

RUNNING EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

Organizational meetings have several functions. They give members a chance to discuss and evaluate goals and objectives and keep you updated on current events. They provide a chance to communicate and keep the group cohesive. But, most of all, meetings allow groups to pull resources together for decision making. If the facilitator starts with a careful plan and finishes with a thorough follow-up, the meeting will "run itself." The following are some tips to help make your next meeting successful, productive, and even fun.

Before the Meeting

1. Define the purpose of the meeting. If you can't come up with a purpose, don't have a meeting!
2. Depending on the size and purpose of your organization, you may have a variety of meetings. If you have an executive board of officers, you may want to hold meetings with just those few people and discuss what needs to take place at the larger group meeting with full membership. Even if you do not have this type of organization, you should probably have a pre-meeting with a few officers to decide what will be on the agenda.
3. Develop an agenda with the officers and advisor. The outline will help ensure an effective and efficient meeting. It is a good idea to generate a process where members can submit agenda items in order to help everyone feel included in the group. Below is a sample agenda: (Check appendix for sample)
4. Distribute the agenda and circulate background material, lengthy documents or articles prior to the meeting so members will be prepared and feel involved and up-to-date.
5. Choose an appropriate meeting time. Set a time limit and stick to it. Remember, members have other commitments. They will be more likely to attend meetings if you make them productive, predictable and as short as possible.
6. If possible, arrange the room so that members face each other, i.e., a circle or semi-circle. For large groups, try U shaped rows. A leader has a better view when s/he is centrally located.
7. Choose a location suitable to your group's size. Small rooms with too many people get stuffy and create tension. A larger room is more comfortable and encourages individual expression.
8. Post a large agenda up front for members to refer to.
9. Vary meeting places if possible to accommodate different members. Be sure everyone knows where and when the next meeting will be held.
10. Arrive early at the meeting site to ensure that the doors are open and all needed supplies are available. Double check with anyone speaking at the meeting before it starts to be sure he/she is present and ready to speak as planned
11. Determine the level of formality you desire for your meetings. Using some form of parliamentary procedure can be helpful in keeping the meeting running smoothly. Whoever is facilitating the meeting should be guiding the meeting along and following the agenda to keep everyone on task.
12. Consider inviting Student Life staff to your next organizational meeting! A Student Life staff member will be glad to be just an observer or to offer his/her expertise in a meeting consultation. Staff can make notes on the positives and negatives of your meeting and

report feedback to the leaders of your organization. Contact Student Life if you are interested.

During the Meeting

1. Greet members and make them feel welcome, even late ones when appropriate.
2. If possible, serve light refreshments, they are good ice breakers and make your members feel special and comfortable.
3. Start on time. End on time.
4. Review the agenda and set priorities for the meeting.
5. Stick to the agenda.
6. Encourage group discussion to get all points of view and ideas. You will have better quality decisions as well as highly motivated members. They will feel that attending meetings is worthwhile.
7. Encourage feedback. Ideas, activities and commitment to the organization improve when members see their impact in the decision-making process.
8. Keep conversation on topic toward an eventual decision. Feel free to ask for only constructive and non-repetitive comments. Tactfully end discussions when they are getting nowhere or becoming destructive or unproductive.
9. Keep minutes of the meeting for future reference in case a question or problem arises (see handout on "Minutes and Record Keeping").
10. Leader, be a role model by listening, showing interest, appreciation, and confidence in members. Admit mistakes.
11. Summarize agreements reached and end the meeting on a unifying or positive note. For example, have members volunteer thoughts of things they feel are good, successful, reciting a group's creed or a good of the order.
12. Set a date, time and place for the next meeting.

Breaking the Ice

The primary goal for an icebreaker or getting-acquainted exercise is to develop an environment which is anxiety-reducing and allows individuals to "break the ice" or get acquainted by having fun. Icebreakers are intended to be tension-reducing rather than providing encounters on a direct interaction basis. Icebreaker exercises should be used with any group that appears to be extremely anxious in the initial stage of development (i.e., first meeting of clubs, program boards, etc.).

Icebreakers should not be used to avoid dealing with anxiety, but rather to provide a less threatening environment. A non-threatening environment initiated at the beginning of a group's development may make way for more meaningful interaction and relationships during the life of the group.

Here are some important reminders about icebreakers and getting acquainted exercises.

1. They can be excellent devices to help people feel more comfortable with themselves and with others and feel more "at home" in a group.
2. They break up the "cliques." Invite people to form random groupings and help individuals meet others in a non-threatening and fun way.
3. They can be used to set a tone for the time a group will be together, will encourage people to feel "safe" and hopefully will evoke lots of laughter in releasing tension.

Examples of Icebreakers

1. Human scavenger hunt

Find someone who:

- is left handed
- plays a musical instrument
- loves dogs
- wears contacts.

2. Hometown

Members tell where they are from and information about their hometown.

3. Name game

Why or how the member got his/her name.

4. Knots

Form a circle by placing hands in the middle of the circle, grab someone else's hands (other than the person's on either side of you), and without letting go, try to untangle the "knot."

5. Repetitive name game

Everyone sits in a circle. The first person states their name and a word that may describe them that begins with the first letter of their name (you may want to limit the word to a topic: food, vacation spot, etc.) The second person repeats the first, then says their own. The third person repeats the first and second, then their own, and so on.

6. Halves

Prepare pictures of objects on cards. Cut the pictures in half and give each person a card. When told, they are to mingle and find the other half of the picture.

Examples of Getting-Acquainted Exercises

1. Dyads

Members get into groups of two and find out information about each other. Possible questions to use:

1. Who do you think is the most important person who has lived in the past 100 years?
2. What is the best movie you have seen recently?
3. What is the title of the last book you have read?
4. If you could be any animal other than human, what would you be?
5. If you could travel to any place in the world, where would you go?
6. What is your favorite sport?
7. One adjective to describe me is...
8. The emotion I find most difficult to control is...

2. Crest or Coat of Arms

Members create their own "Coat of Arms" on paper by filling in information about themselves using words or drawings.

Information to include:

Hobbies

Hometown

Major

Favorite Emotion

Family Members

Five-or Ten-Year-Goals

3. Forced Choice

Ask members to stand in the middle of the room and have them move to either side to indicate their choice

1. More like a Cadillac or a Volkswagen?
2. More of a saver or a spender?
3. More like a dog or a cat?
4. More yes or no?
5. More like a student or a teacher?
6. More here or there?
7. More religious or non-religious?
8. More like the present or the future?
9. More like a file cabinet or a liquor chest?
10. More intuitive or rational?
11. More like a tortoise or a hare?
12. More like an electric typewriter or a quill pen?
13. More like a roller skate or a pogo stick?
14. More like a bubbling brook or a placid lake?
15. More like a gourmet restaurant or a McDonald's?

4. Informal Discussion

An informal discussion sharing feelings about being at South Seattle Community College, and a member of the club. You can use some of the following leading questions: Where are you from? Why did you choose SSCC? Why did you join the club? What is your major/career goal? What sort of activities were you involved in high school? What sort of activities do you think you will get involved in here? What are some of your hobbies? What do you do in your spare time?

5. The Toilet Paper Game

Get a roll of toilet paper (has to be the kind with perforated sheets) and pass it around the circle, telling everyone to take as many sheets as they want (don't tell them why!) Once everyone has done this, tell them that for each sheet they took, they have to share something with the group about themselves. You may want to start out (in case no one else starts). Go around the circle, one sheet at a time, or have each person use all their sheets at once. As someone shares something, they tear off the sheet and throw it in the middle of the circle. This game also works with M & M's.

6. Brown Bag

Have each person bring three things in a brown bag that symbolize them or is important

to them. Share the objects with the group. Variation: Put all bags in a pile and draw them out one at a time, guessing which person it belongs to.

7. Lifeline

Provide each person with a large sheet of paper and a marker or pen. Have them write their name and create their "lifeline" on the sheet - drawing or writing significant events in their life from birth to that day. Then share with the group.

Source: California State University Fullerton Dean of Students Office mb: 9199

After the Meeting

1. Write up and distribute minutes within 3 or 4 days. Quick action reinforces importance of meeting and reduces error of memory.
2. Discuss any problems during the meeting with other officers; come up with ways improvements can be made.
3. Follow-up on delegating decisions. See that all members understand and carry out their responsibilities.
4. Give recognition and appreciation to excellent and timely progress.
5. Put unfinished business on the agenda for the next meeting.
6. Conduct a periodic evaluation of the meetings. Weak areas can be analyzed and improved for more productive meetings.

Once your organization has written its goals and objectives, it is time to take this task one step further by developing an Action Plan. This is the actual mapping out in detail of what is to get done within a time framework.

- What is to be done - your objective?
- How will it be accomplished?
- What are the resources in terms of people, money, materials?
- Who is responsible for completing each task?
- When will it be accomplished?
- How will you know when it is accomplished? What will you be measuring by?

MINUTES

Minutes and Record Keeping

Being a secretary for your organization is not a job to take lightly. This responsibility should not be assigned/delegated to just anyone. Think about these responsibilities when you are considering who will best fulfill this role:

- Is this person well organized and reliable; does s/he complete her/his tasks in a timely way?
- Is this person a good listener; is s/he able to be objective and hear both sides of an issue?
- Is this person on top of what is going on; is s/he able to weed out the trivial information and record the key facts for the record?

As you can see, the role of a secretary is more than "just taking minutes." The secretary is responsible for complete, objective record keeping. They are, in effect, the historian. What s/he records will be referred to by current members as a reminder of what needs follow-up and what

actions were taken. It will also be kept for future members to gain an understanding of where the organization has been and why. Many organizations make it the secretary's responsibility to notify the members about upcoming meetings - time, date, location - as well as any important items to be discussed.

It is critical that the secretary attend all meetings. If your organization has a structure that includes committees - be they ad hoc or standing - there should be someone present to accurately record what transpired. It is not necessary to take down everything unless someone requests that their remarks be entered for the record. Motions and resolutions do need to be taken verbatim and should be read back during the meeting to make sure they have been accurately recorded.

It is the secretary's responsibility to signal the chairperson and ask questions regarding the subject being discussed if they become lost or unsure. A secretary should not wait until the meeting has been adjourned to get clarification; individuals can lose their perspective, issues can become less important, and one's memory can alter what actually occurred.

Immediately after the meeting, the secretary must go over her/his notes while everything is still fresh in her/his mind. S/he should check their notes for the following information:

- Type of meeting (executive, committee, etc.)
- Date, time and place
- List of attendees and those absent
- Time of call to order
- Approval and/or amendments to previous meeting minutes
- Record of reports from standing and special committees
- General matters
- Record of proposals, resolutions, motions, seconding and final disposition, and a summary of the discussion as well as a record of the vote
- Time of adjournment

These minutes should be sent out to all members within 3 or 4 days of the meeting. This allows members time to read the minutes for accuracy before the next meeting and while the previous meeting is still fresh in their minds.

Minute Taking

It is often helpful for the secretary to prepare his/herself before each meeting. S/he should be sure to read the minutes of previous meetings paying attention to and reviewing the agenda and any attached documents. If the organization has agreed upon a standard format for minutes, s/he can use a standardized form and fill in preliminary rough draft information before the meeting so that s/he is able to fill in discussions, etc., as they occur.

If the secretary is unable to attend, a substitute, preferably with the characteristics defined earlier, needs to be appointed. If a substitute is taking minutes, the following hints will make the job easier:

- Identify yourself before speaking
- Speak slowly

- Present motions in writing to the secretary (this is a good practice even when the regular secretary is present)
- Raise hands high during vote counting
- Summarize discussions

There are several ways to take meeting minutes and each organization needs to choose the most appropriate method for them. Minutes can be recorded in writing or on tape. If you choose to tape the minutes, you can either tape the entire proceedings word-or-word or listen to them later, pulling out the pertinent information. Taping an entire meeting is an extreme form of minute taking; it is akin to sitting through the same meeting twice!

A second more practical option is to record a summary of debates, agreements and disagreements with a sufficient explanation of the character of each.

It is often helpful for minute taking and for those attending the meeting if either the chair or the secretary summarizes decisions that are reached. The summarizer should be most careful in clarifying those points of greatest controversy.

Sample Meeting Agenda

Club Name
Meeting Agenda
Tuesday, October 6th, 2009
1:00-2:30 pm -- JMB 142

CHANGE EVERYTHING THAT IS HIGHLIGHTED YELLOW

Club Mission Statement:

The Student Club Center encourages and supports student clubs and organizations. The Center provides students with resources, support services and trainings needed to run student organization effectively and efficiently; promotes diverse club programs, activities and events and encourages the development of new student clubs.

CHECK IN: Big KUDOS to those who helped in Progressive Open-House & First Friday Convocation!

CLUB FALL MEETING SCHEDULE, from 1:00 – 2:20 p.m.

Tuesday, October 27th, 2013
 Tuesday, November 10th, 2013
 Tuesday, November 24th, 2013
 Tuesday, December 8th, 2013

VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITIES:

Monday, October 12 th , 2013	West Seattle Food Bank Work Party (PTK) 7:00 pm
Wednesday, October 28 th , 2013	Evergreen Tutoring Visit 2:30-4:00pm
Thursday, October 29 th , 2013	West Seattle Tutoring Visit 2:30-4:00pm

STAFF REPORTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS: (Upcoming Calendar, Events, Projects, Meetings Deadlines, Staff Updates) Email reports to Club President on Mondays if you want them included please.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

1. Welcome Back! Pre Fall Training & CUSP Conference: 5 clubs
2. Tuesday, Sept. 29th, 2013- Tuesday, October 6th, 2009: Over 200 students; 33 students were interested in student clubs
3. Osurè's Office Hours: Beginning the Week of Oct. 26th-End of the quarter—Tuesday-Thursday 11am-4:30pm
4. Club Expectation: Attend trainings, retreats, meetings, volunteering & be in regular contact
 - i. Name of 3 club officers attending the retreat (NOT PAID)
5. New Club Applications Available in the Club Center
 - a. **DEADLINE: Tuesday, October 13th, 2013**
6. Update on the Current List of Active Clubs: 11 Clubs
7. Booking Rooms—only by e-mails— & List of Copy Codes for Clubs (only student club center staff can make copies for you until trainings are over)

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

1. Preparation for 1st Meeting
 - Sign-in Dates, Times & Desired Locations for Meetings (SEE SHEET)
 - Recruit Officers and Members
 - o Clear Expectations of what Officers will do
 - Action Plan for the Year: Events, Programs, Services
 - o Club Collaborations
 - Sign-In Sheets for first meeting
 - Advisor Agreement Letter (PRINT) **DUE: Tuesday, October 13th, 2013 by 3:00pm** Hardcopy turned in to CeCe
 - E-mail Constitution & Bylaws to CeCe **DUE: Tuesday, October 13th, 2013 by 3:00pm**
 - Invite your Club Advisor(s)
2. Better Club Center Advertising
 - a. Looking for a Publications Guide—Update FB, design Club Center Brochures & Flyers etc.
 - i. Michal Marek signed up to be a volunteer

Action Items:

- Take Individual Photos of Club Presidents
- Pass out Club Center T-shirts & handbooks

- Take Group Photos
- Osurè will e-mail the clubs that attended the pre fall training: business card forms
- E-mail Club & Club Presidents:
 - List of people allowed to make copies
 - Website updated information Request
 - Business Cards for individual officers
 - Club Advisor Agreement
 - Constitution & Bylaws Submit via E-mail

Upcoming All-Clubs Meeting Topics:

1. Fundraising
2. Club Outlook Accounts
3. Club's Action Plan for the Year
4. How to Involve your Club Advisors?
5. Elections

Club's Strategic Goals

Name of Recorder: