

THE ART OF THE PERFECT MEETING

Are your meetings a waste of time?
Learn how to run an effective meeting.



MINUTES

A guide to productive and efficient meetings.

Aspire Mentoring Program 2017

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*“A meeting is an event at which the minutes are kept
and the hours are lost.”*

– Unknown

The following document is a guideline for the planning, execution and follow-up procedures required when holding a meeting, with the goal of saving the hours and increasing the efficiency and productivity of meetings.

Specifically, we will be discussing what needs to happen before the meeting, during the meeting and after the meeting.

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PRE-MEETING PLANNING

What are arrangements for a meeting?

The arrangements for a meeting are the things which need to be done before a meeting takes place, in order to ensure that the meeting is able to happen, that all of the participants are able to attend and all of the resources which are needed for the meeting are available.

The arrangements for a meeting are like the arrangements for a party. You would not throw a party without making appropriate arrangements beforehand, so why would you consider having a meeting without preparing for it? If you prepare for a party in advance, then you will be less likely to have any nasty surprises; the same is true for a meeting.

Arrangements for a meeting are an important part of the planning process associated with a meeting. Careful arrangements must be made before the meeting to ensure that the meeting runs smoothly.

What is the purpose of arrangements for a meeting?

Making proper arrangements for a meeting is essential, because if you do not make the correct arrangements for a meeting, then something could happen which would stop the meeting from progressing as planned. For example, if you failed to arrange for a projector to be available in the meeting room, a participant may not be able to do their presentation. A failure to make proper arrangements could mean that a second meeting has to be planned to supplement the first one.

What are the different types of arrangements for a meeting?

Location	– Where the meeting will be held.
Participants	– Who will be invited to attend the meeting.
Equipment	– Are any pieces of specialist equipment needed at all as part of the meeting?
Agenda	– It is important that you organise the agenda before the meeting, in order to ensure that the meeting has appropriate structure.
Catering	– Whether or not food and drinks are needed.
Time	– What time the meeting will be at.
Estimated Duration	– How long it is expected to last.
Number of participants	– How many people are expected to attend the meeting.

What's involved with the arrangements for a meeting?

The initial stages of making arrangements for a meeting are deciding who is going to attend. Once you know who is planning on attending, it is possible to organise a space which is large enough to accommodate everyone. Once this is done, you can make the participants aware of the meeting location. Arrange any specialist equipment once you have organised the venue. If you are arranging a meeting, it is a good idea to arrive at the venue early, so that you can make sure that everything is set up correctly. Whilst some meetings are arranged by the participants themselves, many big companies employ someone to make the arrangements for them.

How do the arrangements for a meeting impact on the participants?

The date and place of a meeting can affect whether they are able to attend or not. When you are planning a meeting, it is important that you take into account the needs of all of the participants (including physical needs in the case of disabled participants), because this can affect whether they can attend or not. It is important to make the duration of a meeting short enough that participants will want to attend.

DURING THE MEETING

What needs to occur during the meeting?

Although, an agenda is established prior to the meeting, it's important that members of the meeting are provided a copy of the agenda. This is used throughout the meeting as a tool to guide the discussions of the meeting and establishes the primary intention of the meeting. The agenda eliminates excessive rambling and unnecessary discussions and ensures allocating an equal timeframe for all members to contribute and discuss their ideas freely.

Throughout the meeting, the Committee Secretary is accountable for taking minutes, as a way to keep the staff and board members well informed on committee developments, advancements and future needs. Minutes are essential in recording meeting developments and are also a reminder of what follow-up actions need to be taken. They are also important for future reference in case a question or problem arises, as they're accurate record of what was discussed and decided at a meeting.

The facilitator of the meeting, the chairperson, ensures the conventions of the meeting are clearly established at the beginning of the meeting. These are the rules of the meeting, which the chairperson ensures are followed as a way to keep the meeting equal and fair. In the final minutes of the meeting, the facilitator organizes with the attending members of staff, the date, location and preliminary agenda of the next week. As well, as reiterating the key points discussed in the meeting, and highlight unresolved issues that need to be discussed in the next meeting.

What is the role and responsibility of a chairperson for a meeting?

The roles of a chairperson are to set the agenda, direct the meeting, preserve order at the meeting, guarantee the rules of the meeting are being followed, ensure impartiality and fairness at the meeting. The role of a chairperson is to approve the formal minutes of the meeting after they have been formatted, by first confirming that the minutes are a precise and honest depiction of the events at the meeting.

POST-MEETING REVIEW

Following the conclusion of a meeting it is imperative to carry out two main actions.

1. **Distributing the meeting minutes**
2. **Following up the action items decided upon during the meeting**

Distribution of minutes

Within 24 hours of a meeting, the meeting minutes should be written, summarised and distributed.

The record of minutes need not be a detailed transcript of the events that transpired but rather there are a few key elements that should be included:

- **Date, time and location of the meeting**
- **Attendees and apologies**
- **Key points raised and decisions that were agreed upon**
- **Motions and voting results (if applicable)**
- **Follow up actions**
 - **Who is responsible for following up**
 - **By when are these due/ to be completed**
- **Name of the recorder**

Minutes serve a great purpose in keeping all individuals engaged within the organisation and up to date. Moreover, they serve as a timeless record of discussions and commitments made allowing for smooth follow-up later on.

Follow up on commitments

At the end of each meeting, action items and next steps should be established. This includes the due date which should be given consideration and be negotiable. Each commitment should be specific and have a clear deadline.

An individual should also be assigned to follow up each of the actions items at regular intervals to touch base with people responsible for the tasks. This ensure everything is running smoothly and allows for the prospect of re-evaluating task loads and deadlines.

MEETING MINUTES TEMPLATE

DATE			
TIME			
LOCATION			
MEETING CREATED BY:		MINUTE TAKER:	
FACILITATOR:		TIME KEEPER:	
PLEASE READ:			
PLEASE BRING:			

PRESENT:

AGENDA TOPIC			
TIME ALLOCATED		PRESENTED BY	
DISCUSSION			
CONCLUSION			
ACTION Description			
ACTION TO BE TAKEN BY		DATE TO BE ACTIONED BY	

MINUTES:

AGENDA TOPIC			
TIME ALLOCATED		PRESENTED BY	
DISCUSSION			
CONCLUSION			
ACTION Description			
ACTION TO BE TAKEN BY		DATE TO BE ACTIONED BY	

OTHER INFORMATION

OBSERVERS	
RESOURCES	
SPECIAL NOTES	

SECRETARY APPROVAL:

(Signature & Date)

MEETING MINUTES TEMPLATE 2

CALL TO ORDER	
Team Name/ Organisation	
Meeting to discuss	
Attendees present	
Attendees not present	
Approval of Previous Minutes	
Reports	
Unfinished Business	
Motions	
New Business	
Announcements	
Other Business	
Adjournment	

SECRETARY APPROVAL:
(Signature & Date)

