



Chapter 8

Meetings





Stage Plan for Shorter and More Productive Meetings

Stage 1: PLAN

Clarify the precise objectives of the meeting. Be clear why the meeting is needed and list the details.

Stage 2: INFORM

Ensure everyone knows exactly what is being discussed and why and what is needed or wanted from the discussion. Anticipate what information may be needed and have available.

Stage 3: PREPARE

Prepare a logical sequence of items and prepare the time allocation of each item on the basis of its importance — not its urgency.

Stage 4: STRUCTURE AND CONTROL

Deal with the agenda in order. Stop people from jumping ahead or going over old ground.

Stage 5: SUMMARIZE

Summarize all decisions and record them immediately with the name of the person responsible for any action.

The value of professional committee function cannot be overemphasized. However, the application of their function and responsibilities can and does vary from Chamber to Chamber. This is dependent on the size and location of the Chamber, the number of staff, and the experience and capabilities of the administrator.

Close cooperation between the administrator and the president is essential at all times. The board makes the decision and the administrator is then responsible for implementation.

A smaller Chamber, however, may be almost totally reliant on committee function from beginning to implementation and conclusion and in this regard has a major function and responsibility in the operation of the Chamber.



Meeting Procedure and Protocol

Planning a Meeting

A successful meeting must be planned and timed and then executed according to the plan and timing.

General Planning

The chair should remember that the success of the meeting depends on him/her. Keep in mind that:

1. Meetings without purpose are wasted efforts.
2. There should be a worthwhile reason and ample preparation before a meeting is called.
3. The meeting place should be centrally located. It should be held at a place adapted to the purpose — cool or warm according to the season, and one that is quiet and free from interruption.
4. **Attendance is a prerequisite to successful meetings.** To ensure good attendance it is important that everyone expected or desired to attend be notified sufficiently in advance regarding all details.
5. The meeting should start at a strictly adhered to scheduled time or its importance or desirability will not be recognized or appreciated. It is just as important that meetings finish on time.
6. Physical arrangements are another important contribution factor to the success of the meeting. If these have been attended to with care, the participants will be relieved of particular annoyances and distractions which interfere with their giving full attention to the deliberations. The chair that thoughtfully provides for the comfort and convenience of those who participate in his/her meeting does an effective piece of work. The chair must distinguish in his/her preparations between small and large meetings, and one where a meal is served. The following points may be considered in planning the seating arrangements:
 - a. The chairs should be as comfortable as possible, preferably with full or half arms. Wherever possible avoid uncomfortable folding chairs.

- b. For large meetings seating capacity should be ample. For small groups it is better to have a few chairs, with others readily available, than to have too many set up.
- c. Chairs may be arranged in rows of semi-circles facing the presiding officers but this is not as informal as around a table.
- d. When a meal is served to a large group it is more informal to have tables of four or eight than to have a crowded banquet arrangement, which may still be necessary if space is to be conserved.

Attendance

One of the most asked questions is, *"How can we increase our attendance at local meetings?"* The answer lies not in some magical performance or recommendation, but in the performance of your own board members. There are a number of factors that contribute to poor attendance, these include:

- 1. Last minute changes of meeting time without proper notification to members.
- 2. All business meetings and no entertainment.
- 3. No notification to members of meetings.
- 4. No publicity preparations for program.
- 5. Last minute preparations for program.
- 6. Poorly organized meetings.
- 7. Infrequent meetings at irregular times.

Factors contributing to good attendance are:

- 1. Good programs — planned, timed, and interesting.
- 2. Business should be short, concise, and its discussion planned.
- 3. Feature occasional entertainment as a variety of usual meeting procedure.
- 4. Various individuals should conduct the meeting.
- 5. Have the membership participate in forums, discussions, and panel groups.
- 6. Notification of meeting several days prior to meeting.
- 7. A variety of meetings on different themes.

Remember meeting regularly brings results in attendance.



Suggested Basic Agendas

Board Meeting

- a. Call to order
- b. Adoption of agenda
- c. Adoption of last set of minutes
- d. Reports
- e. Unfinished business
- f. New business
- g. Adjournment

General Membership Meeting

- a. Call to order
- b. Adoption of agenda
- c. Adoption of last set of minutes
- d. Reports
- e. Unfinished business
- f. New business
- g. Adjournment

General Membership Dinner Meeting

- a. Call to order
- b. Adoption of agenda
- c. Adoption of last set of minutes
- d. Grace / Toast to the Queen of Canada
- e. Meal service
- f. Introduction of Head Table
- g. Introduction of Speaker
- h. Address
- i. Thanks to the Speaker
- j. Reports
- k. Unfinished business
- l. New business
- m. Adjournment

Annual General Meeting

- a. Call to order
- b. Adoption of agenda
- c. Adoption of last year's AGM minutes
- d. Annual Reports (including audit)
- e. Elections of Board of Directors
 - i. Report of nominating committee
 - ii. Call for further nominations for each office
 - iii. Election of positions (as required by the bylaws)
- f. Unfinished business
- g. New business
- h. Adjournment

Sample Directors Meeting Attendance Roster

Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
President	√	√										
President Elect	√	√										
2 nd Vice President	A	√										
Treasurer	√	√										
Past President	√	√										
Director	√	√										
Director	√	E										
Director	√	√										
Director	√	√										
Director	E	√										
Director	√	√										
Director	√	√										
Director	√	√										
Director	E	√										
Staff	√	√										

√ present

“**A**” designates an absence without being excused

“**E**” designates an excused absence

Number of bBoard members that constitutes a quorum per the bylaws = _____



10 Commandments for a Successful Meeting

- 1. Robert's Rules of Order** will be the procedure and authority at all meetings.
- 2. Request for items to be placed on the agenda** must be done one week prior to the meeting (when possible).
- 3. Arrive on time.** A great deal of friction has been generated in otherwise harmonious boards through persistent tardiness of a few members.
- 4. Prepare a written report** which can be attached to the minutes if you are making a committee report or are making a presentation to the board.
- 5. Put your direction forward by a motion on the floor.** As the office gets its direction from the board unless a motion is passed, the Chamber office has no authority to act.
- 6. Monitor goals and objectives.** Ensure the direction the Chamber is going is representative of the entire membership.
- 7. Keep the members and community informed** and ensure that you are informed. Contact the office should you miss a meeting.
- 8. Be tolerant** of others' opinions and viewpoints.
- 9. Be prepared to work** on at least two (2) or three (3) committees.
- 10. Be accountable and responsible.** A director is not authorized to speak for the Chamber except of those matters where the Chamber has a clearly defined and formulated policy.



How to Ruin a Meeting

HOGGING

— Too much talking by one person.

BOGGING

— Staying on a subject too long.

FOGGING

— Avoiding a topic or being vague or defensive.

FROGGING

— Jumping from topic to topic without any closure on any of them.

FLOGGING

— Attacking a person rather than focusing on that person's input.

CLOGGING

— Slowing down the team by failing to accomplish action items.

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