

# **How to Have a Good Committee Meeting**

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The key to having a good committee meeting is held by the committee chairman. Long before the meeting begins the chairman must plan his work.

## **The Chairman must:**

1. Enlist willing members to serve on the committee.
2. Keep the group small for maximum participation and efficiency.
3. Insure regular attendance by the following procedures:
  - a. Choose the best possible time and place after checking the personal preferences of committee members. If possible keep the same time and place. Starting and ending on time will also promote regular attendance.
  - b. Send out a written reminder to each member well in advance of the meeting. Use the telephone to remind them a day or two before the meeting.
  - c. Give special assignments to members, which require a report at the next meeting.
  - d. Keep a record of attendance and follow up absentees.
4. The chairman well in advance of the meeting should prepare an agenda.
5. Write out the purpose of the committee.
6. Make careful plans for the first meeting. Prepare any audio-visuals or written materials that might be needed. Just before the meeting, check the room temperature, lighting, and seating arrangement. The seating should be arranged so that the chairman is visible to all members.
7. Promote discussion in the following ways:
  - a. Create a permissive atmosphere by encouraging contributions from everyone. See that only one person speaks at a time.
  - b. Keep group attention on the subject at hand.
  - c. Summarize the progress of the discussion periodically. Keep before the group the agreements that have been reached.
  - d. Focus attention on issues rather than personalities. Watch for emotional build-ups. Use humor to reduce tension.
  - e. Help the group move progressively from problem to problem.
  - f. Have someone record on the chalkboard key points as the group engages in discussion.
  - g. If the committee is large, break it down into small groups to encourage participation.
  - h. Consider audio-visuals and printed materials to hand out are standard equipment in good committee meetings.
  - i. No one is designated to carry out the decision. Pause after each committee decision and state what needs to be done, who will do it, and when it should be completed. Often committees produce wonderful ideas but nothing ever happens.
  - j. Near the close of the meeting, allow time for a brief evaluation.
  - k. Always decide and announce the time of the next meeting before adjournment.
  - l. Commend committee members publicly.

**CONCLUSION:** Consult the members about the progress of their work assignments. Help them, but do not take their jobs away. Stand ready to help in case of emergencies.