

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONDUCTING SUCCESSFUL MEETINGS

- 1) Use Parliamentary Procedure.
- 2) Prepare Roll Call for Secretary
 - a) Prior to the meeting advise the Secretary of all members who have been excused.
 - i) If the name of an excused member is called, simply state "Excused."
 - ii) Do not explain reasons for a member's absence.
 - (1) Brings the meeting off focus and uses a lot of unnecessary time.
- 3) Agenda
 - a) Be as detailed as possible when preparing the agenda.
 - i) The more detailed the agenda, the easier it is to stay on task.
 - b) On your copy only, pencil in the time when each piece of business should be addressed.
 - i) Stick to estimated times and the meeting should run according to schedule.
 - c) Start meeting on time.
 - i) Helps set the tone for the entire meeting.
 - d) Follow the agenda.
 - i) Keeps meeting running smoothly and timely.
 - ii) Helps move from one piece of business to the next.
 - e) Stay focused on the agenda.
 - i) Do not stray away from the topic at hand.
 - ii) Do not add personal comments.
- 4) Discussion
 - a) Remain neutral and impartial.
 - i) Of all members, the president should have the least to say during a meeting.
 - ii) Do not comment or voice opinions about topics being discussed.
 - b) Meetings are about the organization and its members, not about the president's personal opinions or comments.
 - i) In extremely rare cases the president may speak on a motion.
 - (1) Specific parliamentary rules must be followed when doing so, which includes vacating the chair.
- 5) Limit time for oral reports to a maximum of 3 minutes to hit the highlights.
 - a) When time is up, time is up.
 - i) Allowing more time to speak than allotted shows lack of control.
 - ii) Additional members might push the limit if just one member gets away with taking more than her allotted time.
 - iii) Allowing extra time for some members and not others shows partiality.
 - iv) The president loses credibility when she shows lack of control or partiality.
 - v) This may result in other unnecessary distractions throughout the meeting.
 - b) Avoid personal comments after each report.
 - i) Thank the person giving the report and move on to the next item.

- 6) Only one person speaks at a time.
 - a) When more than one person is speaking (side chatter or otherwise), ask the person who has the floor to stop speaking for a moment.
 - b) Wait for the members who are being disruptive to stop.
 - c) Then ask the person who has the floor to continue.
 - d) This is very difficult to do, but very necessary.
 - e) Do this just once and you will regain control of the meeting.

- 7) Do not do committee work during the meeting.
 - a) If there is a lengthy discussion about details of an event, send it back to committee or create a committee for further review.

- 8) Handling Motions
 - a) The president does not speak on a motion (except in extremely rare cases).
 - b) When a motion is made and seconded, repeat the motion by stating “It has been moved and seconded that....”
 - i) Helps to alleviate confusion.
 - ii) Helps members to stay focused for discussion.
 - c) If members get off the topic of discussion for the specific motion, simply state “The motion is to.... Is there any further discussion on the motion?”
 - d) When the motion is ready to be put to a vote, restate the motion again.
 - e) Announce the result of the vote.

- 9) Scripts
 - a) Prepare what needs to be said in advance.
 - b) Stick to the script and do not ad lib.
 - i) Getting away from the script leads to tangents, getting off focus and wasting time.
 - c) Sticking to the script helps to maintain order and control.
 - d) The more focused the president is with what she have to say, the greater respect you receive from the members.

- 10) Spiritual Advisor’s Comments
 - a) Ask the Spiritual Advisor if he/she will be attending the meeting.
 - b) If so, find out when it is most convenient for him/her to speak.
 - c) Place the Spiritual Advisor on the agenda accordingly.
 - i) are not always available to attend an entire meeting.
 - ii) Spiritual Advisors should be given an opportunity to speak at their convenience.

Note: These recommendations for conducting successful meetings were developed mainly from the following three resources:

1. *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised, 11th Edition*
2. *The Complete Idiot’s Guide to Robert’s Rules*
3. *NCCW Guidance and Resource Manual*