RUNNING AN EFFECTIVE MEETING

Whether your organization has 10 or 300 members, running an effective meeting is an important aspect organization success. 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. Effective meetings need structure, order and ground rules. Without these elements, meetings can prove to be ineffective and negatively impact the organization. Below, you will find some tips, tricks and best practices to help make sure your meetings are successful, productive and FUN!

BEFORE THE MEETING

Purpose of meeting. Meetings have several functions so it's important to define the purpose of each. The purpose is the reason people come to the meeting. Without a purpose, members may feel that their time was wasted and it could discourage from engaging in the future.

Create an agenda. The agenda should outline the main topics, subtopics, and any time limits to help clarify the purpose of the meeting and define officer/member roles. For longer meetings, try to organize your information into 10 to 15-minute segments. This accommodates shorter attention spans and helps keep everyone engaged and focused. Be sure to share the agenda in advance so members know what to expect.

> *Sample Agenda*
> I. Call to Order
> II. Correction and Approval of Minutes from Last Meeting
> III. Announcements
> IV. Officer / Committee Reports
> V. Unfinished Business
> VI. New Business
> VII. Special Announcements
> VIII. Adjournment

Determine meeting time and Location. Use scheduling tools like Doodle to help find the best meeting time for the group. Once determined, set a time limit and stick to it. 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 that everyone knows when and where the meeting will be held. If possible, hold meetings at the same time and place every week.

Send and track invites. Knowing who will or will not be in attendance helps with your planning especially if there is business that needs to be voted on. In HornsLink, you can create an event/meeting that is only viewable by your members and keep a log of attendees. This will allow you to track and store RSVPs and attendance in one place.

DURING THE MEETING

Arrive early. Arrive 30 minutes early to prepare the technology, load presentation(s), test audio/video, and open all necessary tabs/windows/websites.

Elevate your presence. A virtual meeting is most effective when others are able to see facial expressions and other nonverbal cues. Arrive to the meeting with your webcam on and ensure you

are visible to other attendees. Cameras should be eye level on the monitor you plan to use for the conference. Videos look best in well-lit rooms, without backlighting from windows or lamps. Virtual backgrounds can be helpful and creative but should not be a distraction to others.

Ground rules and etiquette. Ground rules provide attendees with guidance on how they should engage during the meeting. Adopting Roberts Rules of Order can provide useful structure for any meeting and help it flow smoothly. Other common rules include asking participants arrive to the meeting five minutes early to get settled and to raise their hands before speaking. Before the meeting begins, close all non-essential programs and windows on laptops, put phones on silent or do not disturb, and avoid multi-tasking to stay focused. Ground rules should be shared with participants in advance and reinforced as attendees arrive to the meeting.

Provide a virtual in option. For those who are unable to attend the in-person meeting, explore options to allow them to video conference in or call in if they do not have access to the internet. Many virtual platforms like Zoom and Microsoft Teams provide participants the option to video or to dial in directly. This can all for multiple members to attend using one dedicated platform. For this, you will likely need an alternate laptop that is dedicated for the virtual platform. See our *Running an Effective Virtual Meeting* guide for additional tips.

Get Everyone Involved. Your job as the facilitator is to make sure that team members have plenty of opportunities to speak up. You should ask for feedback often and encourage the lesser-heard voices to share their insights. Also, real-time polls, chat box features, and Q&As can be useful for gathering information and keeping attendees engaged. Avoid asking open-ended questions to the whole group; instead, call on people by name to encourage participation.

AFTER THE MEETING

Reset the room. Leave the meeting space in better condition than you found it. Remove all trash and organization materials to an outside dumpster, set tables and chairs back in their proper place, and wipe down any dirty surface areas.

Meeting evaluation. An evaluation of the organization meeting can be valuable in determining how effective meetings are and changes for the future. These should be done periodically by the President.

Share meeting notes. Write up and distribute the minutes within 2 days. Quick action reinforces the importance of the meeting**.** You can store and share your files using the Documents Tool in HornsLink**.**

Follow up on delegated tasks and next steps. Make sure that members understand and carry out their responsibilities. Also share reminder of when the next meeting will be.

Give praise. Give recognition and appreciation to the members for excellent and timely progress.