

## CHECKLIST FOR PRODUCTIVE MEETINGS

- \_\_\_ 1. Do you have a clear purpose for calling the meeting?
- \_\_\_ 2. Have you decided which format will best carry forth the purpose?
- \_\_\_ 3. Are you sure there's no better way to solve the problem?
- \_\_\_ 4. Have you planned an agenda?
- \_\_\_ 5. If you're using consultants or speakers, have you kept them informed about why they have been invited?
- \_\_\_ 6. If you plan to discuss documents, are copies available for all the participants?
- \_\_\_ 7. Is the meeting place centrally located and easy to reach?
- \_\_\_ 8. Is there adequate parking?
- \_\_\_ 9. Does everyone know where the meeting is?
- \_\_\_ 10. Have you given thought to seating, lighting, temperature, ventilation, acoustics, audio visual equipment, et cetera?
- \_\_\_ 11. Have you made arrangements to make a record of the proceedings?
- \_\_\_ 12. Are you familiar with Robert's Rules of Order, or Sturgis? (Parliamentary procedures)
- \_\_\_ 13. Are you prepared for unexpected contingencies?
- \_\_\_ 14. Do you have a clear idea where you want to steer the meeting?
- \_\_\_ 15. If the meeting is held for the purpose of voting, have you thought about the procedure for tabulating and recording votes?
- \_\_\_ 16. Have you given a lot of thought to platform arrangements -- who will sit where?
- \_\_\_ 17. Have you given some consideration to planning the meeting site pursuant to the purpose as well as the audience for the meeting?
- \_\_\_ 18. Is it wise for you to have a closed agenda as opposed to one that is freewheeling and open to any kinds of suggestions?
- 19. Have you made some attempt to anticipate the kinds of questions the audience (members, public, press, school board) will pose to you?
- \_\_\_ 20. Do you have someone prepared to serve as parliamentarian?
- \_\_\_ 21. Have you given some thought to providing coffee, cookies, lunch, etc.

***SAMPLE INSET FOR  
AGENDAS:***

**Next Meeting:  
Nov. 10, 2007  
4:30 P.M.**

**DON'T FORGET  
TO BRING IN  
YOUR EEL  
APPLICATIONS!**

***HOUSE OF  
DELEGATES:  
SATURDAY,  
APRIL 27  
Copper Hills High***

- \_\_\_22. Is food appropriate for the kind of format you've chosen?
- \_\_\_23. Who is presiding over the meeting?
- \_\_\_24. Who is going to control the meeting to keep it from getting out of hand (Association General Membership Meetings)
- \_\_\_25. Do you need a head table?
- \_\_\_26. Do you want the press to report the substance of the meeting?
- \_\_\_27. Are you clever enough to understand the motives of some of your people?
- \_\_\_28. Do you need a quorum before the meeting can commence? If so, do you know what a quorum is under your constitution?
- \_\_\_29. Do you know the proper wording for a motion?
- \_\_\_30. Do you understand what is meant by "a committee of the whole"?
- \_\_\_31. Are you prepared to prevent one or two individuals from dominating certain kinds of meetings?
- \_\_\_32. Are you prepared to keep the group on track--staying with the central purpose of the meeting?
- \_\_\_33. Are you prepared to handle disagreements among your members?
- \_\_\_34. Do you recognize a consensus when you see and hear one?
- \_\_\_35. Are you prepared to move the group toward the phrasing of a motion when a consensus appears apparent?
- \_\_\_36. When the meeting is over, are you prepared to translate the wishes of the group into the who, what, when, and how?
- \_\_\_37. Have you given some thought to inviting your UniServ Staff member to assist you in the conduct of certain types of meetings?
- \_\_\_38. Are you fully aware that general membership meetings are potential dynamite?
- \_\_\_39. Can you recognize someone who has a "hidden agenda"?
- \_\_\_40. Check over everything one more time!

## PLANNING THE 10-MINUTE BUILDING MEETING

Minutes	Topic	Rationale
2 minutes (min. 1-2)	Brief overview of major topics discussed at last month's Rep Council meeting	Keeping members informed. Attempt to reduce the hush-hush attitude so often prevalent during negotiations. Keeping members informed is not a matter of how much they are told. Rather, it's a matter of their feeling that leaders are working hard and regularly to inform them.
4 minutes (min. 3-6)	Here is a current issue. We need your consensus before we go to the next Rep Council meeting, where we shall submit your collective views.	The mere process of getting member consensus reinforces in the member's mind that his/her opinion is actively sought and subsequently presented to the voting body. The AR who neglects this step is asking for mistrust and hostility from members.
3 minutes (min. 7-9)	A 3-minute review of a current issue that is close to the heart, up at soul and gut of members in this building.	This may not be the burning issue to come up at Rep Council, but members need to feel that the Association is conscious of currently felt need of theirs. We could fill up these minutes with "important" matters, but the individual member needs to feel some relief on a topic that touches him/her. Often just talking about a problem gives considerable relief.

r

1 minute  
(min. 10)

We're having some success in this area or, we're optimistic in this area-thanks to YOUR efforts. Keep up the good work.

Praise. Encourage. Nourish the members toward developing a spirit of cautious optimism. An "all is lost" attitude, culminating in "I give up" to often kills support for Association goals, especially during negotiations.

*"Time's up! We told you we could do it in 10 minutes!  
Don't forget to leave your questions and suggestions at the door."*

## RUNNING THE MEETING TO MAKE 'EM LOVE IT

A printed agenda provides direction, gives members security, psyches them up for the important business of the meeting.

Meet in a room large enough to hold the group, but not so large as to allow the group to scatter. People in groups feel more secure and optimistic when they're close together physically.

Do you have a purpose for your meeting, or do you hold meetings because your bylaws state, "Thou shalt conduct two general meetings each year"? Have a definite purpose, a goal, then keep it firmly in mind throughout the meeting.

Plan the discussion. On whom can you count to make it lively. Talk to those people ahead of time.

Choose the prime movers in the audience carefully. Are they respected by the group? Let the meeting end with the members understanding exactly what decisions have been made and what action comes next.

Plan the meeting to provide variety, change of pace, even novelty now and then--just the way you would plan one of your best lessons in the classroom. Consider the cardinal sin of conducting meetings to be the sin of boring the members.

Set yourself a goal--a specific number of individuals who can be persuaded before the meeting to make an act of investment of themselves in the outcome of the meeting. Thus, there will be at least that number of members sitting in the audience, full of attention, poised to participate.

Try this exercise to prepare yourself for the meeting: sit down with one or two vocal members (not necessarily of your personal persuasion) and ask them to express as many arguments and techniques opposing your positions as possible. Keep a list of them. Practice your approach to these opposing views, then keep the list in your pocket until the meeting date. Your self-confidence will show and probably influence the outcome of the meeting.

A meeting, like a story or drama, has a peak, a climax. Plan the meeting so that it peaks near the end, making certain it doesn't drag, but rather bumps to a stop well before interest begins to lag.

## **TRY 10-MINUTE BUILDING MEETINGS**

Faculty Reps who hold regular building meetings have the best shot toward strengthening membership rapport, especially in difficult times.

"But they won't stay for a building meeting," you complain. "They're too busy." Try promising them a ten-minute building meeting--timed by the clock. See the guide for planning such a meeting on the next page. The rationale for each part of the ten-minute program is included. Attached are a sample mailbox announcement of the ten-minute meeting, and a sample agenda to be distributed at the start of the meeting.

Why is the building meeting so important? Often it seems expedient for the faculty rep to skip it and vote in rep council without having gained consensus from members, or by merely "sensing" the opinions of members. But regardless of how well the faculty rep reads members' minds, to neglect to ask for member consensus robs them of knowledge that they have a voice and the feeling that their opinions count in the decision-making process.

When members begin to feel their opinions are sought and carried back to the decision-making body, the faculty rep is out of danger. Only a masochist wants to make decisions alone, to be paid off later with members' anger and distrust.

Most of us consider snappy, business-like association meetings a rarity. Why not try the ten minute building meeting! Note on the sample agenda that members still have the opportunity to let off steam through the rip-off on the bottom. The faculty may thus speak later, on an individual basis, to those who write down their concerns on the rip-offs collected at the door.

*SAMPLE AGENDA*  
Valley Crest Elementary  
April 12, 2007  
Agenda

1. What was discussed at Rep Council last time?  
(4 minutes)
2. We need your consensus on procedures for Building Committee. Your views will be presented at the next Rep Council meeting.  
(2 minutes)
3. Latest developments on the substitute problem.  
(3 minutes)
4. Something you should be proud about...Seven new members this year!  
(1 minute)
5. Time's up! We told you we could do it in 10 minutes! Don't forget to leave your questions and suggestions at the door.

- - - - -

**If you have a small prize, use this section of the agenda for drawing!**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Room \_\_\_\_\_

Concerns or suggestions \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_