

Easy stages guide to Content of Club Meetings

Ethos of meetings:

Club meetings should reflect the Soroptimist International Vision and Mission and therefore be vibrant, dynamic, professional and business-like while focusing on our aim to inspire action and create opportunities to transform the lives of women and girls but still with fun and fellowship to the fore. They should be interesting and varied and take account of members' interests.

Aims of meetings:

Club meetings can have many aims:

- To discuss Club business and decisions
- To discuss issues raised by Federation, National Association, Network or Region
- To support International Appeals and UN Days of Action
- To raise awareness of Programme Action issues and plan and carry out activities in support
- To discuss motions for the Federation annual general meeting
- To enable members to get to know each other better
- To fund raise
- Purely social

Frequency:

There is no longer a requirement for Clubs to have a minimum number of meetings each year. There does have to be an Annual General Meeting but otherwise the frequency and pattern of meetings is for the Club to decide. Many Clubs have two meetings a month but it could be more or less as long as they are frequent enough to enable members to bond and to undertake programme action work.

Content:

The aim or aims of the meeting will determine its content. You might have:

- a speaker meeting, with or without a meal beforehand. The chosen speakers should in the main have expertise or knowledge on programme action issues (keeping the Soroptimist Values and Goals in mind) or other issues local to the Club but could be on other more light-hearted topics to add variety and entertainment. Consider opening the meeting to other Clubs or non-Soroptimists to gain as wide an audience as possible
- a business meeting, with or without a meal beforehand. To make the business more productive consider circulating in advance any relevant papers, documents or ideas for consideration
- a programme action meeting to plan or take forward a project
- a new members meeting where prospective and new members can get to know existing members and Club activities
- a mixed meeting with a speaker followed by business or a programme action or other activity or discussion. This type of mixed meeting can have the benefit of appealing to everyone and avoiding the situation where members come to speaker meetings but not business meetings or vice versa
- a Panel Evening with experts in a specific area relevant to our work. Consider inviting other Clubs or non-Soroptimists to raise awareness and contribute to the discussion
- an international themed meeting in December to support the International President's Appeal and celebrate UN Human Rights Day
- a fund-raising or a purely social event
- the Annual General Meeting to discuss and approve the Club budget and disbursements and elect Club Officers

Don't forget:

Remember that meetings should be stimulating. Keep a balance between the serious and less serious content and don't be rigid but think creatively – whatever their content and format meetings need to be attractive to existing and prospective members. As long as they put programme action at the heart of the Club and meet the needs and wishes of the members then anything goes!