Running Effective Meetings

Meetings are integral to an organization’s success on campus. It is important to be organized when holding a meeting for your organization. Preparation, atmosphere and facilitation make a huge difference in how smoothly your organizations meetings are run!

Things to do before the meeting:

- Who is in charge or planning and running the meetings? Make sure you define this role.
- Reserve a location on campus by following the correct procedure to reserve space. Make sure you don’t advertise for meetings until you have the space confirmed. Make sure the room is conducive to the type of meeting you want to hold. (View our room rental procedure worksheet for more information)
- Prepare a meeting agenda and distribute to group prior to meeting.
- Make sure you have materials from committee members and your groups advisor.
- Prepare any necessary materials for meetings i.e., handouts, agendas, visuals, reserve electronic equipment, etc.
- Email organization members in advance to inform of meeting date, time and location.

The Six A’s of running an effective meeting:

**Attitude**

- Welcome members by greeting them as they enter the room.
- Make sure to show your enthusiasm and positive attitude about the organization to make the meeting a positive experience for members.
- Keep in mind as a leader of an organization you are also a role model for how members should conduct themselves so be sure to be professional and respectful.

**Atmosphere**

- You may want to consider providing light refreshments or snacks to create a welcoming atmosphere.
- Allow time for group discussion as well as for feedback on items being covered during the meeting so that members feel they are part of the decision making process for the organization.
- Do your best to keep the meetings focused on the agenda topics. You may want to consider using the parking lot method where you “park” ideas that are off topic for another time and come back to them later.
- Make sure to share accomplishments of your members, share birthdays or recognizing members for a contribution to the group.

**Agenda**

- Appoint someone to keep minutes of the meeting for future reference.
- Start on time and end on time. Be mindful of other people’s time.
- Review the agenda, and then stick to it.
- Define the purpose of the meeting right from the start to keep on task during the meeting
- Distribute copies of the agenda or make sure to have emailed the agenda to members prior to the meeting.
- Have the agenda focus on the big issues that need the entire organizations attention. You don’t want to cover information that could have simply been sent in an email.
Sample agenda:
Call the meeting to Order
Roll Call
Approval of the minutes
Reports
Old Business (items of importance you spoke about at the last meeting)
New Business (information here that has not been brought up at a previous meeting)
Next Meeting
Adjournment

Accomplishments
- Get done what you need to get done. The average person's attention span is 23 minutes, so it's a challenge.
- Work for consensus. Have a planned way to get group consensus that is always used to make sure that decision making stays fair.
- Summarize agreements reached and end the meeting on a positive note by asking members to express things they thought were good or successful.

Adjourn
- Set a date, time and place for the next meeting.
- Collect any sign-in or sign-up sheets.
- Close the meeting with a strong positive statement. Thank the group and acknowledge their efforts.

After the Meeting
- Write up and distribute minutes within the next few days.
- Discuss any problems from the meeting with other officers and your advisor. Work on solutions and implement them at future meetings.
- Follow-up on delegated tasks and ensure members understand and fulfill their responsibilities.
- Put unfinished business on the agenda for the next meeting