RUNNING AN EFFECTIVE MEETING

Meetings have several functions. They give members a chance to discuss and evaluate goals and objectives, keep members updated on current events, provide a chance to communicate, keep the group cohesive, and allow the group to pool resources for decision-making. The following are a few tips to help make your meetings successful, productive and FUN!

Before the meeting
- Define the purpose of the meeting. The purpose is the reason people come to the meetings. Without a purpose, members may feel that their time was wasted and it could discourage their return to the organization.
- Develop an agenda. 
  *Sample Agenda*
  1. Call to Order
  2. Correction and Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting
  3. Announcements
  4. Officer / Committee Reports
  5. Unfinished Business
  6. New Business
  7. Special Announcements
  8. Adjournment
- Choose an appropriate meeting time. Set a time limit and stick to it.
- Distribute the agenda and any other materials before the meeting so that members can be prepared.
- The location of the meeting is very important. Choose a location that is easy for members to find. Keep in mind that many students do not have their own means of transportation, so it is a good idea to stay on or close to campus. Be sure to select a location that will accommodate the size of your organization. Take time to check out the room prior to your meeting to ensure that the space is appropriate.
- Be sure that everyone knows when and where the meeting will be held. If possible, hold meetings at the same time and place every week.

During the meeting
- Greet members to make them feel welcomed and be sure to introduce any new members.
- Start on time. End on time.
- Follow the agenda.
- Encourage discussion so that you get different ideas and viewpoints. Remember that the organization belongs to all of the members. When members see that their ideas have an impact on the decision-making process, their commitment to the organization is increased.
- Keep the discussion on topic and moving towards an eventual decision.
- Designate an officer to keep minutes of the meeting for future reference in case a question or problem arises.
- The leader or facilitator should model leadership skills such as staying on task, listening, valuing members and appreciating diverse points of view.
- Confirm the date, time and location at the next meeting.
After the meeting

- Write up and distribute the minutes within 2 days. Quick action reinforces the importance of the meeting.
- Discuss any problems that may have surfaced during the meeting with officers so that improvements can be made.
- Follow up on delegated tasks. Make sure that members understand and carry out their responsibilities.
- Put unfinished business on the agenda for the next meeting.
- Most importantly, give recognition and appreciation to the members for excellent and timely progress.

An Effective Meeting has the following

- Desired outcomes
- Clear purpose
- Clear roles of individuals
- Room setup
- Decision-making power
- Process tools
- Shared responsibility
- Follow-up accountability
- Agenda
- Good use of time
- Preparation
- Unbiased leader
- Total involvement
- Real issues
- Diverse opinions
- Evaluation

Meeting Evaluation

An evaluation of the organization meeting should be taken periodically by the presiding officer. This information can be valuable in determining how effective meetings are. Below is a sample form for evaluating meetings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA-Strongly Agree</th>
<th>A-Agree</th>
<th>U-Undecided</th>
<th>D-Disagree</th>
<th>SD-Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The group accomplished something as a result of the meeting.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. The presiding officer was prepared for the meeting.</td>
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<td>3. The members were prepared for the meeting.</td>
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<td>4. The members had enough time to discuss important issues.</td>
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<td>5. The meeting would have been better if some parts had been left out. Explain.</td>
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<td>6. Everyone was given a chance to speak.</td>
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<td>7. The meeting proceeded close to the agenda.</td>
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<td>8. The atmosphere of the meeting was comfortable.</td>
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<td>9. The length of the meeting was appropriate.</td>
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<td>10. I enjoyed attending this meeting.</td>
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<td>11. The meeting was productive.</td>
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<td>12. The meeting held everyone's attention.</td>
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<td>13. New ideas originated from the meeting.</td>
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Suggestions for future meetings: