WLN Academy

Running Efficient and Effective Meetings
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One of the ways you can keep people motivated during meetings and attract new people to future meetings is to run your meetings efficiently and effectively. We have all been to meetings that have no structure, no direction, and seem to go on forever without accomplishing anything. DON'T LET THIS HAPPEN TO YOUR ORGANIZATION! Well run meetings are the sign of a healthy chapter, and they can often be the thing that helps a struggling chapter become healthy.

Adopt an Agenda. By using agendas, and printing them off for distribution at meetings, you will lend structure and direction to your meetings while letting attendees know what to expect. Many organizations already do this, and they have found that drafting, printing, and distributing agendas helps to keep meetings on track and on time. Here is a simple agenda you can use to start out with:

1. *Call To Order / Pledge of Allegiance / Invocation*
2. *Introductions of Leaders and Guests*
3. *Reports*
4. *Old Business*
5. *New Business*
6. *Main Program (Training or Project)*
7. *Adjournment*

This agenda may or may not be suitable for your chapter, but the idea is that you have some kind of planned structure for the meeting. By printing and distributing the agenda, you can help to keep your meetings on track (attendees will help you too if the meeting gets stalled for some reason).

Add Time Limits to Your Agendas. You can take agendas one step further. Even with agendas, meetings can run long - especially if you have one or more speakers that drone on and on and on; do you know any such people? If you do, you can regain control of your agenda without any awkward interruptions by adding time limits to your agenda - and making it clear at the meeting's start that you will enforce them:

1. *6:30: Call To Order / Pledge of Allegiance (2 minutes)*
2. *6:32: Introductions of Leaders and Guests (3 minutes)*
3. *6:35: Reports (5 minutes)*
4. *6:40: Old Business (20 minutes)*
5. *7:00: New Business (30 minutes)*
6. *7:30: Main Program - Training or Project (30 minutes)*
7. *8:00: Adjournment*

You would not believe how well having a schedule like this helps to pace a meeting. Trust me, it works. Having a digital clock with big red numbers also helps. In this case, speakers who tend to drone on will effectively police themselves because they will know how much time they have and will know exactly what time it is. If they are interrupted because of time, they will be less likely to be offended.

By having well structured meetings that stick to an agenda, and making sure that your agenda helps pace your meetings, you will find your meetings run more efficiently and will be more fun for your attendees. Good luck!

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