

Organizing Chapter Meeting, Planning Agenda, Basic Parliamentary Procedure By Diane Kovach

When developing an agenda using a parliamentary procedure agenda and thinking of what overall outcome one wants to achieve helps in what activities need to occur.

Always start on time. This respects those who show up on time. Reward those who are there on time. Finish on time. Don't let the meeting continue past a certain time limit.

The 30/30/30 model for a meeting- 1st for dinner and socializing, 2nd- business meeting, 3rd for program.

Go over ground rules. This does not need to be done at each meeting but can be brought up when needed. Turn off cell phones. Keep focused on the current topic being discussed. One person talks at a time. Some important ground rules are: participate, focus on the topic, maintain momentum, reach closure, and confidentiality.

Confidentiality is important. Information discussed in the group should be remain confidential. Honor the right of privacy. Members should be supportive rather than judgmental.

Send in advance a sample agenda. It is recommended to give a sample chapter meeting agenda either by e-mail in advance or at the actual meeting.

Chapters using a parliamentary procedure usually follow a fixed order of business at their meetings. A typical example:

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Secretary's report- minutes
4. Treasurer's report
5. Officers' Report
6. Committee Reports
7. Special Orders- important business previously designated for consideration at this meeting
8. Unfinished Business-business left over from previous meeting
9. New Business- introduction of new topics
10. Announcements
11. Adjournment

Everyone is responsible for the success of a meeting. Be a team player and respect each other's ideas. Preparing the agenda in advance can help make a productive meeting by using time wisely, keeping focused on topics, and covering all details that need to be discussed. The location and room set up should be comfortable for all members. Have members participate in the meeting. Plan a balanced program. Have speakers know the time limit for their presentation. Use the talents of members for some of the programs. Keep the meeting moving. Do not allow one

person to take over the discussion. Call on members to give opinions, etc. If members have a part in the agenda, they will be more supportive in coming to the meetings and making the chapter meeting a success. They have part ownership. The meeting belongs to all. It takes time to prepare for a meeting and it will worth it. Meetings should be organized and fun.