

Title: How to run a successful meeting

Reference: GOV004



## Introduction

When running a meeting to make sure results are achievable make sure the meeting is well-planned meetings. To help with this follow the suggested 3 stages below:

### Stage 1 – Pre-meeting planning

It is essential that pre-planning takes place by the Chair or facilitator.

Review the goals and expected outcome, so you have an end aim which is realistic and achievable.

Determine that a meeting is the best vehicle to solve the problem, improve a process, or make plans to accomplish goals, and it is not just convenient for you. To schedule and hold a meeting is expensive when you account for the time of the people attending. You may be able to accomplish the goals with an e-mail discussion, on-line forum or by setting up a survey by e-mail. Please refer to [volsupport@ramblers.org.uk](mailto:volsupport@ramblers.org.uk) for details.

If attendees need to travel far to attend the meeting, it may be more cost effective to hold a telephone conference. Check with Central Office to see if this is the best option [vol.support@ramblers.org.uk](mailto:vol.support@ramblers.org.uk)

Propose a date and time for the meeting and check that the required attendees are able to attend.

Design the meeting, set the framework of the agenda and ensure relevant information is supplied to attendees well in advance to the meeting taking place so they can read it and prepare in advance: please refer to the Factsheet for writing an agenda.

Choosing the venue is very important. Ensure the meeting room is big enough, correctly set up to your requirements and the air quality is acceptable. Do they have the facilities you require (PowerPoint or a flipchart and pens) and do you have access to refreshments and if required, facilities for people with special needs?

Delegate the note taking to a reliable Group member, who can capture the action points in brief.



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## **Stage 2 - During the meeting**

Set a positive, productive tone for interaction between attendees. Help them to stay focused and on track. Do not run over the expected time.

Introduce the meeting, explain the timeframe, aims of the meeting, process for making decisions and explain what behaviour is acceptable and not acceptable. Ask the group to agree on these points- this way you can always remind the group about what they have agreed. Go through the agenda item by item.

Involve each participant in the actions. Every group has various personalities. You have quiet attendees and ones who try to dominate every discussion; everybody needs to be invested in the topic of discussion, the action and follow-up to accomplish results, rather than one dominant person trying to push everyone else into their decision. Watch the time, and ensure discussions do not go off on a tangent, bring them back to the decision point of the item.

During the meeting, have a follow up plan on each specific item, which should include the name of the person who agreed to action the item point, the date of completion and agreement of what action will be carried out.

Always ask if anybody has any other business, so that any new issues can be noted and taken forward. Set a time and a place for the next meeting.

## **Stage 3 - Post Meeting / follow up**

Publish your minutes and action plan within 24 hours. Attendees will most effectively contribute to results if they get started on the action points immediately, while their memory and enthusiasm is still fresh. People often wait for the minutes before they start the action points.

Observing deadlines and follow-up will help you achieve results from your meetings.

Following the meeting, each person with an action item should make a plan for completing their agreed action. Your goal is to check progress with each individual and ensure that tasks are underway.

Check the final progress at the start of the next meeting by going through the action points from the last meeting ("Matters arising").

Report on progress and outcomes at the next meeting and expect that all will have been accomplished. Alternatively, check progress at the next meeting and if there is a real roadblock to progress, determine how to proceed.

The practice of debriefing each meeting is essential for continuous improvement. Attendees should take turns discussing what was effective or ineffective about the current meeting process, along with the progress they feel the group is making on the topic of the meeting.

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### **Name badge template**

A name badge template has been inserted below. The easiest way to set them up is to print them onto sticky labels. Please check the size of the labels to ensure they print to the correct size.






Alternatively, print on to plain paper, cut them out and place them in a plastic pin badge holder (which can be purchased very cheaply). Please remember to ask delegates to hand them in after the meeting, so you can recycle them for next time.



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