

# Effective Meetings & Minutes



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# Content

- The elements of effective meetings
- Ground rules
- Individual and collective roles
- Challenging behaviour at meetings
- Keep meetings focused and productive
- Produce effective agendas
- Produce accurate, brief and clear minutes
- The physical environment

# SUCCESSFUL MEETINGS

- Have a clear purpose
- Have clear roles for attendees
- Share out the work
- Have a clear agenda
- Produce clear, complete & correct minutes
- Have agreed ground rules

# Task

- Draw up a set of ground rules for meetings



# ROLE OF EACH MEMBER

- To ensure that the meeting sticks to its purpose
- To give the meeting direction through effective decision-making and planning
- To ensure smooth running of the meeting – conflict, communication styles and conduct

# ROLE of the CHAIRPERSON

- Keep order at meetings
- Encourage contributions / ask questions to clarify
- Ensure decisions are made / keep to the point
- Summarise decision at the end of agenda item
- Manage voting on agenda items

# Secretary

- Plan meetings with the Chair or Staff
- Ensure correspondence is dealt with
- Ensure appropriate arrangements for meetings
- Ensure agenda is prepared and circulated
- Ensure accurate minutes are taken
- Ensure contact details of members are kept

# Challenging behaviour

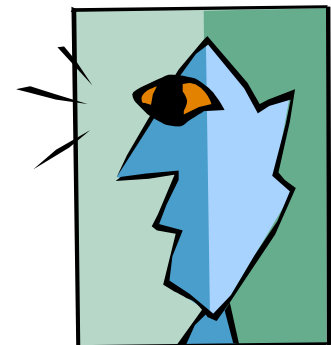
- Consider challenging behaviour you have encountered at meetings
- How did you deal with it?
- Go through the checklist
- Solutions?



# Agendas

Compare agendas A and B:

- What are the main differences?
- Which would suit your purposes?
- Why?



# Effective Communication at Meetings

- Words 7%
- Voice 40%
- Body Language 53%
- Developing good communications skills helps us promote effective relationships and saves time.
- What are the barriers to effective listening?

# Principles of a Good Meeting

## 1. MOTIVATION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- People like a good, positive atmosphere
- People like to get things done and to feel involved
- New people need to feel motivated to join in
- People need to be able to share ideas and remain active within the group

# Principles of a Good Meeting

## 2. INFORMATION

- exchange of information is a two-way process
- The exchange should be short and clear
- Information should be relevant and sufficient

# Principles of a Good Meeting

## 3. TIMING

- Latecomers cause disruptions
- An agreed location
- People are generally tired and lack concentration late in the day/evening
- An agreed meeting duration – time content
- Productivity drops when people get hungry!

# Principles of a Good Meeting

## 4. DECISIONS

- Remember arguments are not important
- The decision is important, not the ego!
- Use a process for decision-making
- Let the agenda and minutes facilitate the decision-making process

# What are minutes for?

- Accuracy
- Record
- Resolve misunderstandings
- Legal
- Actions
- Accountability



# Role of the Minute-taker

- Understand the agenda
- Record date (including year), time and location
- Record apologies, absentees
- Record attendees and in what capacity they attend
- Be prepared to listen and ask for clarification
- Take accurate notes during the meeting



# Role of the Minute-taker

- Ensure DECISIONS and ACTIONS are recorded
- Note if/when a meeting becomes inquorate
- Note declarations of conflicts of interest and what action taken
- Note proposals put to vote and results
- Write up minutes asap after the meeting
- Get the Chair to approve minutes before circulation

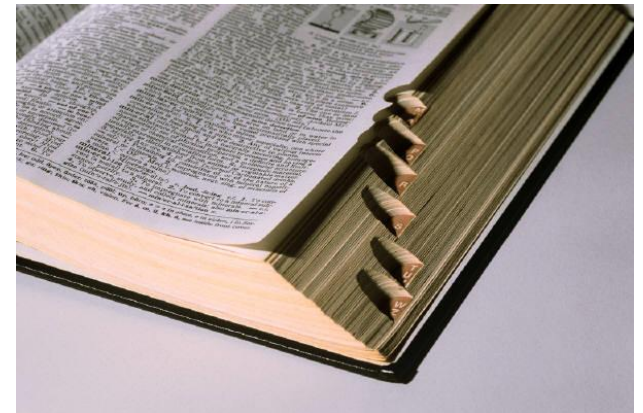
# Guidance note on minutes layout

- Logistics
- Present
- In attendance
- Apologies
- Decisions
- Actions



# How NOT to write minutes

- Read the two examples
- What are the main differences?
- Consider how people's names are used in both examples.
- The passive voice



# Some thoughts on the physical environment

- Room Layout
- Equipment
- Lighting
- Heating
- Refreshments



# Charities Governance Code

## Principle 5: Working Effectively

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- 5.1. Identify charity trustees with relevant **skills**
- 5.2. Hold regular **board meetings**. Give enough notice before meetings and provide prepared agendas
- 5.3. Board **agendas** should include activities, finance and conflicts of interests and loyalties
- 5.4. Make sure that there is enough information to make informed decisions which are recorded accurately in the **minutes**

# Checklist for effective meetings

- Consider the checklist in relation to your own meetings
- Share with your committee
- Any actions you need to take?

**Carmichael.**