



Directorate Communication

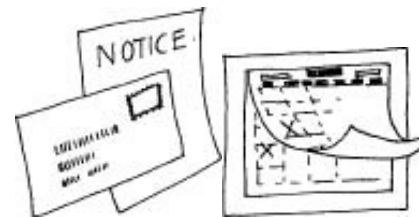


HOW TO RUN A MEETING

A meeting is a group of people (or committee) who come together regularly to discuss a subject or to decide what to do.

Notice

- To give notice of a meeting is to inform people that the meeting will be held.
- Notice must be given to each person who should attend the meeting.
- Notice should usually be given a month before the meeting, but meetings may also be held sooner than that, if necessary.
- The date, time and place must be given.
- Notices are usually written and sent by post.



Chairperson

- **A chairperson must be chosen to lead every meeting.**
- **If the chairperson is not present, the vice-chairperson or secretary can lead the meeting.**
- **The person who stands in for the chairperson may remain chairperson during the whole meeting, even if the chairperson turns up.**
- **If the chairperson, or person appointed by the chairperson, does not lead the meeting, the meeting is not legal.**
- **If a decision is made after the chairperson has left, the decision is not legal either.**
- **Members should speak to the chairperson only. The chairperson should not be addressed by name, but should be addressed as "Mr Chair", or "Madam Chair". If the member needs to speak to another member, he may do so by addressing the chairperson: "Mr Chairman/Madam Chair, through you to John".**

Choosing a chairperson

Members must be careful when they choose a chairperson.

The chairperson must:

- × know the organisation well
- × know how to hold a meeting

- × be a pleasant person
- × have an understanding of problems, people, etc
- × be fair
- × not talk too much
- × not try to influence people
- × speak clearly
- × be firm.



The chairperson's tasks

The chairperson must, as indicated in the rules:

- × see to it that the correct persons, or number of persons, are present
- × ask the members at the beginning of the meeting if there are any additional items for the agenda and may add more under the heading "General"
- × decide on the order of the meeting if there are no rules
- × make sure that the rules are followed

- × see to it that members keep to the subject
- × give people with different opinions an equal chance to speak
- × control talk about all matters
- × keep order
- × see to it that people are removed from the meeting if they do not pay attention
- × decide when the members have to vote about a matter
- × make sure that the minutes (notes on the meeting) are kept
- × close the meeting. The chairperson may close the meeting at any time if
 - ◆ not enough members are present any longer
 - ◆ there is disorder
 - ◆ further information is necessary
- × represent the organisation at social functions.



Secretary

Choosing a secretary



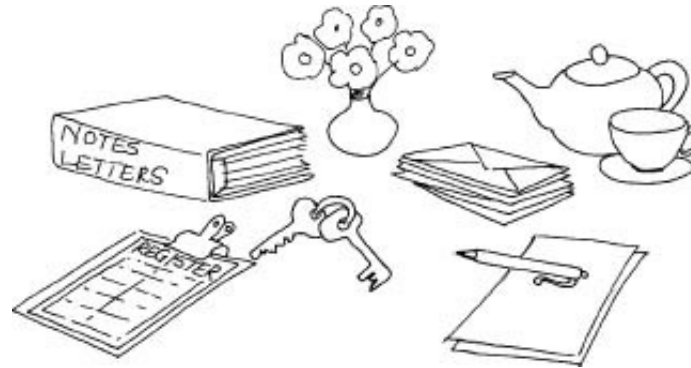
The secretary must:

- × be able to organise
- × be fair towards all
- × give advice to the chairperson if asked.

The secretary's tasks

The secretary must, as indicated in the rules:

- × organise the meeting-place (venue)
- × put together the list of matters to be discussed at the meeting (agenda)
- × **send out notices**
- × **keep a list of the members**
- × **sometimes act as chairperson**
- × **see to it that the meeting is declared open (enough people present)**
- × **write notes (minutes) on what is said or decided at the meeting (minutes are only available to members)**

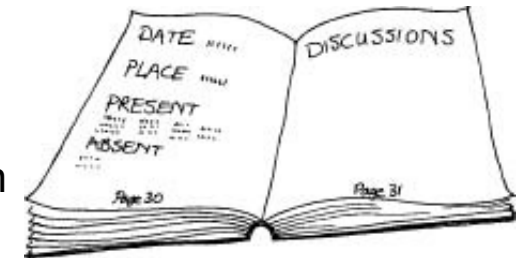


- × **make copies of the minutes for the next meeting**
- × **see to it that members at the meeting sign their names in the register**
- × **keep copies of all letters, notes, etc in files**
- × **arrange for paper, keys to the hall, lighting, or something to eat and drink when necessary**

The secretary may also act as treasurer, and then see to it that the funds are used in the right manner.

Minutes

- The secretary must keep minutes of what is decided during the meeting.
- The minutes should contain the date, place, names of members present (or absent), and may contain a summary of the discussions.
- Minutes are written in a book with numbered pages and no page may be torn out.
- The minutes are read at the next meeting, just after the meeting has started.
- After the minutes have been read, the chairperson asks if everybody agrees that the facts are correct.
- If everybody agrees, the chairperson asks someone to suggest that the minutes may be accepted.
- If one person puts up his hand, the chairperson asks for a second.



- Thereafter the minutes are signed by the chairperson.
- If there are incorrect facts, these are discussed and corrected before the minutes are accepted. The correction must be signed by the chairperson.
- The names of the people who proposed and seconded the minutes are recorded in the minutes of the next meeting.

EXAMPLE OF MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting of the (name of committee) held at(meeting-place)
on(date) at (time).

Present: ..chairperson

.....secretary
.....treasurer
.....member
.....member
.....member

Apologies:.....

Absent:.....

Acceptance of notice of meeting and agenda:

Minutes of the previous meeting:

The minutes of the meeting on(date of previous meeting) were presented by the chairperson,
and proposed by, and seconded by, and accepted by the chairperson.

I. Matters arising from the minutes:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

II. New business:
Items listed as on the agenda.

- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

III. Announcements

IV. Date of next meeting, time, meeting-place

V. Closure

Treasurer

A treasurer is the person who has to handle and is responsible for the money matters of the organisation.

The treasurer's tasks

The treasurer must, as indicated in the rules:

- × see that all money is used as the rules say it should be
- × not use money unnecessarily

- × keep notes (records) of all money matters (cash-book, cheque book, receipt books, etc)
- × collect membership fees and give a receipt.



Members

Members' tasks

The members should:

- × find out all that needs to be known about the organisation
- × study the agenda before a meeting, and prepare the facts for items they want to discuss
- × be present at all meetings

If, for a very good reason, a member cannot attend a meeting, the secretary must be informed. This is called an apology, and is recorded in the minutes. A member that does not send an apology, should be recorded as absent.



Agenda

- **The agenda is a list of matters to be discussed at the meeting.**
- **The agenda is often sent to members together with the notice of the meeting so that the members know what the meeting will be about.**
- **The secretary talks to the chairperson and then writes the agenda.**
- **The chairperson may only change the order of the agenda when the members at the meeting agree to it.**
- **Any item in the minutes of the previous meeting that still needs further discussion, should receive attention under "matters arising from the minutes".**
- **The agenda should make provision for the treasurer (or the secretary/treasurer) to report on the finances of the committee, under an item called "Financial Report".**

The meeting

- **The chairperson opens the meeting and decides whether enough people are present for the meeting to go on. The number of people who must be present is given in the rules.**
- **The minutes are read and accepted.**
- **The chairperson deals with each subject on the agenda in the order in which it appears on the agenda.**
- **The chairperson says as little as possible and only leads the meeting.**
- **A subject must be discussed well before a decision is taken.**
- **The chairperson decides when to stop discussions about a matter.**
- **Only one member may stand and speak at a time.**
- **The members vote about a matter before a decision is taken.**
- **The members vote by putting up their hands or they can vote on paper (ballot).**
- **If the same number of people are for or against, the matter is decided against or the chairperson may make the final decision.**
- **If people do not behave themselves, the chairperson may ask them to leave.**
- **When all the subjects on the agenda have been discussed, and the date of the next meeting has**

been decided on, the meeting is closed.



EXAMPLE OF AN AGENDA

Notice of meeting of(name of committee) to be held on(date)
at(time) at(venue).

AGENDA

Roll call: Present

Apologies

Absent

1. Acceptance of notice of meeting and agenda
2. Acceptance of minutes of previous meeting
3. Matters arising from the minutes
4. New business
5. Financial report

6. General
7. Announcements
8. Date, time and meeting-place of next meeting
9. Closure

Compiled by the Directorate Communication of the National Department of Agriculture in cooperation with

Rikki Abbott of KwaZulu-Natal Department of Agriculture

Printed and published in the Republic of South Africa by the National Department of Agriculture and obtainable from the Resource Centre, Directorate Communication, Private Bag X144, Pretoria

First edition 1996

Reprinted 1998

Reprinted 2000