

Co-op Meetings

Part One

How to Write an Agenda and Facilitate a Meeting

1. Call People at Least a Week in Advance for Agenda Items.
2. Remember Old Business.
3. Try to Give Topics Witty Names to Grab the Eye.
4. Type the Agenda.
5. Get the Agenda Out at Least five days Before the Meeting.
6. Call for More Agenda Items at the Meeting.
7. Put Your Head on a Swivel; Make Sure People Get Chances to Speak; Watch Their Eyes.
8. When a Topic Gets Heated, Play Traffic Cop. Say "OK, After X, Then Y Speaks, Then Z ..."
9. Control Topic Drift; Never Hesitate to Tell a Person, "We're not talking about that right now."
10. Do Not Engage in a Debate; You Are the Moderator.
11. If You Must Speak to an Issue, Surrender the Chair to Somebody Not as Engaged on the Topic.
12. Notice When Discussion Bogs Down—Either Call for a Motion, a Vote, or Say, "I believe we've agreed to ..."
13. When Voting, First Call for "Those in Favor," then "Those Opposed," then Ask for "Abstentions." The Motion is Not Over until the Facilitator Announces Whether the Motion "Passed" or "Failed."

14. Tolerate No Hostilities; Call a Temporary Adjournment for a Cooling Off Period.
15. Try Short, Slightly Humorous, Segues into Topics.
16. Keep Your Eye on the Clock and Keep Moving. Issues Resolved After 90 Minutes Are Often Disasters.
17. Make Sure the Next Meeting and Facilitator Are Set Before Adjournment.

Part Two

Recommendations for More *Efficient Meetings*

1. The facilitator should ask co-op members for **agenda items** the week before the meeting, giving them a date to respond by. Members should describe their item in a **sentence**.
2. The facilitator should get the **agenda** to the members, either electronically or by hand, at least two days before the meeting.
3. The secretary/notetaker should get the **minutes** to the members, either electronically or by hand, at least two days before the meeting.
4. Dependent on the urgency of the matter and the length of the agenda, the facilitator may table **new** agenda items brought up **during** the meeting to the **following** meeting; the facilitator for that next meeting should make a note to put them on the **next** agenda.
5. Members who know before the meeting that they will make a motion at the meeting should bring **written copies** of the motion to distribute during discussion of the item at the meeting.