

Running Effective Meetings

Pay attention to the physical set-up

The set-up of the room should allow participation of all members but maintain focus on the chair, who is running the meeting. The chair of the meeting should sit in a prominent location where he is visible to all members. One option may be to have the executive board seated at the front of the room with other members facing them in a semi-circle.

Start and END on time

Start as soon as quorum is present. Late-comers can catch up afterwards. This creates the reputation of starting on time. Setting a time limit for the meetings allows participants to plan for that time.

Circulate an agenda in advance

Following a pre-made agenda helps maintain the meeting's focus. Executive board members and key officers should let the chair (WA) know in advance the topics they plan to cover. The chair can distribute this to the membership. This allows members to see what is set to be covered and plan to address those topics at the appropriate times. **A sample agenda is included at the end of this document.**

Know and state the purpose of the meeting

Is the meeting a planning meeting, or are you there to get something done? A lot of planning is done by committees, and chapter meetings are only for final decisions. Typically chapter meetings or meetings of the whole membership are planning meetings. This is a time for the committees and officers to report to the membership and, if necessary, get the vote of the membership for final decisions. Meetings of committees or the executive board are for getting things done. This is the time to brainstorm and actually work things out amongst those present. The results of these meetings are then reported at the chapter meeting.

Keep a single focus on process by following Robert's Rules

Even following a watered-down version of Robert's Rules creates a structure to the meetings, allowing business to be achieved while limiting off-topic conversations.

Obtain and maintain all participants' involvement

Not only does this keep members' interest, but as a self-run organization, we rely on the participation of everyone. Allowing them to be involved in the meetings will keep them involved in many of the organization's activities.

Record all pertinent information and follow up with group minutes

This is key not only for those who have missed the meeting, but also as a reminder of what happened at the meeting. Along with the minutes, include a list of action items and who is responsible for each. This lets everyone know what needs to be done and who is working on it. For example:

- WA will speak with faculty about scholarship opportunities.
- Social director will collect names for party list.
- Rush chair will email current rushes about Thursday's event.

Practice "crowd control"

Following Robert's Rules is a great way to do this. It limits debate on topics and prevents conversations from getting off-topic. It is common to have the Worthy Superintendent keep order at meetings.

Group Participation Tips

- Listen
- Stay involved
- Stay positive
- Do not get defensive if an idea is criticized
- Remember: whether you are leading or participating – if you are in it, you are responsible for the outcome

Sample Agenda

Call to Order

Roll Call

Approval of the Minutes (from the previous meeting)

Officer/Committee Reports

Worthy Scribe

Worthy Clerk

Worthy Estimator

Worthy Associate Architect

Worthy Architect

Old Business (things that have been discussed before)

New Business (things that have never been discussed before)

Betterment of the Chapter (suggestions, encouragement, etc.)

Announcements (this is if someone wants to invite people to a party, study session, etc.)

Adjournment