

Easy stages guide to running a club meeting

Why have a club meeting?

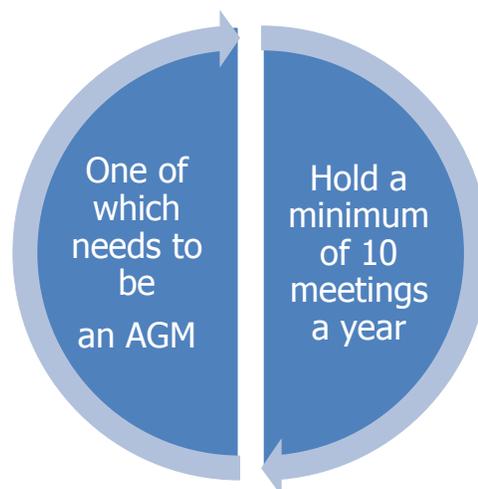
A club meeting is convened to socialise, to share information, to make decisions and reach agreement. Some club meetings may have more of an emphasis on one of these activities than another, for example, an Annual General Meeting may have more emphasis on sharing of information, a supper meeting may have more emphasis on socialising.

The point being that each meeting has a purpose and there is a job to be done to make it as interesting, stimulating and as enjoyable an experience as we can. It is a recurring meeting and a good measure of success is whether we want to be there or not and would we bring a guest.

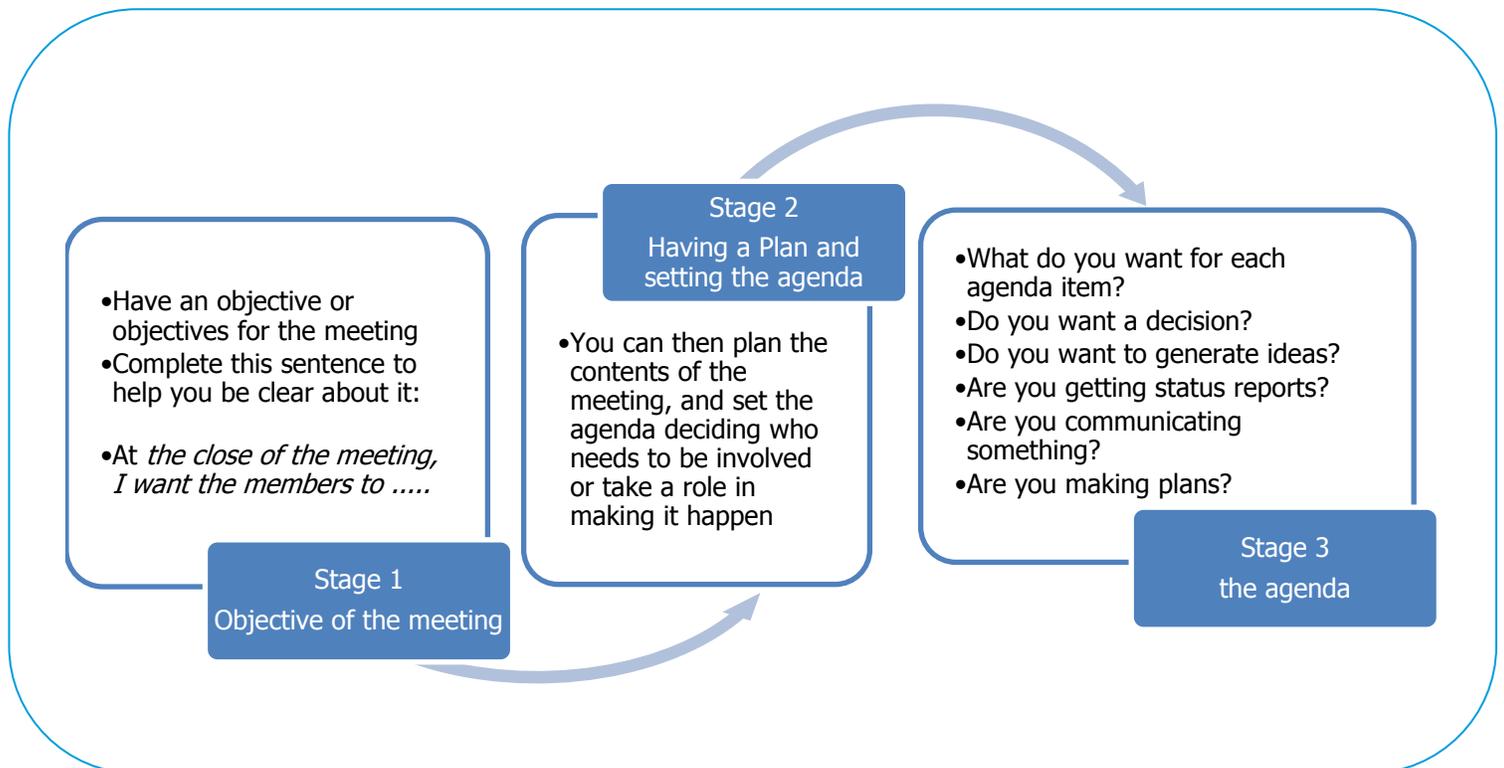
Imagine taking a guest along to a club meeting, what would we want them to say? How do we get them to quickly realise, from the content and organisation of a meeting, that this is a group of women who network and support each other and who work for the benefit of women and girls locally, nationally and internationally?

The easy stages guide takes us through some of the stages we can think about to help us create that experience.

What must we do?



How do you go about it?



How can you engage your members and guests?

- Distribute the agenda and any reading material, e.g., Officers Reports, Conference Motions. Nominations Forms before the meeting
- Assign a time limit to each agenda item and identify the person responsible to speak
- Share your time frame, at the very least the start and end time so people know when you are finishing. Remember , time is a precious resource, and no one wants their time wasted
- In some clubs, one meeting per month is a business meeting. Agenda items might be budget decisions, discussion of Programme Action projects and debates on issues to be raised at the Region Council meeting or resolutions for the Federation General Meeting. The second meeting is a speaker meeting. The invited speaker might raise members' awareness of issues related to our Programme work or something relevant in the community. This type of meeting might also have a fun social element, a meal, or include a 'my job' talk when a new member tells the Club more about herself and her job
- Increasingly, Clubs are moving away from this rigid pattern to a programme of meetings which mix any of the above activities. It might be a two hour meeting with an hour for a speaker including time for questions and debate, a fifteen minute refreshment break and then an hour for Club business which might include a twenty minute slot from a new member or a session planning a Programme Action event.
This sort of mixed meeting can provide something for everyone and avoid a situation where members come to speaker meetings and not business meetings or vice versa.

How can you retain the engagement of your members and guests?

Meetings need to start on time and absorb latecomers

- Make SMART action notes – *Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-Related*
- Make sure that everyone is clear about what they need to do to follow up points raised or practical tasks that have been delegated to those present
- Try to pick up on energy and mood changes and bring the meeting back on track before it has a chance to stray from the agenda
- Any other business. Do not launch an important piece of information or problem on an unsuspecting audience or hold up the end of the meeting. You can ask for items in advance or at the start of the meeting

What next?

Share your record of decisions and action notes promptly with all members via email or post

Get feedback
did you achieve
what you wanted
to achieve?



Web-based services such as Google Docs. Email, Skype can be used to ensure progress on projects and action points between meetings, especially where problems with travel make frequent meetings difficult.

Business and decisions taken at the Club Executive Committee can also be shared electronically. Good use of these tools allows time at Club meetings to be spent on networking, Programme Action and fun

Consider the feedback for the next meeting - you don't have to act on it

How will you ensure success?

With a solid objective in mind, a tight agenda and a commitment to involving the meeting participants in the planning preparations and execution of the meeting,

Sample of an agenda for a club meeting

The headings for the agenda will vary according to how the Club is organised. Each item should show beside it the name of the person who is going to speak to it. It is also good practice to show the planned start and finish times for the meeting.

Business Meeting of SI xx, on (date), at 7.30 p.m. at (venue)
with President (name) in the Chair

A G E N D A

1. Welcome
 2. Apologies for absence
 3. Minutes of last meeting (date).....
 4. Matters arising:
 5. Correspondence:
 - 5.1 Received from Federation Office
 - 5.2 Any other correspondence received e.g. from National Association/Network or Region
 6. Treasurer's Report:
 7. President's Business:
 8. Committee Reports:
 - 8.1 Attendance and Hospitality
 - 8.2 International
 - 8.3 Membership
 - 8.4 Programme Action
 - 8.5 Social
 - 8.6 Press and Publicity
 9. President Elect's Business
 10. Vice President's Business
 11. Secretary's Business:
 - 11.1 Friendship Links - (news received)
 - 11.2 Dinners: (any invitations received)
 12. Any other Business:
- Date of next Meeting