



USSA Podium Club Certification Elements

Attached you will find the required elements for USSA Podium Club Certification (Bronze, Silver and Gold). There are 136 statements that are embedded in the on-line certification process that all Bronze, Silver and Gold candidate clubs must be able to confirm as "True". The subsequent interview (Bronze), and club visit (Silver and Gold) will further verify and assess these particular elements.

These 136 "Best Practices" are the primary contributors to organizational and athletic performance and long-term success. Whether your club is seeking certification at the podium level or not, this list of best practices provides a roadmap for organizational improvement.

The elements are broken into the following sections, which are further explained in the corresponding chapters of the Guide to Club Excellence:

2. Leadership and Governance	(11)
3. Finance and Funding	(17)
4. Fostering Club Culture	(19)
5. PR, Communications and Marketing	(13)
6. Human Resources	(15)
7. Child/Athlete Protection	(9)
8. USSA Club Programming	(35)
9. USSA Club Logistics	(17)

Note: Chapter 1 "Business Entity" covers your legal business structures and Chapter 10 "Assessing Outcomes and Measuring Results" provides further guidance on organizational and program assessment/evaluation.

For assistance please contact Brian Krill, USSA Club Development Manager, at bkrill@ussa.org.

2. Leadership and Governance Assessment

Board Committees

We utilize a standing committee structure (or equivalent strategy) to divide up and delegate board work. Each committee has good leadership and reports to the full board of directors.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Board Evaluation

Our board regularly evaluates organizational performance, board performance and accountability.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Board leadership

We have an active and engaged board of directors with clear roles and responsibilities, and a high level of accountability.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Board Member Evaluation

Each board member and officer regularly evaluates their own performance.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Bylaws

We have current and binding bylaws which our board and organization follow.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Character Development

Our Club values both character development and athletic performance.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Executive Leadership Assessment

The board regularly evaluates the executive leadership (executive director/director/head coach, etc.), and the executive leadership evaluates all other staff.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Executive Self - Evaluation

The executive leader of the organization (executive director, director, head coach, etc.) submits an annual self-evaluation to the board of directors.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Mission Statement

We have an official Mission Statement.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Officers

We have active and accountable board officers fulfilling the duties of board president/chair, board treasurer, and board secretary.

- ☐ True
☐ False

SWOT

We have performed a SWOT analysis or other like exercise in the last two years with both board members and key staff.

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

Submit

3. Finance and Funding Assessment

Annual Budget

Our board of directors drafts an annual budget with the staff leadership and this is formally approved by the full board.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Annual Report

We draft an annual financial report (even a simple one) for our organization, parents and other constituents.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Board Involvement

Our board of directors actively gives or gets resources for the organization, and provides leadership in all areas of resource development.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Budget Priorities

Our budgets and financial plans are a direct reflection of our mission, values and goals.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Budget Structure

Our budget is structured such that the following are easy to identify and track:

1. Earned revenues vs. development revenues

2. Operating vs. capital expenses
3. "In-kind" resources
4. Program expenses vs. general operating expenses
5. Cash flow budgeting

- ☐ True
☐ False

Case Statement

We have drafted at least a basic "case statement" for our club.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Community Foundation

We have made contact with our local community foundation(s) and are at least on their radar.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Donations

Our club has clear policies and procedures for accepting and processing charitable gifts, sponsorships, in-kind donations, and other support. - including appropriate recognition of the donor/sponsor.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Financial Aid and Scholarships

Our budgets and resource development plans account for appropriate financial aid or scholarship funds.

- ☐ True

☐ False

Financial Policies

Major financial policies are current in our bylaws and we are aware of the Sarbanes-Oxley guidelines as they relate to financial accounting practices.

☐ True

☐ False

Financial Principles and Practices

We are aware of and adhere to the best principles and practices of financial reporting.

☐ True

☐ False

Fundraising Principles and Practices

Our club is aware of and adheres to the best principles and practices of ethical fundraising.

☐ True

☐ False

In-kind support

Our club quantifies and tracks in-kind gifts, donations and support (including board/volunteer hours, and support from your host resort).

☐ True

☐ False

Regular Financial Reports

Our board of directors and club leadership understand and review a "profit and loss" report, a "YTD budget to actual" report, and a "balance sheet" report, and

review them no less than quarterly.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Resource Development Plan

Our club has clear goals represented in our "resource development" plan (or fundraising plan).

- ☐ True
☐ False

Resource Management

We have an overall resource management plan that includes human (staff, volunteers, etc.), physical (facilities and equipment), *and* financial resources.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Roles and Responsibilities

Our club has clearly defined roles and responsibilities regarding financial accounting and financial performance.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Submit

4. Fostering Culture Assessment

Athlete Career

We emphasize the importance of student-athlete academic responsibilities. They are frequently discussed, monitored and consistently supported by the entire club community.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Athlete Recruiting

We enforce high ethical standards with regards to our athlete recruiting practices, and we respect athlete and parent decisions with regards to what program is best for them.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Awards and Recognition

Our club awards and recognizes individuals, behaviors and performance that best represent *all* aspects of our desired culture with parents, athletes, volunteers and coaches.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Character Development and Athletic Performance

We regularly discuss the important balance between character development and athletic performance with our parents, athletes, coaches and the community.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Club Culture - USSA Culture

Our club actively strives to promote and encourage a "shared culture" with

USSA.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Coaching at all Levels

As a club, we strive to provide optimal and knowledgeable coaching at all levels.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Code of Conduct

We have an athlete code of conduct which we take seriously and enforce consistently.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Community Code

We are proactive with members of the community who encourage or allow breaches in the code of conduct. We expect athletes, parents and the club community to not only abide by and respect our codes of conduct for themselves, but also not tolerate the actions of others who may not support the codes.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Due Process

We have a clearly stated and documented process for code of conduct violations and conflict resolution.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Long Term Athlete Development

We consistently emphasize the importance of long term athlete development with our parents, athletes, coaches and community.

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

Measuring Club Performance

As a club, we are fostering a culture that measures club and athletic performance against consistent standards.

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

Mission, Values and Goals

We regularly use, discuss and display our mission, values and goals with parents, athletes, coaches, staff and the community.

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

Non-discrimination

Our club strongly supports a non-discriminatory environment, has a formal non-discrimination policy which it enforces consistently, and discusses this both formally and informally with its parents, athletes, coaches, board and community.

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

Parent Education

We educate parents about their appropriate roles and responsibilities - both formally and informally. We facilitate parent-to-parent education.

- ☐ True

☐ False

Parent Orientation

We always host a parent orientation meeting in the fall or early winter.

☐ True

☐ False

Parent Roles and Rights

We encourage parent involvement, and recognize parents' rights.

☐ True

☐ False

Self - referral

Our codes of conduct and disciplinary processes allow for a self-referral.

☐ True

☐ False

USSA Resources

We utilize USSA resources to help us reinforce our own club culture as well as the culture of the USSA.

☐ True

☐ False

Winning vs. Success

We regularly discuss our philosophies on "winning" vs. "success" (both formally and informally) with our parents, athletes and coaches. We are fostering these philosophies as consistently as possible.

☐ True

☐ False

Submit

5. PR and Communications Assessment

Communicating Logistics

We post or distribute training schedules, competition schedules, information on upcoming events, and other up-to-date and easy to access information.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Communication Outlets

All available communications outlets are properly utilized.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Communications Personelle

We have dedicated personelle or a volunteer who monitors and implements our communications plan.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Communications Plan

We have a coordinated plan that guides all our PR, marketing and communication efforts.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Community Outreach

Our communications plan includes stratgies for community outreach.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Local Market

We advertise throughout our local and regional market - especially through an established relationship with all local schools.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Mission, Vision, Values, Goals

The mission, vision, values and goals of the organization are communicated consistently in all of our communications and marketing.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Newsletter

We utilize some type of newsletter to communicate updates and club activities to all constituents.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Non-discrimination

Our communications reflect our non-discrimination policy and are intended to reach all potential constituents. Further, we are always looking to include new demographics represented in our communities.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Other Resources

We capitalize on the use of appropriate USSA marketing campaigns and resources, as well as other opportunities such as: "USSA's National Club Day", "NSAA's Learn to Ski and Snowboard Month", FIS's "World Snow Day" and "Bring Children to the Snow" projects, and other opportunities at your local resort.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Social Media

We employ some social media strategies for club communications and marketing: Facebook, twitter, etc.

- ☐ True
☐ False

USSA Resource

We utilize USSA's available marketing and communications resources.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Website

We use a regularly updated and user friendly website. It contains good information for all constituents.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Submit

6. Human Resources Assessment

Club Staff

We have a staff that possesses the following qualities:

Enthusiastic
Team players
Available to parents
Well-trained
Safety-conscious
Integrity
Committed to goals
A positive influence and role model for children
Reliable
Motivated
Good communicators
Professional.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Compensation and Benefits

Our club offers appropriate compensation and benefits.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Leadership USSA Certification

We comply with all USSA rules and procedures and our coaching leadership has adequate levels of USSA certification. Nordic should be 100 level or higher, freestyle should be 200 level or higher, alpine or snowboard should be 300 level or higher.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Position Descriptions

We use written position descriptions for all staff positions.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Professional Development Resources

We specifically allocate resources to staff and professional development activities.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Staff and Organizational Structure

Our staff and organizational structure is well-defined and well-communicated to all staff.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Staff and Professional Development

We have specific guidelines with regards to staff or professional development requirements and/or opportunities.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Staff Handbook

We use a staff handbook which contains information about the organization's history, mission and culture, compensation guidelines, professional development, performance reviews, benefits, and other major staff and organizational policies.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Staff Incentives

Our club offers some incentives for coaches and staff receiving higher levels of

certification or advanced degrees applicable to their position.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Termination

We have clear guidelines regarding the grounds for termination, and the process associated with termination. We always have good documentation regarding performance when a termination is necessary.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Train and Evaluate

We train and evaluate staff regularly.

- ☐ True
☐ False

USSA Membership

Our club encourages and complies with USSA membership for all coaches and officials - which include requirements for background checks.

- ☐ True
☐ False

USSA Programs

Our club leadership is involved in USSA Sport Education programs. (Clinics, Conferences, Teaching Clinics, etc.)

- ☐ True
☐ False

USSA Resources

Our club utilizes USSA education programs, and we encourage our families, athletes, coaches and members to do the same.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Volunteers

We recruit for and train volunteers regularly. And we give volunteers clear work descriptions.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Submit

7. Child Protection Assessment

Abuse

Our club is aware of *and vigilant in dealing with* any form of abuse: physical, emotional, neglect, sexual or bullying.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Background Checks

Our club supports required background checks for USSA coaches and officials, and we ensure that these individuals have current USSA membership. We also ensure that all individuals (ie. volunteers) are screened in some way or background checked by our club.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Concussion Policy

Our club is aware of and has adopted USSA's concussion policy.

- ☐ True
☐ False

First Aid/CPR

First Aid and CPR training and certification is current for all appropriate staff. We provide for or arrange relatively easy ways for our staff to renew these certifications.

- ☐ True
☐ False

SafeSport Guidelines

Our club, its leadership, coaches, parents and athletes are aware of the USSA SafeSport guidelines.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Supplements

Our club is aware of and monitors the use of supplements used by its athletes. We have clearly defined guidelines for their acceptable use.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Training and Competition

We only allow trained and certified professionals manage our training and competitive arenas.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Travel

We have safety protocols and guidelines for all club travel - which include minimizing risks with regards to travel, supervision and abuse.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Use SafeSport

Our club uses the SafeSport guidelines as an educational tool for its leadership, athletes, parents and coaches.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Submit

8. Programming Assessment

Anti-doping

We have a clear anti-doping policy.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Athlete Management

Our coaches develop a season-long athlete management plan for each athlete.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Club Equipment

We look for opportunities to help our athletes test and acquire different products.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Coach Contact

Our coaches get involved with appropriate local, regional and national camps, competitions and projects.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Coach Talk

Our coaches have adopted and discuss a common teaching language and terminology.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Coaching at all Levels

We provide educated and professional coaching at all levels.

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

Communication

We have clearly established athlete-to-coach communication strategies and necessary equipment during competitions.

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

Comp Coaching

We provide coaching (or help coordinate and arrange with regional, national or international partners) at every level of competition that any of our athletes reach.

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

Competition Day

Our program teaches and implements competition day plans that include behaviors, techniques and strategies.

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

Core Values

Our coaches communicate our core values and a philosophy of winning that are consistent with our club's values and philosophies.

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

Cross Training

Our club curricula incorporate cross training and general motor skill development.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Curriculum

Our club programs follow written curricula that are in line with USSA Training Systems, the athlete development pipeline and an assessment of benchmark skills.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Equipment

Our club curriculum includes guidance and oversight with equipment selection, preparation and maintenance.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Equipment Compliance

We educate our athletes and families about, and verify the use of, USSA, FIS and other governing bodies' equipment guidelines and regulations.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Events

We provide coaching at all competitive events attended by the team/club.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Expert

Our club has a dedicated strength and conditioning staff to plan and deliver the conditioning program - or - our club utilizes outside professional resources to do the same.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Focus

Our curriculum develops athlete concentration and focus skills.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Individual Goals

Our club curriculum teaches athletes how to set and monitor individual goals, and supports the achievement of these goals.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Inspection

We develop course/venue inspection skills in training and at competitions.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Physical Conditioning

Our club curriculum includes an emphasis on and implementation of physical conditioning.

- ☐ True

☐ False

Physicals

We require annual physical exams for all our athletes.

☐ True
☐ False

Pipeline

We use (*and explain and present to athletes and parents*) a clear athlete pipeline that coincides with the principles of long term athlete development and the USSA's Training Systems.

☐ True
☐ False

Psychology 1

Our program focusses on fun and rewarding skill acquisition.

☐ True
☐ False

Psychology 2

Our program emphasizes sportsmanship and fair play.

☐ True
☐ False

Recovery

Our club curriculum maps out appropriate rest and recovery sessions or activities.

☐ True

☐ False

Relaxation

Our curriculum teaches and uses relaxation and/or arousal techniques.

☐ True

☐ False

Return

We have clear "return from injury" policies and procedures.

☐ True

☐ False

SkillsQuest

We implement SkillsQuest and use USSA accredited evaluators.

☐ True

☐ False

Talent

Our club is open and honest in discussing relative talent and the balance of talent, skill acquisition and effort.

☐ True

☐ False

Technical and Tactical

Our curriculum incorporates appropriate technical and tactical skill acquisition that is age-appropriate and sport and/or discipline specific.

☐ True

☐ False

Terrain

Our club works to maximize the use of our available terrain preparing athletes for various, and less than ideal conditions.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Testing

Our club conducts periodic strength and conditioning testing.

- ☐ True
☐ False

USSA Training Systems

Our club uses the USSA Training Systems model.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Visualization

Our curriculum introduces and uses visualization and imagery techniques.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Year-round

Our club provides some year-round training/physical conditioning - or maintains contact with athletes and families year-round regarding the same.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Submit

9. Logistics Assessment

Advocacy

Our club, its leadership, coaches, athletes, parents and families are advocates and ambassadors for our local or host resort.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Club as a Resource

We offer and present our club as a resource to the resort.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Competitions

We have an adequate and trained volunteer base for the events we host or help host.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Course Control

We implement course/venue control systems and communications systems during all training and competitions.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Critical Communication

We have a communication plan in place to inform parents, the club community, and key leadership about critical incidents (major happenings that everyone is likely to hear about anyway, ie. injuries, discipline, etc.), such that we as a club can help "control the flow" of information.

- ☐ True
☐ False

EAP

Our club has an emergency action plan for all of our training and competition venues.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Equipment

Our equipment complies with USSA and/or FIS regulations.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Inspection

Course inspection is mandatory in our club.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Maintain Venues and Courses

We maintain our courses and venues up to industry standards and USSA guidelines.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Peer to Peer Communications

Our club board of directors has made direct contact with, and maintains contact with, resort ownership about our on-going strategic alliance.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Peer to Peer Communications

The appropriate person/people at our club deal directly with the appropriate resort management and personelle to execute written agreements that are backed by the strategic alliance discussed by the board and resort ownership.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Purchase and Maintain

All equipment is purchased by *knowledgable* club staff or someone informed by knowledgable club staff, and is stored, maintained and properly monitored by a dedicated and trained staff.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Resort Relations

Our club has fostered a good working relationship with our local/host resort.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Resort Use

Our programs and club are organized such that we can give detailed information about our program activities to the resort and other allies well in advance.

- ☐ True
☐ False

USSA Event Organizer Handbook

Our club uses the USSA Event Organizer Handbook as a resource for mapping out roles and responsibilities for competitions.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Venue Safety

Our club has a venue safety plan.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Written Agreements

We strive to have all agreements with the resort and other strategic allies in writing and formally reviewed on an annual basis.

- ☐ True
☐ False

Submit