

GUIDANCE NOTE

Seeking support

Approaching potential sponsors or supporters

When you're thinking of approaching potential sponsors or supporters, there are a number of factors you'll need to consider:

- i) Who should you approach - this could be friends, family, local clubs, someone you've played golf with (during a Pro-Am for example), local businesses, a current or former employer or a company that has values or an image with which you want to be associated.
- ii) Find out as much as you can about the individual or organisation you're going to approach. Give some thought to what might interest them the most and what benefits you have to offer that are a good fit with their organisation. See if you can find out what their values are.
- iii) Timing might be important - you may be able to help with a specific event or product launch. Doing your homework about a potential sponsor or supporter may help you get this right.
- iv) Give a good first impression - you only get one chance to give a first impression so make sure it's a good one. Make sure any material you're going to send them or give to them is as good as it can possibly be. It is important that you come across as professional, prepared and organised.
- v) Don't be afraid to sell yourself - you are talented and have lots of potential so be confident when talking about your achievements and aspirations, without coming across as arrogant, of course. They might feel flattered by an approach from a professional golfer, especially if it's done in the right way. They might say 'no' due to timing or other reasons, but they might remember you for future company plans.
- vi) Be clear about what you're going to ask for and try to match this as closely as possible to what you think they will be able to provide. This might include:
 - Financial support
 - Assistance with transport (car, petrol, fares, etc.)
 - Insurance
 - Communications (telephone charges, broadband fees, etc.)
- vii) Be realistic and it may be necessary to start with a small relationship, which has the potential to grow.
- viii) Explain clearly and simply why you're contacting them. They might lose interest if it takes too long to get to the point. To help, some suggested paragraphs for an introductory letter are shown in Appendix 1.

- ix) Make reference to something or someone you have in common (a friend, a golf club or a memory you share) as this will help you to start a relationship.

- x) You will need to offer some benefits to the sponsor or supporter. Ask them what they would be looking for and what they value. Here are a few ideas you might be able to offer them:
 - Logo on clothing
 - Logo and reference on player website
 - Logo on bag
 - Reference on the player page on the LET website
 - Round of golf with staff or key clients (subject to availability)
 - Support during golf lessons for clients.
 - Appearances at local events
 - Mentions in Facebook postings and Tweets
 - Use of photos and endorsement quotes
 - Blogs or articles for their website or newsletter

- xi) DON'T over promise – this will only put pressure on you and disappoint the sponsor or supporter making them far less likely to renew.

- xii) It's very unlikely that you'll 'seal the deal' through just letters, e-mails or phone calls. It's important for you to meet them face-to-face. When you do, remember to give a good impression. Be positive and optimistic about your job and your future plans, but stay also humble and don't ask for too much.

Managing relationships with sponsors or supporters

Once you've negotiated support from a sponsor or supporter, make sure you look after them. You need to manage the relationship.

Communicate with them regularly and remind them that you're grateful for their assistance. Contact them even if you miss a few cuts in a row. They will appreciate hearing about your experiences and will be pleased to hear about what you're planning to do to get better.

All of this will help you to continue to build the relationship and will make it more difficult for them to say 'no' to you in the future when you go back to talk to them about renewing an agreement.

APPENDIX

EXAMPLE PARAGRAPHS FOR AN INTRODUCTORY LETTER FOR A POTENTIAL SPONSOR

I have recently joined the Ladies European Tour as a Rookie and I am looking forward to a new challenge and a new chapter in my life. I am passionate about golf and I feel privileged that I now have the opportunity to play the sport I love as a Tour Professional. To assist me, I am seeking partners who can help me fulfil my dream of not only becoming one of the golf stars of the future, but also a positive role model who helps the sport to grow. In return, I am able to offer a range of benefits such as attendance at events or involvement in PR activity. I would be grateful if we could meet to discuss the possibility of creating a business relationship that will work for both of us.

I understand your company has an interest in sport and I am hopeful that this extends to offering support to talented young sportspeople. I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to tell you more about my progress in golf so far and to explain what I want to achieve in my sport. My hope is that you might be interested in working together in a way that benefits both of us.

Since a young age, I have been a big fan of [insert company name] and always felt very happy and comfortable wearing your [...clothes/shoes/belts....] as an amateur. Now that I am a professional golfer, I was wondering if it might be possible to work together. I believe I would be a great ambassador for your brand and I would be able to support you in a number of ways at events or through PR activity.

I have the ability to be able to profile my sponsors and supporters on my LET profile page - [insert link]. I am also active on Facebook and Twitter, which means I am able to offer media exposure throughout the year.

The Ladies European Tour aspires to be 'Fresh, Inspiring, Connected and Approachable'. These are values that I would bring to a partnership with [insert company name]. I am hard-working, focused and determined and if you are able to support me, I would endeavour to represent your company in the best possible way at all times.

The Ladies European Tour (LET) is a professional women's golf tour that involves over 320 females from almost 40 countries in around 20 tournaments that take place in 4 continents. It is a truly global tour with world-class golfers that inspire fans and future generations. In recent years, coverage of the LET has increased significantly through broadcast, print and digital media.
