

## RUNNING AN EFFECTIVE MEETING

### Ten Steps to Effective Meeting

1. There is plenty of discussion but it's to the point. If discussion strays, someone brings it back quickly.
2. Members understand their task clearly. Time is spent determining this early and then they are committed to it.
3. Members actively listen to each other. They give each idea a fair hearing and don't jump onto unrelated ideas.
4. The group does not evade disagreement and uses its energy to focus on the issue rather than the person.
5. Members are encouraged to reveal their opposition.
6. There are no personal attacks. Members are inclined to give positive respect and recognition.
7. The leader does not dominate. 'Leadership' shifts from time to time based on specific abilities and/or skills.
8. There are no power struggles or point scoring. Control is not an issue.
9. Members are conscious of their effectiveness as a team.
10. The group is capable of analyzing a weakness in its performance and addressing it quickly.

### Agenda

The agenda is the basis of any meeting and gives direction, structure and purpose. The agenda should be drawn up jointly by the chairperson and secretary and should be followed in order, unless the meeting directs otherwise. The agenda should be circulated prior to the meeting so that members may attend the meeting prepared to make a well-informed contribution.

- 1. Call the meeting to order.** Being satisfied that a quorum is present, the meeting should be formally declared open. If numbers at the meeting fall below the quorum at any stage during proceedings, no further decisions should be made.
- 2. Attendance and Apologies.**
  - Record all members present;
  - Introduce any visitors or guests and welcome them;
  - Call for apologies and ask for a formal motion that these be accepted.

- 3. Minutes.** It is the chairpersons duty to ask for any corrections to the minutes of the previous meeting (amend if necessary) and then call for a motion to accept them.
  
- 4. Matters arising from the minutes.**
  - List matters to be decided on the agenda;
  - Discussion should be confined strictly to matters in the minutes which will not be covered in reports.
  
- 5. Correspondence.**
  - The secretary presents to the committee a list of inward and outward correspondence in chronological order;
  - Only meaningful correspondence is read in full;
  - A motion is passed that all inward correspondence is received and all outward correspondence is approved.
  - Discussion should not be allowed before the motion is presented.
  
- 6. Financial Report**
  - The Treasurer presents a regular financial report
  
- 7. Committee Reports**
  - These should be kept brief and incorporated into the minutes (Insist on written reports).
  - Each report to provide a recommendation to be discussed and then a motion presented to adopt.

#### ***Motions and Amendments***

All items of business requiring a decision must come before the meeting by way of a motion and if passed, becomes a resolution. A motion should be proposed before the chairperson allows any debate or discussion on the topic. This promotes an orderly discussion.

#### ***Moving a Motion***

The mover introduces the motion, "I move that...". This introduces an item of business for the meeting's scrutiny. The mover must state their case to the meeting on that motion in a clear concise and unambiguous manner. The mover is granted right of reply at the end of any debate.

#### ***The Seconder***

This implies there is support for the motion.

The speaker must introduce their support with “I second that motion”. If there is no seconder the motion lapses.

Immediately a motion has been proposed and seconded the chairperson can save time and cut out repetition by declaring “Does anyone wish to speak AGAINST the motion?”. If no, the motion may be put to the vote. If yes, the order of debate should be speaker against, then for, (i.e. alternately) with no speaker speaking more than once except the movers right of reply.

### **Voting**

At the end of a debate, the chairperson puts the motion to the vote. Different forms of voting are:

- By voice
- By show of hands
- By members standing
- By secret ballot
- By a division

Unless specified otherwise in the constitution a simple majority vote by voices is often enough to cause the chairperson to declare the result.

The constitution should provide for voting power of the chairperson who may have:

- A deliberate vote only;
- A casting vote only;
- A deliberate and casting vote;
- No vote.

If the motion is lost, the meeting proceeds to the next item of business.

## **8. General Business**

- The chairperson can decide whether a point should be discussed, although only relatively minor points can be brought up
- Notice of motion for the next meeting may be brought up with a written copy of the motion handed to the secretary
- The chairperson should restrict discussion to the interest of the meeting.

## **9. Next Meeting**

Discuss time date and venue for the next meeting and ensure everyone is aware of the details.

## 10 Closure

This is the signal to indicate that no further business is being conducted.