



Effective Meetings

What is an Effective Meeting?

Effective committee meetings are an important component in creating effective committees. Meetings done well enhance performance and enable the committee to communicate so that everyone knows what's going on. The meeting helps keep committee members focused on what's important, make decisions and evaluate how the committee is progressing

Why is having an effective committee important?

For clubs to function successfully it is vital that club committees run regular and effective meetings. With the proper planning and preparation, any meeting can be effective and enjoyable and therefore well worth the time and investment by committee members.

Challenges to having effective meetings

All too often meetings, during and after can be perceived as a waste of time by those invited. This can usually be attributed to a lack of understanding about what the meeting was for. Here is a list of reasons why meetings can fail for you to use as a checklist when planning your next meeting:

- Minutes and reports not sent out in advance
- People turning up unprepared (papers not read)
- Minutes not actioned
- Too much time spent looking back, not forward (20/80 rule)
- No monitoring of performance (of committee & club)
- Individuals pushing own issues
- Low numbers turning up/irregular attendance
- Lack of clarity of decision making process; who is doing what; reporting lines
- Disagreements become personal attacks
- Committee members distancing themselves publicly from committee decisions (disagree in private; unite in public)
- No communication with members
- Breaches of confidentiality



Effective Meetings

How to hold effective meetings

The frequency and format for meetings will not be the same for all clubs, so just make sure that it is right for your club and all that are involved. There are three key stages to consider if you wish to conduct effective committee meetings:

Before the Meeting

- Hold regular meetings throughout the season (Monthly/Bi-Monthly is a good time frame)
- Ensure the meeting is absolutely necessary
- A clear agenda is set and committee members have an input (a long agenda will often prove to be unproductive, so it is best to keep it short and to only relevant items)
- Agenda, previous minutes, date of meeting, location, time and length of meeting are circulated in advance (ideally 7 days) of meeting
- Agree a duration of the meeting and allocate time frames to agenda items - ensure this is adhered to
- Committee members are aware that a quorum is required for the meeting to take place and business to be transacted (The Quorum number is outlined in the Clubs Constitution)

During the Meeting

- The meeting follows Standing Orders/ground rules (See Swim Ireland template for standing orders)
- Approve previous meetings minutes to ensure accuracy (Matters arising from minutes may occur and should only be minor discussions otherwise they should be agenda items)
- Review action points from previous meeting
- Work through agenda items and keep record of time
- Keep detailed minutes and action points throughout the meeting
- Chairperson should keep the meeting on track- put items on agenda for next meeting if you are getting side tracked
- Committee members are aware who are required to make reports and how the report is communicated
- All committee members are willing to take on Club duties, appropriate to their skills / experience
- All committee members are encouraged to contribute to the meetings and treated respectfully
- Review action points and agree responsibility & time frames
- Agree Points of Note and Next Meeting date

After the meeting

- Send out minutes to committee members and remind members who have committed to actions
- Circulate Points of Note to all club members within 7 days
- Committee Members should ensure that information of a sensitive nature is kept confidential within the committee and unite on decisions
- Chairperson should follow up with all members to ensure action points are being followed
- Follow up on non-attendance