

RUNNING A MEETING

Below are some best practices to follow when running a meeting:

GREET ALL MEMBERS

Make everyone feel welcome, even those who are running late. Showing interest and appreciation to everyone will help to set a positive tone for the meeting.

START & END ON TIME

If you are having trouble ending meetings on time, plan out how long each topic will take. While it might not be completely accurate, you can better prepare for keeping discussions allotted to 30 minutes within a 30-minute timeframe. You can also time how long each topic takes to cover and provide that information to the officers who come after you so they can better prepare for timely meetings.

REVIEW THE AGENDA & STICK TO IT

Having an agenda is like having a game plan. Review your agenda so you can set priorities for the meeting. A good way to not get off topic is to provide either a Parking Lot or an open Announcements section of the meeting. Parking Lots are documents (could be a giant sticky note or a digital word file) that are available throughout the entirety of the meeting. At any point during the meeting, participants can put a topic on the Parking Lot to be addressed either at a later meeting or if time allows, at the end of the meeting.

Open Announcement sections allow for participants to bring up any topic that may not have been covered in the meeting to either quickly address it or to add it as a discussion point for the next meeting.

ENCOURAGE DISCUSSION & FEEDBACK

By getting all viewpoints and ideas you will have better quality decisions as well as highly motivated members. A way to do this is when prompted by questions, refrain from always providing your answer and instead reply with "How do you think we should proceed?". Open the floor to the participants and facilitate conversation before weighing in. When you encourage feedback on ideas and activities, the overall commitment to the organization can improve when members see their impact on the decision-making process. Always remember to keep conversation on topic, toward the eventual decision. Feel free to ask for only constructive comments.

DELEGATE TASKS

Don't be afraid to delegate some responsibilities to officers and members. Give members a voice in decision-making. You can also delegate minute keeping. Writing down the minutes for future reference is a great idea just in case a question or problem arises.

END THE MEETING

At the end of the meeting you should summarize agreements reached and end on a unifying or positive note. For example, have members volunteer thoughts of things they feel are good or successful, exciting upcoming event or developments, or by reciting the organization's mission. Set a date and time for the next meeting. When possible, plan these meeting dates and times out in advance- annually or semesterly. Provide participants a list of these dates and times for the entire year or semester early on and use the end of the meeting as a reminder. Finally, be ready to follow some post-meeting procedures outlined below.

POST MEETING PROCEDURES

- Prepare and distribute minutes within 24 hours. Quick action reinforces the importance of the meeting and reduces error of memory.
- You can also establish a designated officer to take minutes for each meeting while the meeting is occurring to limit the amount of memory error.
- Here is an example of what your meeting minutes might look like. Meeting Minutes Example
- With your officer team (and Advisor(s) when available), follow-up and discuss what went really well that you can continue within the meetings and what areas need improvement for the next meeting.
- Follow-up on delegation decisions. See that all members understand and carry out their responsibilities.
- Give recognition and appreciation to excellent and timely progress.