

How to Run a Meeting

It's all About Planning and Preparation

Want to start a group, run an event, or raise awareness? To get a variety of things done, running a well-planned meeting may be extremely productive. With many people in the room, however, it can be easy to get nothing done.

When & Where

- Make sure that the place you choose is easy to get to and try to pick a time when there aren't many conflicts. If you want to have regular meetings, make sure they can be at the same time and place every week so you don't have to keep moving around and alerting your group members.
- Maybe you want to meet in an empty school classroom, an auditorium, or a student lounge. Just make sure you ask for permission.

Meeting Preparation

- Prepare an agenda in advance and stick to it. Write it like you would write an outline for a paper and set out approximate time guidelines for each item on the agenda. Keep it simple and clear, allowing people to follow along throughout the meeting. Do not include details – you will talk about those in the meeting itself.
- Make copies of your agenda for everyone there and encourage them to take notes.
- Send out reminders, including when and where. Try all avenues: phone, email, word

of mouth, school news outlets, flyers. Get people to come! Free food always works.

The Actual Meeting

- Find a volunteer to record the minutes of the meeting. It doesn't have to be word for word, but make sure he or she jots down all the decisions that were made and the important info.
- Let people share their opinions, but keep it on track. No one wants to sit in a meeting for two hours.
- Don't put anyone's ideas down. Keep it friendly and be open-minded.
- Try to make the seating circular to encourage discussion. Allowing people to see each other helps get ideas flowing.
- Don't lecture. You may be the leader but you don't have all the ideas. Give other people time to share the spotlight.
- Figure out what the next step is. Are you just meeting to meet or is there something that you are working towards. Discuss who is doing what and what needs to be done. Make sure everyone has a part in it.
- Finally, at the end, remind everyone when the next meeting is. Stick around for a few extra minutes in case

anyone has other questions or comments. And please don't forget to thank them or coming. They're more likely to return if they feel appreciated!

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