How to Run an Effective Chapter Meeting

One of the most basic things that an organization does is to conduct business. There are many ways to do this, but few have proven more successful than calling a meeting. It is my intent in the following information to provide you with enough information to run an effective meeting by covering a sample agenda, and Robert’s Rules of Order.

If you have not already done so you may want to use your first meeting as a time to set up the by-laws and/or constitution that your organization will be governed by. This may also be a good time to develop an organizational structure (President, VP, Treasurer…) that sets up the leadership for your group. This is often done at the first meeting, and here’s an agenda of a standard meeting.

Sample Agenda

Your High School Chapter Name

Meeting Date

1. Call to Order President
2. Invocation (Optional) Chapter Officer
3. Pledge of Allegiance Chapter Officer or Member
4. Organization Creed (can be found online) all members
5. Roll Call (Can be done silently) Secretary
6. Reading/Approval of Minutes Secretary/President
7. Officers Reports Each Officer
8. Committee reports Committee Chairpersons
   1. Finance
   2. Promotions
   3. Social
   4. Special Committees
9. Unfinished Business President
10. New Business President
11. Set Next meeting Date President
12. Adjourn the Meeting

Every meeting needs to have someone who is in control. In most meetings this person is the highest-ranking officer or a chapter advisor and is referred to as “The Chair.” It is the responsibility of the Chair to set the meeting agenda and to monitor discussion to make sure that those who wish to participate get a chance to be heard.

This agenda is a good system to follow for running your meetings. Not all of the items on this agenda may need to be done every meeting, but the choice is up to you as to what you may add or remove from this process.

Also, in running your meeting it is very important that you keep order and efficiency, while allowing for full discussion of agenda items. The most recommended way to do so is by using Robert’s Rules of Order. The following are a list of the motions and their effect on the flow of the meeting.

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| In making a motion, you must state it as follows: | Member: I move that/to (state the idea). |
| Often a second is required and is stated as follows: | Different member: “I second the motion.” |
| In regard to debate the chair is to state: | Chair: It has been moved and seconded that we (restate the idea). Is there any discussion? |
| If during discussion a member would like to make an adjustment to the motion, they must state their amendment as follows: | Member: I move to amend the motion to be (state the amended version of the idea). |
| Again the chair is responsible for controlling discussion on the amendment. THIS AMENDMENT MUST BE VOTED UPON BEFORE YOU MAY VOTE ON THE ORIGINAL MOTION. If the amendment is successful the main motion is amended and can still be discussed, time permitting. If the amendment fails, discussion can continue as before, time permitting. | |
| Once the chair closes discussion the motion may be voted upon. The chair states: | Chair: Discussion is now closed on the motion. I now call for a vote. All those in favor please say ‘Aye.’ All those opposed say ‘Nay.’ The (Ayes or Nays) have it. Motion (Carries or Fails). |

Hopefully this information has been helpful in your understanding of how to run an effective meeting. If you have further questions please consult your Chapter Handbook, Chapter Advisor, State Officer, National Officer, or look for more information online.