

TIPS FOR RUNNING AN EFFECTIVE MEETING

Before the meeting:

- Determine the purpose of the meeting. Are you planning an event? Putting together the newsletter? Providing training or hosting a speaker?
- What resources will you need? Childcare? Refreshments? Audio-visual equipment? Tables and chairs? What size room?
- Set the agenda and distribute it prior to the meeting so that everyone will know what to expect. Ask for input if possible before setting the agenda or set at least part of the next meeting's agenda as a closing activity at each meeting.
- Include a starting and ending time with the agenda.
- Prepare any visual aids you will need.

At the meeting

- Greet people as they arrive. If the group is small, you can do introductions as people come in. Otherwise, do introductions as the first part of the meeting. Consider nametags if you will have new people or have only met together a few times.
- Review the agenda and set any ground rules.
- Encourage discussion and participation. This may mean drawing people out who are not sharing, and tactfully bringing others to a close.
- Take minutes.
- Summarize what has been accomplished or resolved for each agenda item.
- Recognize success and achievement.

After the meeting:

- Send out the minutes.
- Follow up on action items.
- Start the agenda for the next meeting.
- Do all of the above in a timely manner.

Special tips for teleconference or virtual meetings:

- Always check equipment before every meeting.
- Send out the agenda early.
- Have participants log on five to ten minutes before starting the meeting.
- Avoid background noise.
- Have participants state their name before speaking.
- Don't multi-task.
- Describe or explain pauses for those who can't see.
- Sequence responses in a set order to avoid everyone talking at once.