



Meeting Checklist Guidelines

Before the Meeting

- **Meetings are for making decisions.** Be sure you understand what decisions have to be made at the meeting.
- **Plan the agenda** to ensure that the most important and most time-critical decisions are made first.
- Make sure that **reports and information necessary to make the needed decisions are sent with the agenda** in sufficient time for them to be read.
- Contact individuals scheduled to make a verbal report and make sure they will be present or will appoint someone else to give the report.
- Note when someone comes unprepared to the meeting. Call them in advance of the next meeting with a reminder to read and think about the agenda items before the meeting.
- The board or committee can be severely handicapped when members are absent. Frequent absences may indicate personal problems for the member or a problem with the Board. **If you have reason to think that a member is not making a serious effort to attend all meetings, call them to find out why.**

At the Meeting

- **Use a "Consent Agenda"** to dispense quickly with routine and non-controversial agenda items.
- Rules of order are important to **ensure that decisions are made fairly and that the rights of the majority and minorities are protected.** Make sure that the rules you follow encourage adequate discussion and participation.
- **Start meetings at the scheduled time.**
- Introduce and welcome all newcomers.
- **Summarize the issues to be discussed.**
- Clarify the time-line for discussion.
- **Keep a speakers list.** Make sure that everyone who wishes to speak has done so before any speaker has a second opportunity.
- Encourage the quiet ones. Direct questions to them or go around the table so that everyone can comment.
- When discussion wanders, bring it back to the matter at hand.
- **Be alert to nonverbal behaviours signifying dissent.** Ask the dissenter to comment.
- When debate becomes confrontational and positions become entrenched, seek ways to identify the interests and values that underlie the positions and seek ways to negotiate resolution.
- **Watch for signs that the debate has run its course.** Then summarize the discussion and ask for a vote or expression of consensus.
- **Ask the secretary to read all motions & amendments** to be sure that they are clear, express the intent of the mover, and are **correctly entered in the minutes.**
- Before the meeting is adjourned (or before people start leaving), **make sure that anyone who has been assigned a task is clear on their responsibilities and aware of the reporting date.**
- Check to see if anyone has a problem with the next meeting date and time.
- **End the meeting on time.**

After the Meeting

- **Review the previous meetings to identify problems** so that they can be addressed before the next meeting.
- Review the Annual Agenda to see what is coming up in the months ahead. Update the annual agenda if necessary.
- Review this checklist. **Consider what you might do to make the next meeting better** and what long-term strategies might improve your meetings.
- Consider what you might do to assist new members, deal with absenteeism, or remediate poor performance.
- **If you have a vice-chairperson or if there is someone in line for the chairperson's role, he/she should be included in this review process.**