Essentials for Effective Meetings

Overview

Before the Meeting

During the Meeting

After the Meeting

Meeting Tools & Resources

Purposeful & Successful Meetings

Before the meeting

(what needs to happen before the meeting to ensure its success?)

During the meeting

(what meeting processes will help to ensure a productive and well run meeting?)

After the meeting

(what follow up will help to ensure actions agreed on in the meeting are followed through?)

Why Have a Meeting?

- Decision making
- Accountability
- Reporting
- Reviewing
- Planning
- Problem solving; and
- Discussion

Before the meeting- think about

WHY?

WHY IS THE MEETING NEEDED?

WHERE?

WHERE SHOULD THE MEETING BE HELD? WHAT VENUE/LOCATION WILL BEST SUPPORT ATTENDANCE?

WHEN ?

CONSIDER WHAT DAY, MONTH, TIME OF DAY IS BEST AND ALSO HOW OFTEN (FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS).

HOW LONG?

HOW LONG SHOULD THE MEETING LAST? ASK MEMBERS WHAT WORKS FOR THEM- A MEETING THAT IS TOO LONG CAN BE A BARRIER TO ATTENDANCE. A MEETING THAT IS TOO SHORT CAN IMPACT ON ACHIEVING OUTCOMES.

WHO?

WHO NEEDS TO ATTEND- SHOULD ANY GUESTS BE INVITED?

WHAT?

WHAT WILL BE COVERED IN THE MEETING AGENDA?

Before the Meeting

There are a few essential tasks before the meeting that are key for a successful meeting. The Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and all members have a responsibility to prepare before every meeting.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Call for agenda items (Chairperson)	Create/send agenda (Chairperson & Secretary)	Prepare financial information/ report (Treasurer)	Gather/send any correspondence/ meeting papers (Secretary)	Send confirmation/ apology (all members)	Read meeting papers (all members)

During the Meeting- Chairperson's Role

- Assign minute taker *(usually secretary)*
- Check quorum *(the minimum number of attendees necessary as per model rules)*
- Open Meeting- present apologies
- Confirmation of minutes
- Check for conflicts of interest
- Work through agenda items
- Encourage discussion
- Encourage participation
- Summarise key decisions/actions
- Be Neutral
- Keep the meeting to time
- Call for other business *(items members wish to discuss that aren't listed on the agenda)*
- Close the meeting

During the Meeting Strategies for Participation

- Set /revisit ground rules

(ground rules set in advance with a group to guide how members act in a meeting and support productive and successful meetings)

- Have an icebreaker *(can help members relax)*

- Go around the table *(ask each member for input- this can help when you are only hearing from a few stronger voices and want to invite more input)*

- Paraphrase to wrap up what someone is saying *(sharing the key points to acknowledge participation and then moving on)*

- Ask to hear from others who haven't spoken

(I'd like to hear from other who haven't shared their thoughts)

- Invite other thoughts-what do others think?

- Quietly write thoughts then share *(this can give people time to think and can ensure all members have input- collect all written info)*

- Brainstorming out loud *(no wrong answers- keep session short- for next five minutes we are going to write all ideas up on board- no wrong ideas- GO!)*

- Small group conversations *(break into smaller groups and get someone to write key points and then share back to larger group)*

Ground Rules Example
Getting the most out of our meeting

- ✓Be present
- ✓Share the 'air-time'
- ✓Listen actively
- ✓Value all contributions
- ✓All ideas are good/welcome
- ✓Respect differences
- ✓Stay on task
- ✓Be open minded
- ✓Have positive expectations

TIP: ground rules are most effective when group members actively participate in developing them.

During the Meeting
Conflict

'Conflict arises from the clash of perceptions, goals, or values in an arena where people care about the outcome.'

(Alessandra, 1993 p.92)

What do you think causes conflict in meetings?

During the Meeting

Common Sources of Group Conflict

Values

Attitudes

Goals/expectations

Roles/responsibilities

Limited resources

Personalities

Increased interaction

Passion

During the Meeting Managing Conflict

- Set ground rules for the group
- Remind members of rules
- Be clear about purpose of committee/group
- Acknowledge that conflict happens
- Plan for how to deal with conflict
- Have a break
- Depersonalise the situation
- Find common ground
- Adjourn discussion until next meeting
- Consider independent facilitator

During the Meeting

Effective Minute Taking

📄 Use a template

📋 Know the agenda

🎧 Listen

✔️ Use dot points

🔑 Capture decisions/key discussion points/who is doing what

✏️ Summarise discussion (do not write everything)

👅 Do not need to quote/name everyone who speaks

🧠 Write the minutes up while fresh in mind

What can ALL participants do to make committee meetings more effective?

During the Meeting

Participants role in making meetings effective

- Attend meetings regularly
- Arrive on time and leave when meeting is finished
- Read meeting papers- note questions/comments in advance
- Limit distractions
- Stick to the agenda
- Actively participate
- Ask questions
- Make space for others
- Learn how to accept committee decisions graciously

After the Meeting

Send minutes out

(send minutes out asap- this will give members time to follow up on agreed actions from the meeting)

Read minutes

(all members should read the minutes and take note of any missing information and actions requiring follow up)

Follow through on allocated actions

(Identify actions that you need to follow up on prior to the next meeting)

Meeting Tools & Resources

On Loddon Shire's Website you will find free resources/tools to assist you to run effective meetings:

✓Tips for effective minute taking

✓Minutes template

✓Agenda template

✓Meeting checklist

Meeting Tools & Resources

The agenda and minute taking templates can be adapted and you can personalise them by adding your own logo.

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TIPS FOR EFFECTIVE MINUTE TAKING

USE A TEMPLATE
The 'Minute Taking Template' sets out an easy to use format for minute takers to follow.

KNOW THE AGENDA
The agenda sets out the items for discussion and the order of the meeting. Use this format to guide your minute taking.

SUMMARISE
-Use dot points
-Summarise discussion
-Do not quote/name everyone who speaks
-Do not write everything word for word.

CAPTURE DECISIONS/ACTIONS
Capture key discussion points and agreed actions, including timeframes and who is doing what.

WRITE MINUTES SOON AFTER
Write the minutes soon after the meeting whilst they are fresh in your mind.

SEND OUT MINUTES ASAP
Send out the minutes ASAP. The minutes will remind members about the actions they need to follow up on before you meet again.

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Meeting Checklist
for effective meetings....

- ☐ Call for agenda items from other group members (Chair)
- ☐ Create/send agenda & meeting papers (ideally by 1 week before meeting)
- ☐ Prepare financial information/report (Treasurer)
- ☐ Send confirmation of attendace or apology (all members)
- ☐ Read meeting papers (all members)
- ☐ Confirm minute taker (this is usually the secretary if present)
- ☐ Discuss agenda items (all members guided by Chair)
- ☐ Call for other business (Chair)
- ☐ Summarise key decisions/actions (Chair)
- ☐ Send minutes through to group members (as soon as possible after meeting- Secretary)

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AGENDA
(Insert name of group/meeting name)
Date: *(+date)*
Time: *(+start time-finish time)*
Location: *(+location)*

AGENDA ITEMS

Time Needed	Item	Person Responsible
	1. Welcome/Introductions	Chair
	2. Apologies	Secretary
	3. Minutes of previous meeting *(discuss/agree on minutes)*	Chair
	4. Quorum *(has quorum been met?)*	Chair
	5. Conflict of interest declarations	Chair
	6. Actions arising (from previous meetings)	Chair
	7. Treasurer's report	Treasurer
	8. *(+ item to be discussed)*	
	9. *(+ item to be discussed)*	
	10. *(+ item to be discussed)*	
	11. *(+ item to be discussed)*	
	12. *(+ item to be discussed)*	
	13. Other business *(call for other items that haven't been discussed)*	
	14. Date, time and location of next meeting	
	15. Meeting Close	

	Actions from Previous Meeting(s)		
Meeting Date	Action	Person responsible	Progress/comments

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MINUTES
(Insert name of meeting/organisation/group name))

Date:

Time: *(write start and end time of meeting)*

Location:

ATTENDANCE
(list names of attendees)

APOLOGIES
(list names of apologies)

AGENDA ITEMS
1. *(add agenda item and add summary of discussion)*
2. *(as above)*
3.
4.
5.

ACTIONS *(capture all agreed actions from the meeting)*
1. *(list action, person responsible and due date)*
2. *(as above)*
3.
4.
5.

OTHER BUSINESS
(Capture summary of other business discussed here. Include actions in above action list)