



How to Ensure A Successful Meeting

There are 5 basic requirements to ensure a successful meeting.

These are;

1. Purpose

The reason for the meeting is clear and the objectives have been communicated and understood. It has been assessed that a face to face meeting is required to achieve the desired outcome.

2. Leader

The *chairperson* or facilitator is aware of their role, and the need to keep things on track.

3. Process

The process of the meeting is established and decisions are made in accordance with the constitution, consensus, standing orders or debate. Consensus is finding a proposal that is acceptable enough for all members to support, and agree to abide by.

4. Agenda of items to be discussed

Document all agenda items and stick to them. When preparing the agenda estimate the amount of time needed to discuss each item. Some groups add an action column to the agenda so that each person has the opportunity to record what decision was reached and who does what.

5. Record of the meeting

Minutes are a vital component of a meeting as they document the decisions made. In this way they may be used as a tool for planning, conflict resolution and training.

The chairperson's role and responsibilities

A good chairperson;

- Makes sure the meeting starts on time
- Welcomes members and organises any introductions
- Lists any ground rules that have been developed by the members
- Knows and keeps to the agenda
- Reads and calls for apologies
- Knows the rules (e.g. the constitution, the procedure the meeting follows)
- Takes the lead by introducing agenda items
- Stays neutral
- Encourages discussion
- Keeps the discussion on the topic
- Involves everyone – encourages quiet people to have their say
- Listens carefully so that clarification and summarising can take place. Uses tools such as reflecting, suggesting options, seeking agreements and encouraging participation to assist the group to complete its task
- When the topic has been discussed enough the chairperson summarises and asks if anyone can put forward a motion
- Mediates if there is conflict between members
- Makes sure everyone is aware of the decision that has been made and that it is written down in the minutes
- Is democratic and firm
- Is in control of the meeting at all times
- Calls for order in a good strong voice
- As part of the closure ensures everyone is clear as to what is to be done, by whom and when
- Thanks everyone for attending

NOTE: The chair may decide to walk out of the meeting if unable to gain control by using all conventional methods.

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