

EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

PLANNING FOR A MEETING

- Don't call a meeting unless it is necessary and timely.
- Know in advance what you want to accomplish.
- Always distribute an agenda.
 - In advance if possible.
 - Otherwise, at the beginning of the meeting.
- Be realistic about what you can accomplish in the time available.
- Make sure your constituents' interests will be addressed.
- Make sure everyone who attends has a role to play.
- Have a strategy.
 - Anticipate areas of disagreement.
 - Know your own positions.
 - Formulate resolutions to be introduced at the meeting.
 - Think of compromises and fall-back positions.
 - Think of ways to mediate disagreements.

CHAIRING A MEETING

- Make sure someone is taking minutes.
- Be neutral and fair.
 - Your primary role is to move the discussion.
 - You can still take positions.
- Listen closely to what people say.
- Encourage participation.
 - Don't let anyone feel ignored.
 - Don't let a few people dominate.
- Structure and lead the discussion.
 - Keep people focussed and constructive.
 - Separate issues from each other.
 - Summarize areas of agreement and disagreement.
 - Be aware of time.
 - Use informal votes to close debate or continue discussion.
- Avoid becoming angry or defensive.
- Be ready to change your plans if necessary in response to group.

FOLLOW-UP

- Ask people what they thought of the meeting.
- Listen to criticisms and think of ways to improve.
- Get a legible copy of the minutes.
- Make sure people with specific tasks know what to do and have deadlines.
- Report what you have learned at the meeting to the officers.