

Conducting a Meeting

See also: [Mindful Meetings](#)

If appropriate preparations have been made, then the scene is set for an effective meeting.

[Agendas](#) will have been produced and circulated. Participants will arrive knowing what is to be discussed and with sufficient



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arrive knowing what is to be discussed and with sufficient background information to make relevant contributions. If appropriate, they will have consulted with people they represent and discussed any pertinent issues.

See our page: [Meetings - Planning and Structure](#) to learn how.

This page examines the role of the chairperson whose job it is to run the meeting.

The Role of the Chairperson

In a more formal meeting, the chairperson will outline the purpose of the meeting and remind members why they are there.

In such a meeting there is little need to refer to this procedure as this is implicit in the established etiquette, namely:

- ✓ The chair controls the meeting.
- ✓ All remarks are addressed through the chair.
- ✓ Members do not interrupt each other.
- ✓ Members aim to reach a consensus.
- ✓ A vote is taken if consensus is not reached.
- ✓ The majority wins the vote.
- ✓ All members accept the majority decision.

This is **one model** but alternative models may be adopted.

When discussion is underway, it is the chairperson's responsibility to ensure that it continues to flow smoothly by involving all members present and by not permitting one or two people to dominate the meeting. Summarising by the chairperson during meetings can:

- ✓ Indicate progress, or lack of.
- ✓ Refocus discussion that has wandered off the point.
- ✓ Conclude one point and lead into the next.
- ✓ Highlight important points.
- ✓ Assist the secretary if necessary.
- ✓ Clarify any misunderstanding.

The chairperson should *pace* the meeting, ensuring it runs to time. If the planning has been properly executed, this should not prove to be a problem.

At the end of a meeting, the chairperson should remind members what they have achieved and thank them for their contributions. Finally, the time and date of the next meeting should be arranged. Again this is one common model for effective meetings, successful outcomes can be achieved in different ways with different strategies for different purposes, so adapt as appropriate to specific situations.



The Role of the Members

While it is the role of the chairperson to run the meeting, the participation of all members is also fundamental to the success of the meeting.

To ensure an effective meeting, all participants should:

- ✓ Undertake any necessary preparation prior to the meeting.
- ✓ Arrive on time.
- ✓ Keep an open mind.
- ✓ Listen to the opinions of others.
- ✓ Participate.
- ✓ Avoid dominating the proceedings.
- ✓ Avoid conflict situations.
- ✓ Avoid side conversations which distract others.
- ✓ Ask questions to clarify understanding.

