

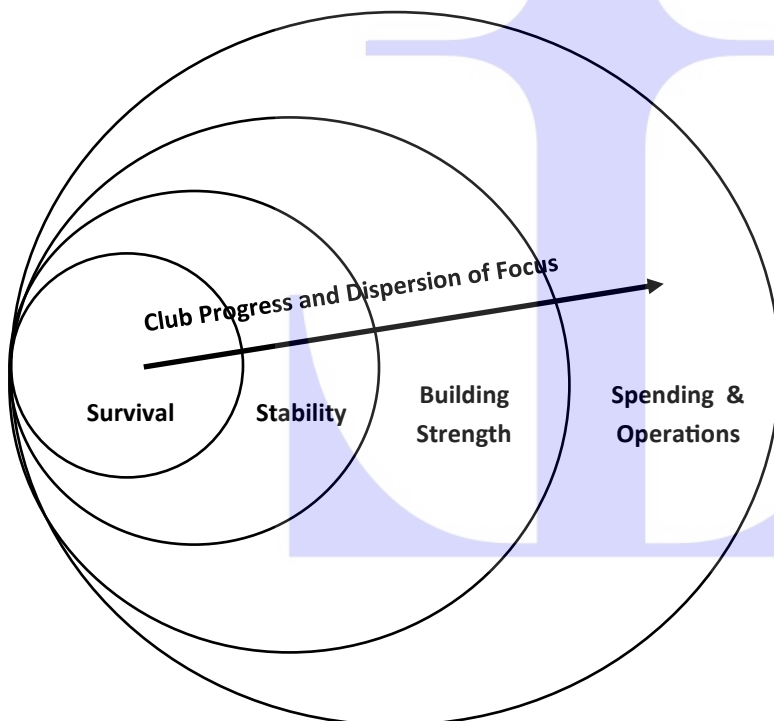
TANDEM CLUB PARTNERS

PERSPECTIVE

Focus Dispersion

Many cautionary tales at clubs share a common storyline; struggling club finds stability, followed by years of growth and thriving, only to become a victim of its own success by overspending, board infighting and management turnover furthering the instability. It happens time and time again and it leaves one wondering 'what went wrong?'.

It's quite simple: focus dispersion occurred. Focus dispersion is when the focus of those in club leadership positions begins to widen to a point in which continuity is lost. It's when the main thing is no longer the main thing. This is seen a lot in clubs that are struggling to survive, as indicated in the small circle in the diagram below. Leadership is focused on the basic need of survival; the focus is clear the focus is honed. As the club evolves and progress is made, the eye can wonder and dispersion can occur, with each board members' focus drifting away from the 'main thing' and becoming influenced by personal preferences, agendas, and egos. As time goes on and success continues and leaders change, as happens quite regularly on volunteer boards, dispersion increases that can result in confusion, inconsistency and conflict. The financial stability that once captured leadership's focus morphed into a focus on spending the now flush capital reserve fund and the focus on finding solutions for operational problems that do not exist.



So what can be done? First of all, don't get me wrong...as a club evolves, so should the focus. However, if left unchecked, the focus can be fueled by rumor, misperceptions and personal agendas. And once it begins, it can be difficult to reign in. The solution is to establish a drip campaign of third-party data, delivered to leadership consistently and on a structured timetable. These gentle nudges to keep the players inbounds reminds them of what their focus should be and provides a perspective that goes beyond the driving range, 19th hole or poolside bar.