

## ***Running a Meeting***

The first activity that directly affects the membership is the first meeting of the year. An organized and effective meeting can make a winning first impression on members and creates optimistic expectations for the semester ahead.

Why to we even have meeting? Meetings have several functions. They give members a chance to discuss and evaluate goals and objectives, keep updated on current events, provide a chance to communicate with one another and keep one another informed about what the committees are working on. The following are some tips to help you make your next meeting successful, productive and Fun.

### **Does Your Meeting Have PULSE?**

**P- Plan, Progress and Participation**

**U- Understanding**

**L- Leveling and Logic**

**S- Set an agenda and Sensitivity**

**E- Encouragement and Energy**

*Plan, Progress and Participation:*

- Have a plan of action. Plan the meeting carefully: who is invited, what day is the meeting, where is the meeting, when is the meeting, why are you having the meeting and how many will attend. Come to the meeting early to get yourself all set and welcome any early bird arrivals. Move the meeting along. Don't get caught up in small talk and stop side conversation. Participation in the meeting is important. If possible, arrange the room so that members face one another; choose a location that is suitable for your groups' size.

*Understanding:*

- All those who attend should have a good understanding of the goals, direction of the meeting and issues to be discussed. Have your general meeting times and committee meeting times on the voice mail message and the web site. An e-mail reminder should be sent out a few days a head of time and the day of to remind people about the meeting. Get in the habit of sending out the agenda with the reminder e-mail the day of the meeting. This will help those that are attending the meeting know what will be discussed. Always start the meeting on time and end on time.

*Leveling and Logic:*

- Level the playing field. Set basic ground rules such as one person speaks at a time, no side conversations and make sure that the group respects everyone's

rights and those who want to speak get a chance to speak. Plan the agenda in a logical way.

*Set an agenda and Sensitivity:*

- Always set an agenda for the meeting. Send the agenda out ahead of time so members know what will be covered at the meeting. Here is an example of what could be include in your meeting agenda:

- Call to order
- Approval of the Agenda
- Correction and Approval of the minutes
- Old Business
- New Business
- Committee Reports
- Advisor report
- Announcement

Be opening and welcoming to all those in attendance at the meeting. Refrain from side conversations, inappropriate comments and inside jokes.

*Encouragement and Energy:*

- Encourage participation from all members. Don't let one or two people dominate the meeting. Be enthusiastic. Enthusiasm breeds enthusiasm.

A well run meeting allows organizations to accomplish their goals and keeps members actively involved and interested. Being able to run a successful meeting is something that is learned through practice. The following are a few pointers for a successful meeting

- Greet members and make them feel welcome, even late members(when appropriate)
- When possible have ice-breakers and team building exercise to make your members feel special and build cohesion
- Start on time, end on time.
- Review the agenda and set priorities for the meeting and stick to them
- Use visual aids when appropriate.
- Encourage group discussion to get all points of views and ideas
- Keep conversation focused on the topic
- Tactfully end discussions when they are getting nowhere or becoming destructive or unproductive
- Keep minutes of the meetings for future reference in case a question arises
- As a leader, be a role model by listening, showing interest, appreciation and confidence in members
- Admit mistakes and ask for help
- Set a date, time and place for the next meeting