEED HELP?

Contact the ABF National Marketing Officer at marketing@abf.com.au.