



- Topics:**
- Effectively prepare for meetings
 - Utilize proper format for recording minutes
 - Select the main points to record for effective minute taking
 - Identify the responsibilities and the deadlines for completing minutes

Meeting Preparation

Taking minutes is a necessary business task in most organizations. It requires the accurate recording of meetings for record keeping purposes, decision making, and for further action. Minutes additionally document decisions and accountability. Although most people never learn how to take minutes it is a standard duty and one that requires great detail and precision.

Meetings need to be organized and consequently should reflect in an organized way what transpires. You need to do the following in preparation for a meeting:

- Provide minutes of previous meetings and anything else you need

Essential Meeting Elements

It is important that you have everything that you need. Essential meeting elements include noting the type of meeting to be held, the name of your organization/department, the date and time, the name of the chair/facilitator, the main topics, and the time of adjournment. (For formal meetings include the approval of previous minutes and all resolutions.)

You should know who will attend and who will not make the meeting. You should also have a fair idea of meeting members who are excused and those who don't show up. You'll need: List of expected attendees, agenda and minutes format.

- Obtain a list of committee members
- Prepare a sign-in sheet to pass around to attendees which should include:
 - Name, Department
 - Telephone number/ email address
- Provide recording devise (with accessories)
- Provide agenda/background information
- Provide spare paper, pens, etc.
- Study the issues to be discussed



Inside this issue:	
Taking Notes	2
Action Items	2
Minutes Content	2
The Recording Process	3
Guidelines for Minutes	3
Confidentiality	4
Resources	4

Minutes Content

Minutes provide a record of what occurred at the meeting. They are the official record of what happened, not necessarily everything that was said, at a meeting.

Record the main points of discussion. Consequently, it is not necessary to record verbatim what was said at a meeting. The minutes should be objective and should not include side bar conversations.



Minutes should be organized in the order of the agenda. They should include conclusions, recommendations, and actions.

Taking Notes

Whether you take notes, record or video, it's important to have a back up system in case something's goes awry. A list of things you might need include:

- ✓ Recording device
- ✓ Note pad
- ✓ Video
- ✓ Laptop
- ✓ Flip chart and stand

It's a good idea to study the issues to be discussed before the meeting so that you can ask questions if necessary. This will help you understand what transpires during the meeting. The meeting will be less than productive if you must struggle to comprehend what's happening while taking notes, and your notes won't make sense to you later.

Notes should be typed up soon after the meeting and approved for accuracy and distribution. Once approved, the minutes should be formatted for circulation in a manner that you and/or the chair determines.



Action Items

Action items are those that require that something be done after the meeting. Someone may be assigned a task or responsibility to complete at the meeting and the assignment and the responsible party must be recorded.

List action items on a separate sheet of paper or in a special section of the form. Action items should also contain a deadline date for completion and a method for reporting back to the committee if necessary.

Action items are normally referred to in subsequent meetings.

Minutes

Preparation

Prepare everything that you need.

Format

Use the right format to take notes.

Resources

Ensure that you keep current with up-to-date resources.

The Recording Process

- √ Use a preprinted format
- √ Listen for main points or key phrases and words
- √ Avoid defamatory remarks
- √ Upon closure determine:
 - Was there a decision?
 - Was there an action?
 - Who agreed to take the action?
 - When will the follow up be taken?
- √ Clarify conclusions and actions at the end of the meeting
- √ Monitor attendance

Guidelines for Minutes

The minutes should include the following:

1. Name of the group/department
2. Place, time and date of the meeting
3. Type of meeting (regular or special meeting called to discuss a specific topic)
4. Names of committee members present, excused and absent
5. List of observers indicating name and department
6. A statement that the minutes of the prior meeting were approved, revised or not read
7. Announcements or issues for discussion
8. Items outlined in the order listed on the agenda. Briefly describe main points discussed and state actions) taken. A transcript of the discussion is not necessary, but be sure to include actions, votes, resolutions, motions, etc.
9. If a member of the committee is assigned a task or volunteers for an assignment, state clearly the person's name, the responsibility accepted, and when the assignment is to be completed.
10. The time the meeting was adjourned
11. The place, time, and date of the next meeting
12. The recording secretary's signature and typed name



For Minutes Format Templates go to: <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/templates/default.aspx>

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Standard Agenda Format

- ✓ Meeting name, date, time and location
- ✓ List of attendees
- ✓ Approval of last meeting minutes
- ✓ Old Business
 - Unresolved issues from previous meetings
 - Tabled topics from last meeting
- ✓ New Business
 - Standing agenda topics
 - Review of process improvement topics and supporting data
 - Education items
 - Other business

Confidentiality

- The following are considered confidential materials
 - ✓ All medical staff committee minutes
 - ✓ All medical staff department minutes
 - ✓ All credential files and minutes
 - ✓ All reappointment files
 - ✓ All general files maintained in the Medical Staff Office
- The distribution of minutes should be restricted to those parties who are actually involved
- No minutes or materials should be left in the meeting room
- Questions about legal protection and disclosure should be referred to legal management. Minutes are considered public documents by law and can be subpoenaed in court

Additional Resources

Robertsrulesonline.com

Software

- ✓ Meeting Scribe
- ✓ Go To Meeting
- ✓ Meeting Sense