
Contents

Before you begin	vii
Topic 1: Prepare for meetings	1
1A Develop an agenda	2
1B Ensure an appropriate style and structure for the meeting	10
1C Identify meeting participants and notify them of the meeting	16
1D Confirm meeting arrangements	21
1E Dispatch meeting papers within designated time lines	30
Summary	34
Learning checkpoint 1: Prepare for meetings	35
Topic 2: Conduct meetings	41
2A Chair meetings according to requirements and agreed conventions	42
2B Ensure meetings are focused, time-efficient and achieve outcomes	52
2C Facilitate participation, discussion, problem-solving and issue resolution	56
2D Brief the minute-taker	61
Summary	67
Learning checkpoint 2: Conduct meetings	68
Topic 3: Follow up meetings	77
3A Check the accuracy and format of meeting notes	78
3B Distribute and store minutes and other follow-up documentation	80
3C Report meeting outcomes within designated time lines	83
Summary	85
Learning checkpoint 3: Follow up meetings	86

1A

Develop an agenda

An agenda is a framework that supports the meeting and allows matters to be discussed in an orderly fashion. It allows for clarity, continuity and an effective outcome of the meeting. It should list all relevant matters for the particular meeting and set out an order of proceedings.

Before the agenda is created, research should be conducted in conjunction with management, potential members of the meeting and any relevant parties, to ensure that a meeting is warranted and, if so, that relevant topics are put on the agenda. This research also helps when deciding who will attend the meeting.



Establish a purpose for the meeting

Before you begin preparations for a meeting you need to confirm why you are having it. Every meeting must have a clearly defined purpose. A meeting goal can simply be to gain information, to give information or to hold a discussion to work out the best way to go about a specific task. Meeting purposes may be formalised or required by company protocols; for example, an annual general meeting of shareholders is dictated by the company's prospectus and company rules. There may also be government rules and regulations that must be adhered to.

Reasons why meetings are held

You must be very clear why you are having a meeting. Examples of common reasons for conducting a meeting are provided below.

Goals and decisions

To set goals and reach a decision

The setting of goals can relate to a company, to teams or individuals. These types of meetings will allow employees an opportunity to take part in the decision-making processes along with management.

Example

The sales manager calls a meeting with the sales team to set a monthly target for them to achieve during a new promotion. This lets everyone know the target and gives them an opportunity to decide an achievable goal.

Resolve conflict

To discover, analyse or solve a problem or conflict

Conflict needs to be solved as quickly as possible, and a meeting with individuals helps to contain any issues.

Example

If the company needs to resolve an issue, such as a need to change shift hours, an open forum with key personnel enables meeting participants to discuss possible issues that may arise, and to develop risk management strategies.

Forum for discussion

A forum for discussion

This kind of meeting is valuable for both internal and external participants as a clarification tool for a range of business items. This is where the views of individuals can be aired, listened to and a plan of action can be discussed or put into place.

Example

An annual general meeting where shareholders can have their say on the performance of the company is a forum for discussion.

Share information

To share information

Some meetings provide information to participants without requirement for discussion.

Example

A staff meeting is held to inform staff of new phone procedures and advise there will be some disruption to their work stations when new air conditioning is installed next week.

Gain understanding

To gain understanding

A meeting requires information from its participants for the benefit of all concerned, but mainly as a gathering of details for the Chair.

Example

A team meets to update the supervisor on their projects. The supervisor can then pass that information up the line.

4

Welcome and apologies

The meeting is declared open by the chair and those non-attending participants (who have notified the secretary or chair that they cannot be there) are read out by the secretary. The chair then asks meeting attendees if there are any further apologies known.

5

Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting (if there was one) are accepted and any amendments are noted before a motion is carried. These are official documents reflecting what occurred during a meeting. They may be required for official records; for example, as in a shareholder meeting of a public company.

6

Matters of business arising from the previous minutes

This means any decisions that were made during the previous meeting that require action are reviewed; for example, a decision may have been made to set a sales target by the next meeting so the meeting needs to know whether this has been achieved.

7

Correspondence

Correspondence is any communication relating to the meeting both inward and outward. Each letter or email is read out and if a decision or action needs to be taken a motion will be moved and seconded by members in the group. The motion would be discussed (if required) and then voted upon by the members in the group. This particular procedure may be deferred to general business when there is more time allowed and greater discussion permitted.

8

Reports

Reports are presented in written form from particular members of the meeting. The Treasurer's report will usually be the first considered as it may have bearing on other reports and business from a financial point of view. It is good practice to have the reports, the minutes of the previous meeting and the notice of meeting sent out to participants, at hand.

9

Major agenda items

Major agenda items are the purpose for which the meeting was called. These may include the general item; for example 'Sales', but may also include directions such as, 'Review sales targets', 'Discuss monthly sales figures' or 'Decide on advertisement for new sales consultant'.

1B

Ensure an appropriate style and structure for the meeting

A well run meeting addresses the needs of the participants, as well as effectively conducting the items detailed on the agenda. For this reason, you need to pay particular attention in the planning stages to how it will be structured and presented. This will depend on the purpose of the meeting; for example, whether it is an annual general meeting with legal obligations or an informal team meeting designed to share progress and motivate members.

The style of a meeting will also depend on the participants; for example, whether they are team members, the whole staff, a project team, shareholders, board members or members of the public.

Identify the meeting's style and structure

You need to be able to identify a meeting's style, structure, size and duration. This will be based on the purpose of the meeting.

The purpose of the meeting dictates whether it is highly structured and moderated with rigorous guidelines and protocols, or is friendly and informal.



Type of meeting to be held

Each of the following types of meetings should be presented and run in a manner appropriate to its purpose.

Annual general meeting

An annual general meeting or board meeting is highly structured, moderated and formal, usually following comprehensive guidelines and protocols (set out in a company charter, prospectus or organisational regulations). A prepared agenda is sent out ahead of time identifying areas of discussion, time, location, etc. An annual general meeting is an official requirement of public companies so the minutes will be kept as a company record and need to accurately reflect the proceedings of the meeting.

Staff meeting

A staff meeting may be formal or informal depending on the nature of the meeting; for example, a committee meeting that needs to submit a report may choose to take minutes and have a formal agenda, and keep people on track; whereas a Monday morning briefing on projects at hand may have a brief agenda but be more relaxed with informal discussion.

Webconferencing

Webconferencing is following a similar pathway as telephone conferencing and has the potential to include an extremely broad audience in meetings. From an implementation perspective, the required hardware is either built into notebook computers or mobile devices or can be easily added to desktop computers, but there are many technological hurdles that webconference participants commonly experience. Appropriate training and continued development of hands-on experience in using webconference systems are important factors that contribute to its successful adoption.

Videoconferencing

Videoconferencing requires the installation of specialised equipment, but is commonly used in large organisations. This technology is improving rapidly, making it possible to video conference across organisational systems with linkage into computer systems such as electronic whiteboards.

Other factors

Apart from the type of meeting, there are a number of other factors that affect the style and structure of a meeting.

Select the images below to learn more about these factors.



Who needs to attend?

The participants will dictate the manner in which the meeting is presented. For example, consider whether it is appropriate to invite key stakeholders, board members, all staff, departmental staff, personnel from branch offices or representatives from other organisations.



The size of the meeting

Consider how many people will best suit the purpose of the meeting and help you reach your objectives. For example:

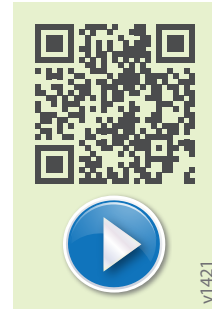
- Do all stakeholders need to be present?
- Will you be taking a vote and need a quorum?

Example: Team management meetings

At Jones and Company weekly team meetings:

- keep management up to date with what's happening in the office and client negotiations
- allow management to identify and resolve any detrimental issues or conflict situations
- provide feedback to and from upper management.

The weekly meetings always have a prepared agenda but sometimes take on a semi-formal nature and are conducted in an informal style to allow a free flow of information. Occasionally a more formal tone is required when decisions are conveyed. Minutes of the meeting are taken and made available on the file server.



Practice task 2

Review these meeting types then answer the questions that follow:

- annual general meeting
- staff meeting
- teleconference
- project meeting
- team management meeting
- face-to-face meeting with two people
- impromptu meeting.

1. Which types of meetings are formal or informal in style? Why?

2. Identify the meetings that require minutes to be recorded. Why would minutes be necessary?

continued ...

Who should attend?

- Who must be there?
- Who are the decision-makers?
- Who will the meeting affect?
- Do they need to be there?
- Are there organisational requirements that must be adhered to?
- How many people need to be there?
- Do you require diversity of viewpoints?

Who should possibly be included?

- What is their role?
- How can they help?
- Are they for or against the issue?
- Are they interested?
- Do they have time to attend?
- Do they have information on the purpose of the meeting?
- Will they be involved in any process of the decision – research, carrying it out or formulating procedures, etc.?
- Can they contribute effectively to the meeting?

Example: Select participants for a meeting

This table may help you when selecting participants for meetings with maximum effectiveness. Adjust the headings according to your needs and the needs of the meeting and add the names of your participants to the table.

Participant qualities required	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor	Unknown
Knowledge of topic/expertise					
Commitment					
Time					
Viewpoint					
Speaks their mind					
Open minded					
Authority to make decisions					

Here are some examples of the many ways to notify people of meetings:

- Email, letter, memo or invitation
- Phone or SMS
- Fax
- Word of mouth
- Bulletin or poster on a noticeboard
- Newspaper or advertisement

Additional meeting inclusions

There are many inclusions that can help prepare a participant for an effective meeting, such as those listed here:

- Map and any travel details, parking or methods of transport
- Time line, or a brief outline of the agenda
- Meals and other activities available
- RSVP for numbers (specifically for venue and catering purposes)
- Request for additional items for the agenda



Example: Provide notice of board meetings

The following is an organisation's procedures for the regulations governing a notice of meeting for a board meeting.

1.5.2 Notice of meetings

Notice of meeting to be sent out at least seven days prior to the meeting date.

Approved written forms of communication with participants include letter, fax or email. Telephone and verbal forms of communication may not be used, and a written record must be kept of each participant invited to each board meeting. The president, or in his/her absence, one of the two vice-presidents may make an exception to the rule and notify the meeting, at the start of the meeting prior to apologies being taken, as to why authorised procedures were not followed. The minute-taker will document the exception and reasons within the official minutes.

Ensure that you or someone you delegate views the venue prior to the meeting and any issues are identified and corrected. Meetings proceed smoothly if you prepare beforehand for all the resources that are required.

Venue considerations

Regardless of whether you are booking an external venue or using an on-site meeting room, consider the following aspects when arranging a venue.

Venue considerations

1

Budget

Confirm the cost if you are hiring a venue. Find out the payment terms.

2

Purpose

Confirm that the venue is appropriate for the purpose of the meeting. For example, check that the venue will hold the number of people you are expecting. A room that is too small will make the participants feel squashed and uncomfortable; too large and it may appear intimidating and intrusive. A good rule of thumb is to ensure there is enough room to move around easily and allow each participant personal space. Also allow for an extra participant and some extra chairs.

3

Availability

Ensure the venue is available for the times you need it. Confirm the booking procedures, such as recording the meeting in a booking form; or paying a deposit.

4

Time frame

The duration of the meeting, the number of participants and the meeting's purpose will dictate how long you require the venue. Make sure you clearly indicate the proposed duration when you book the room.

5

Functions manager

If you are dealing with an external venue, contact the manager who will assist you before and during the meeting.

6

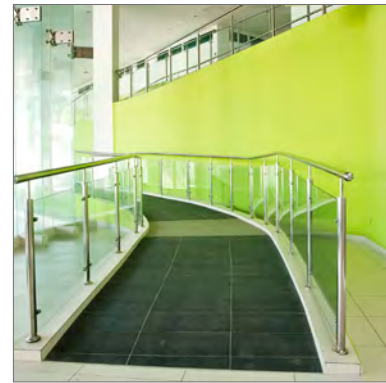
Ease of access

Ensure that the venue is easy to get to. Check there are transport options nearby. Check that the room is easily accessible to all participants; for example, that there is wheelchair access or a lift for older participants.

Identify specific needs

Confirm if participants who are presenting need anything, such as particular equipment to play a DVD or a data projector to present overheads.

Confirm that the venue has the facilities and amenities you need such as breakout rooms for discussions, toilets, areas for people to smoke, a separate food area and parking. You must also check that the venue is easily accessible to all participants; for example, access for people with special needs; an interpreter to assist those for whom English is a second language; or material in large-print format.



Confirm technology requirements of the meeting

Consider the following aspects you will need to check and confirm.

Confirm the following technology requirements:

- The type of technology needed; for example, microphones, speakers, data projectors, telephone link up, electronic whiteboards, flipcharts, recording equipment or computers
- Whether your organisation can supply the equipment or whether you need to hire it
- The cost to hire
- Availability
- How long you need the equipment
- If there will be an expert to operate the equipment provided, and if this costs extra
- An alternative if the technology should fail



Identify accommodation and transport needs

For a long meeting, or one that will continue over a few days, it may be necessary to have accommodation available for participants. Provide your participants with at least three alternatives for accommodation, taking both cost and location in mind. In some situations, such as a board meeting, the organisation may pay for the accommodation. Directions for appropriate accommodation should be included with details of the meeting. If the venue is within, or affiliated with a hotel, participants may receive a discount for staying there; this can be confirmed by the organisers and supplied with the meeting details.

If you are organising transport for the participants you will need to know how many participants require transport, when they will be arriving and where, and any costs involved.

Alternatively, directions to the venue and modes of transport are required for all participants. Ensure directions are clear enough for those not familiar with the area to be able to locate the venue easily. Alert participants to a range of options that will allow them to get to the venue, and if possible give them time frames and costs for that particular mode of transport. Here are some examples of transport issues.

Practice task 4

Read the case study, then complete the task that follows.

Case study

You are the organiser for a team planning meeting to be held over two days from Monday 5 December to Tuesday 7 December 2016. There will be 15 staff attending the meeting from a number of locations. The meeting will be held at a hotel in Burwood, near the company's head office. The same venue is used every year for the planning meeting. Accommodation and all food are provided from Monday lunch through to Tuesday lunch.

A notice of meeting and agenda will be provided and confirmed prior to the meeting. Planning documents will also be sent to meeting participants.

Attendees

- Attendees are staying at the hotel where the planning meeting is being held.
- Four staff are arriving at Melbourne airport at 8.30 am on Monday morning. They will catch a taxi from the airport to the hotel using taxi vouchers you have issued them.
- Five staff, including the manager, are meeting in Geelong and travelling to the hotel in the company car.
- Staff who work in Melbourne will make their own way to the hotel.

Catering

Morning and afternoon tea and lunch on Monday and Tuesday will be provided at the hotel. The staff will be going out together for dinner to a local Indian restaurant within walking distance, which you will book.

Venue

The hotel has a meeting room large enough to accommodate the 15 staff. Hotel staff will bring in and clear away morning/afternoon teas and lunches.

Resources

The manager will need a data projector. She will bring her own laptop.

Staff will bring their own iPads or notebook computers.

Create a time line and checklist for any arrangements needed for the meeting.

You may like to use this table and add lines as required.

Task	Time line	Completed

continued ...

Additional information that may be useful includes:

- details of any required information the participant should bring with them; for example, paper, pen, laptop, reports, invoices
- a list of other participants if relevant
- expectations of the participant and what they can do to prepare for the meeting; for example, give a report, make a presentation, listen and discuss, read an article to be discussed at meeting, watch a video etc.
- whether a reply in the form of an RSVP is required.

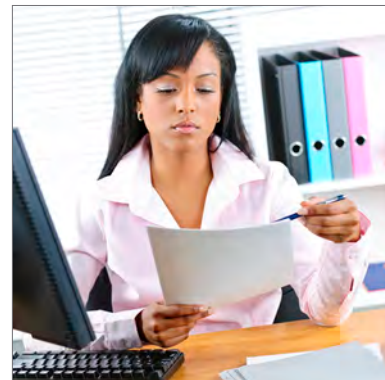
Example: Types of documentation sent to participants

Determine which of these documents need to be sent to participants:

- Notice of meeting, time, date and venue of meeting is essential
- Agenda, so participants know what the meeting will cover; in some instances, the agenda may be given to participants as they arrive at the meeting
- Previous minutes are needed to ensure their accuracy was vetted by previous participants and any business arising from previous minutes is on hand
- Chair's report, including provision of information; such as direction of proceedings or additional information regarding a motion on notice
- Any particular correspondence that has relevance to any motion or discussion
- Financial reports, if required
- Itemised meeting papers, when a number of items are to be discussed in a particular order
- Research reports, so all participants are kept up to date on any particular motion, discussion or decision

Time lines

Adhere to the organisation's policy and procedures for sending out the notice of meeting and other documentation. The time frame will depend on the type of meeting; for example, board members may need to be informed at least two weeks before the meeting, if not earlier; staff should be given the agenda a week before the regular staff meeting; participants may only have an hour or so notification of an emergency meeting.



Best practice is to allocate an appropriate amount of time you will need to prepare for the meeting and ensure that the documentation is prepared, checked, collated and dispatched in time for the participants to read them. Consider contingency plans if, for example, the photocopier breaks down.

The documentation's safe arrival is another important aspect – options include delivery by post, by hand, express delivery or email.

Meeting time frames

Be aware of any legal, contractual or organisational requirements that surround the particular meeting. There may be legal requirements in regard to timing that must be adhered to; for example, notification of a shareholders notice of meeting may need to be sent as a personal letter 14 days prior to the meeting and via public notices in a major newspaper

2A

Chair meetings according to requirements and agreed conventions

Meetings would quickly degenerate into disarray if there was no agreement on procedures for how they were conducted and if there was no-one in charge to arbitrate issues that arose. Over the years conventions for formal meeting procedures have evolved and been adopted in various forms by most organisations. These conventions are intended to allow all members of the meeting to have an equal and fair input into resolutions, and for any decisions made to be the consensus of the whole meeting and not the opinion of one person or faction. In some instances, procedures are controlled by legal and ethical considerations as well as organisational policies and procedures.



Role of the chair

The most important person at any meeting is the chairperson (or chair). The chair is responsible for the maintenance of order during the meeting, the conduct of business, procedural correctness and the general tone of the meeting itself.

As chair of a meeting it is your role to conduct the meeting according to the organisation's meeting protocols and relevant meeting conventions. To do this efficiently and effectively you must review the range of conventions covered under organisational policy and legislation prior to taking on the role of chair. You need to feel confident about conducting a meeting, especially if others know the protocols better than yourself.

It is essential that you maintain control of a meeting, otherwise the goals it sets out to achieve may not be achieved. Control can be maintained throughout the meeting through the agenda and using your communication and interpersonal skills to encourage participation, keep track of the time, ensure discussion is clear and appropriate, summarise proceedings when necessary, arrange voting when needed and identify any follow-up action. You need to conduct yourself professionally at all times and be confident, tactful, patient and impartial.

Meeting procedures

Procedures and protocols of meetings will be outlined in a company's organisational rules that govern the conduct of an organisation. These should include the rules and requirements for conducting meetings including the roles of office bearers and how they are elected. They are generally referred to as standing orders. It is useful, especially if you are new to chairing meetings, to have a copy of your organisation's standing orders with you at the meeting so you can refer to them if necessary. It is better to be accurate than risk making a mistake.

The organisation may have a separate meetings procedures document, with details on formatting, structure, distribution and storage of meeting documents. There are a number of common meeting procedures and conventions that most organisations follow but some will depend on the type of meeting.

Motions have two forms as described here.

Substantive motion

A substantive motion is a motion ordering that something be done, authorising some action or expressing the meeting's opinion on a topic.

Example: 'That the minutes of the previous meeting be endorsed' or 'That the organisation supports the new environmental guidelines'.

Procedural motion

A procedural motion is a motion dealing with the conduct of the meeting.

Example: 'That the meeting move on to the next agenda item'.

Motion procedure

When a motion is proposed it should be worded clearly and simply so there is no misunderstanding and should always begin with the words 'That ...'. Once a motion is proposed and seconded, it proceeds as follows.

Procedures once a motion is proposed and seconded
The chair opens the motion to discussion (debate) calling alternately for people to speak for and against the motion.
Attendees may only speak once to the motion, including the mover and seconder, and are subject to a time limit overseen by the chair. This allows an opportunity for all members to speak and prevents more-vocal attendees from monopolising the debate.
After an appropriate time for discussion, the chair calls the debate to a close.
The chair restates the motion and asks participants to vote first for, then against, the motion. If the required majority vote in favour of the motion the chair declares the motion carried. The resolution becomes an official decision of the meeting.
If the vote is tied, subject to standing orders, the chair may pass a deciding vote. Some organisations consider a motion defeated if there is not a majority in favour; in this case a tied vote would result in the motion being defeated.

Motion amendments

If the original motion is changed by someone suggesting better words to clarify the meaning, then this amended motion must be proposed, seconded, discussed and voted on.

If the amended motion is accepted, then the procedure begins again with further discussion and voting until it is either accepted or defeated.

... continued

Copyright legislation

Intellectual property used for, within or as a result of a meeting should be protected by basic copyright legislation. Be aware that ideas, proposals and even memos can be considered to have legal ownership. In corporate settings, the ownership is usually passed on to the organisation under contractual arrangements with employees.

Health and safety requirements

The meeting must be held in a safe and healthy environment. Where the meeting is held affects the level of risk. For example, meeting in an outdoor environment will have more inherent risks than an office-based meeting. Ensure all aspects of the environment including physical, emotional and social risks are considered. Meeting with parties representing vastly different points of view may increase the emotional or social risks – this should be managed effectively to ensure the safety of all members. Large meetings may also require public liability insurance to protect the company in the event of injury or incident involving the attendees.

Ethical requirements

The meeting should abide by the principles of ethical behaviour. Ethical behaviour will depend on the where, when and with whom the meeting is conducted. Consider cultural differences, ceremonies, traditions and other elements within a meeting environment that may require ethical consideration.

Treat everyone equally, be aware of people's beliefs and sensitivities and be able to provide evidence for any statements you may make.

Codes of practice

Existing codes of practice may form the foundation of the meeting procedures. A code of practice usually refers to an organisation-wide set of behaviours that all employees are expected to follow. These behaviours are broad enough to incorporate existing anti-discrimination and WHS legislation as well as the acceptable treatment of others in the workplace. Ensure your meeting abides by these practices.



Legislation relating to companies and associations

Corporations law and the Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC) stipulate the requirement for companies to hold regular meetings as a measure of good governance. Companies limited by guarantee are required to hold annual general meetings as well as regular board meetings under the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth), Part 2G. While there is no legislative requirement for the directors of proprietary limited companies to meet, it is seen as good practice and is often inferred as a requirement of good financial housekeeping.

2B

Ensure meetings are focused, time-efficient and achieve outcomes

The chair of a meeting is a crucial role as it is this person's responsibility to facilitate and impartially guide participants to ensure all the business on the agenda is considered, the meeting fulfils its purpose and is completed within the planned time frame.

The chair should ensure that all members of the meeting understand each agenda item, that each item is addressed comprehensively, and that appropriate time is given for discussion. Pacing a meeting is a skill that is learnt with practice.



Keep meetings focused and on time

To keep a meeting on time and focused follow these suggestions.

Steps to keep meetings focused and on time

1

Start the meeting on time

Do not wait for latecomers to arrive. Some groups even schedule 10 minutes of time to socialise before the start of the meeting, to make sure everyone is there.

2

Ensure there is a quorum

If a quorum is required for business to be legally transacted then it is the chair's responsibility to ensure there are enough members present. If a quorum is not present, any business transacted is null and void.

3

Establish the length of the meeting

Establish at the outset how long the meeting will take.

4

Review the purpose and aims of the meeting

Briefly review the agenda to give an overview at the start of the meeting of the aims and purposes of the meeting. This helps participants focus their attention and understand what will be required of them. The chair should make clear the outcomes to be achieved, and what decisions or actions they hope to make.

Meeting administration requirements including:

- having prepared all the paperwork needed for the meeting
- being aware of governing documents and procedures
- understanding the organisation's style and preferred format for presenting the minutes; for example, using full sentences, recording who participated in a discussion, and italicising follow-up actions
- being familiar with the issues that may arise in the meeting so they are aware of specific terminology, acronyms, key names and likely discussion areas.

Meeting administration protocols including:

- knowing how to deal with confidential information
- knowing how to record a guest speaker or someone who only attends for a short period of time
- checking any equipment needed by participants is ready and working; this includes the laptop the minute-taker may be using to record the minutes
- knowing the time lines for the meeting and for speakers.

Record the meeting

There are a range of tasks the minute-taker must carry out during the meeting. Check that they understand the following duties.

Duties of the minute-taker during a meeting

Ensure that people sign-in at the meeting; this is particularly important when a quorum needs to be established.

Ensure everyone has a copy of the agenda and the previous minutes, if appropriate.

Receive and report apologies.

Alert the chair to procedural issues; for example, if there is not a quorum; if they are confused by a decision.

Ensure minutes are signed by the chair (once agreed) and are filed away.

Responsibilities for different types of meetings

The following information describes the difference in the style of minutes that may be produced for different types of meetings.



Refer to agenda

Have a copy of the agenda with you and follow the same format for recording the minutes. Number the pages to avoid confusion later.



Tips for producing minutes

During the meeting, write in sentences and as fully as possible as it is better to have too much information than not enough (you can always summarise later or the chair can delete superfluous information). Learn various shorthand tricks to help you with speed; for example, 'mtg' for meeting.

Don't be afraid to interrupt if you did not catch a name or statement correctly.

Write up the minutes as soon as possible after the meeting while the information is still able to be easily recalled.



Use standard phrases or conventions

Use standard phrases or conventions that clearly convey what happened such as:

- 'The meeting agreed to ...'
- 'Lively discussion followed where it was agreed that ...'
- 'The following questions were raised ...'
- 'There was disagreement from this point and participants put forward the following suggestions: ...'



Attach additional documents

Additional documents should be attached in an appendix or an indication given of their location.



Further tips

- Be objective – your role is to be an impartial observer. Try to capture the tone and feel of the meeting as well as the facts. Don't include your own opinion.
- Focus on action items, not the discussion.
- Avoid using people's names except when recording motions or seconds. For example, 'The discussion centred on ...' rather than 'Mr Keith said ... then Mr Christer said ...'.

3C

Report meeting outcomes within designated time lines

After a meeting has been finalised, it may be your responsibility to report the outcomes of the meeting to a relevant body such as a project committee, your senior management group, or your team.

Examples of meeting outcomes that may need to be reported are shown below.

A management meeting may have made a resolution that you need to disseminate to team members.

You may need to distribute the annual general meeting report to shareholders.

You may need to let staff know of the decision made concerning the purchase of a new dishwasher for the kitchen.

How and what to report

How and what you report will depend on who you are reporting to and the type of information they need; for example, you may only need to prepare a summary report listing recommendations made and actions to be taken. This may be forwarded to the appropriate people or you may need to make a face-to-face presentation to them.

In some instances, the decisions of a meeting may need a committee to be formed, additional research undertaken, action or discussion outside of the original meeting, documentation sent, or people to be contacted. Depending on the circumstances, you may need to prepare a comprehensive list of actions required and let the relevant people know what their responsibilities are and when they need to complete the task. Make sure you include a time line with appropriate checks along the way. You will need to report back at a subsequent meeting about the progress of the action taken.

Whatever the outcomes or decisions made at a meeting, they must be conveyed to the relevant people as soon as possible. You may find it useful to highlight each outcome from the minutes and identify the necessary follow up.

