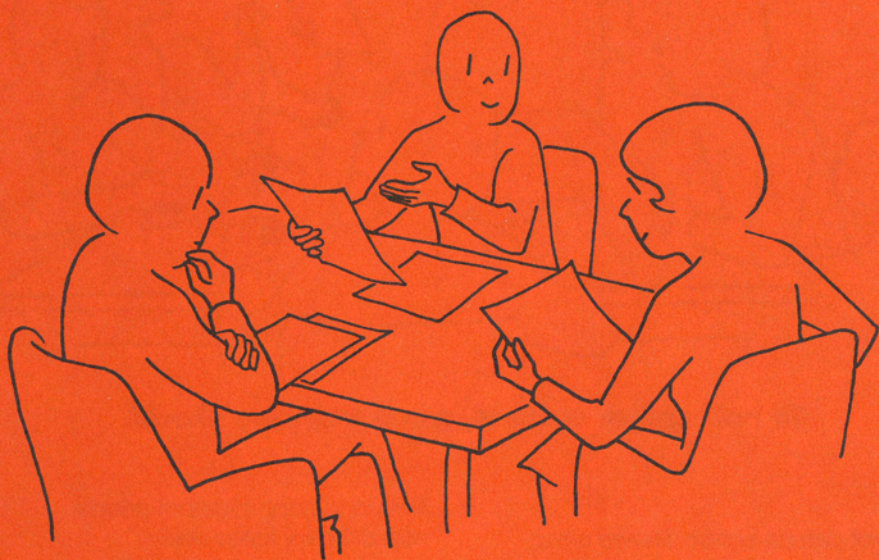


How to have
**SUCCESSFUL
MEETINGS**



**Benevolent and
Protective Order of
Elks of the U.S.A.**

WHAT MAKES A MEETING SUCCESSFUL?

It takes a team of people who actively exchange ideas to accomplish goals.



To help ensure success, group members should:

UNDERSTAND THE MEETING'S PURPOSE

A lot can be accomplished when people have a clear sense of direction. Some of the common goals of meetings are to:

- exchange information
- solve problems
- make decisions
- share concerns
- explain issues.

POOL THEIR KNOWLEDGE

Meetings bring together people with different ideas and experiences. Members have an opportunity and a responsibility to:

- express thoughts
- react to others' ideas
- combine their skills to reach solutions.

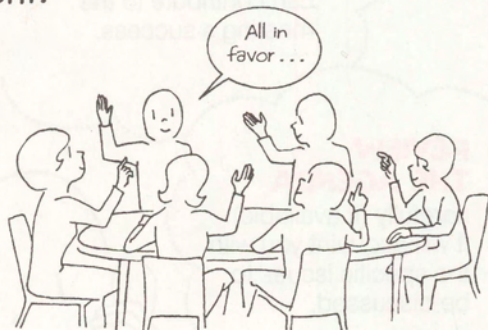
WHY IS MY PARTICIPATION IMPORTANT?

Because your ideas, comments and suggestions can benefit:

YOUR ORGANIZATION

Active and positive participation helps to:

- achieve the goals of the meeting
- promote the group's objectives
- improve teamwork and morale.



YOU

Your involvement can help you polish your skills in:

- communication, because meetings allow you to gain experience in expressing yourself
- leadership, since you can learn a great deal by observing and following the examples of successful group leaders.

Learn how you can become a more effective participant...



Important Notice

Please read: The publisher has taken care in the preparation of this booklet, but the information it contains does not necessarily describe particular situations you may encounter. You should ask a qualified expert or professional for advice about your particular situation.

BE PREPARED

You can help the meeting run smoothly if you do your homework!

KNOW THE PURPOSE

of the meeting so you can determine how you can contribute to the meeting's success.

RESEARCH

any available background information before the meeting so you can be a more knowledgeable, valuable meeting member.

REVIEW THE AGENDA

carefully (if available). It will acquaint you with the specific issues to be discussed.



ASK QUESTIONS

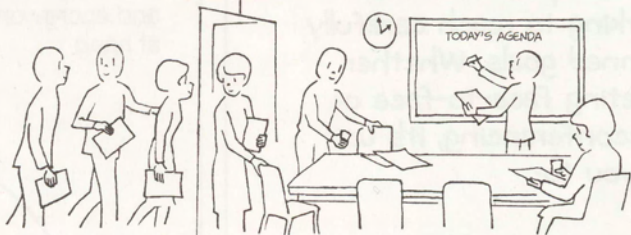
before the meeting about anything you don't understand. Questions show your concern for the meeting's success.

UNDERSTAND

why you've been invited. You're more likely to participate actively if you know what's expected of you.

PRACTICE GOOD MEETING MANNERS

Proper etiquette can help ensure that goals are met according to schedule.

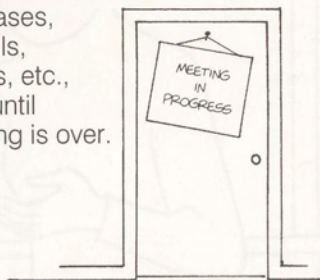


ARRIVE ON TIME

Latecomers may delay the meeting, create confusion or break the flow of progress.

AVOID UNNECESSARY INTERRUPTIONS

In most cases, phone calls, messages, etc., can wait until the meeting is over.



OBSERVE SPECIFIED TIME LIMITS

This will allow others a chance to speak and helps ensure that all issues on the agenda are covered.



REFRAIN FROM DISTRACTIONS

This includes whispering to your neighbor, doodling, shuffling papers, etc.



STAY UNTIL THE END

Important follow-up plans are often made during the final minutes of a meeting.



YOUR PARTICIPATION DOES MAKE A DIFFERENCE

You are part of a team working to reach carefully planned goals. Whether meeting face-to-face or teleconferencing, it's up to you to:

SUPPORT THE GROUP'S EFFORTS

Commitment to the goals of the group is the most important ingredient for a successful meeting. Combine forces with others by focusing your talents and energy on the issues at hand.



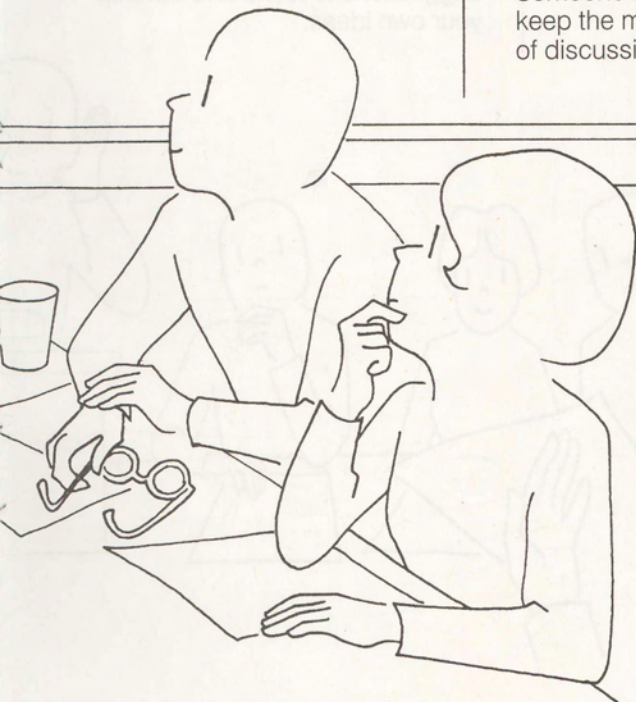
GET INVOLVED IN DISCUSSIONS

You really can influence the direction the meeting will take.

- Speak when you have something worthwhile to say (but keep your remarks to the point and as brief as possible).
- Encourage others to stick to the issues.

BE CREATIVE

Group members usually welcome innovative ideas that are supported by sound reasoning. To help promote an imaginative plan, try to think of answers to possible criticisms before you present your ideas.



EXPRESS YOUR FEELINGS

Differences of opinion expose people to other points of view. Let others know how you feel about their ideas. But be careful that your remarks do not become a personal attack.

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS

Holding back when you have an idea robs the group of your knowledge. It also prevents you from further developing your idea. Have confidence in yourself, and speak up!

TAKE NOTES

Brief, accurate notes can be helpful during and after a meeting. Someone may be appointed to keep the minutes, a formal record of discussion and decisions.

TAKE A POSITIVE APPROACH

Keep an open mind. When a group member shares an idea, look for the value in that idea. Above all, be enthusiastic. Enthusiasm can be contagious!

GOOD COMMUNICATION IS A SKILL WORTH BUILDING

Ideas can be shared more effectively if you keep these basics in mind.

WHEN OTHERS SPEAK

LISTEN CAREFULLY

Each speaker deserves your full attention. But being attentive isn't just a matter of politeness. Careful listening prevents you from missing valuable information and allows you to take accurate notes.

BE COURTEOUS

Treat all members in the same way you'd like them to treat you. Don't interrupt speakers. Never distract others with inappropriate remarks or actions.

RESPECT OPINIONS

Everyone has the right to express an opinion. Avoid making hasty judgments of others' ideas. Allow others to express their ideas completely before you offer comments.

CONSIDER SUGGESTIONS

Don't become defensive when others express ideas that conflict with yours. Instead, use their suggestions to refine and develop your own ideas.



WHEN YOU SPEAK

EXPRESS YOURSELF CLEARLY

Good pronunciation (saying sounds correctly) and enunciation (saying sounds distinctly) will be appreciated by your listeners. Proper volume, tone and speed also enhance delivery. Be sure that you face the group (don't speak when drawing on board, etc.).

SUMMARIZE AS NEEDED

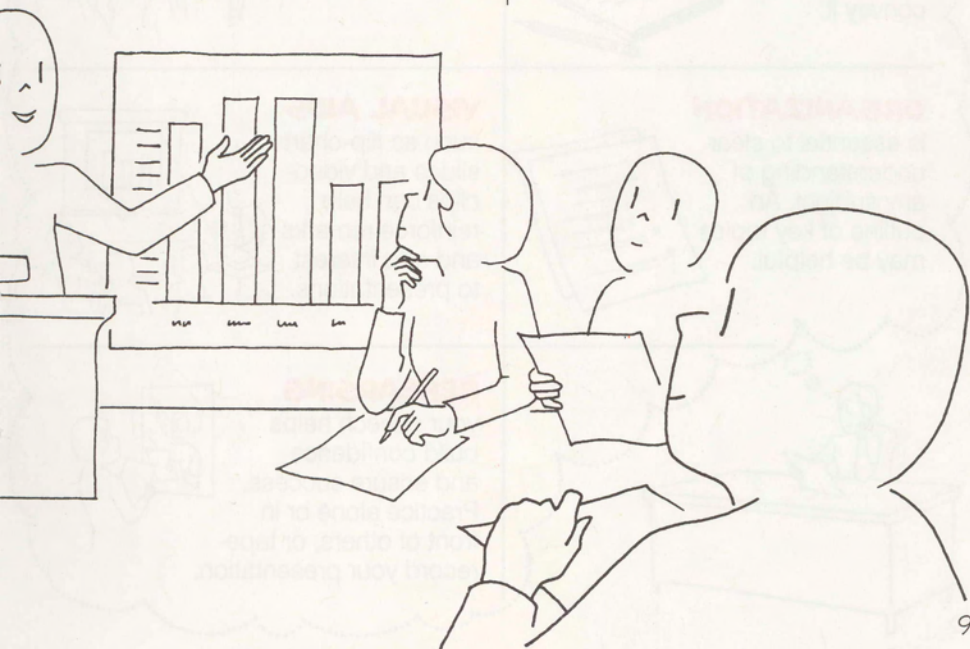
Sometimes your remarks may be long and complex because of the topic of discussion. In such cases, you can help your listeners by summarizing your main points before you finish speaking.

INCLUDE EVERYONE

Make all group members feel that you're speaking to each of them. Never direct your comments only to the person beside or opposite you.

OFFER SUGGESTIONS

Most people welcome good advice. Don't hesitate to make suggestions, but offer them at an appropriate time and in a positive manner.



MAKING AN EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION

This is your special chance to share your knowledge on a subject of importance to the group.

PREPARATION

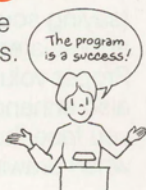
YOUR AUDIENCE

must be considered when you prepare your speech. What they need to know, how much they already know, etc., are important factors.



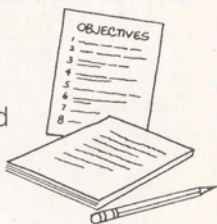
OPENING REMARKS

set the tone and state the purpose of all that follows. Capture the attention of your audience with an interesting beginning.



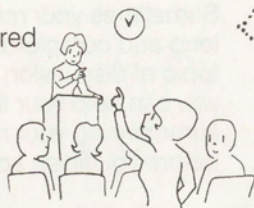
YOUR OBJECTIVES

establish what information you'd like to convey and how you'd like to convey it.



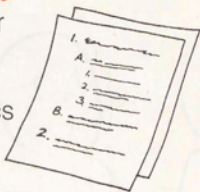
TIME LIMITS

must be considered when preparing a presentation. Reserve time for questions.



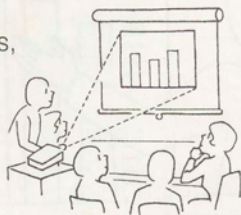
ORGANIZATION

is essential to clear understanding of any subject. An outline of key topics may be helpful.



VISUAL AIDS

such as flip-charts, slides and video-clips can help reinforce remarks and add interest to presentations.



REHEARSING

your speech helps build confidence and ensure success. Practice alone or in front of others, or tape-record your presentation.



DELIVERY

SPEAK NATURALLY

from your notes. Avoid reading or memorizing your speech.

GAUGE YOUR VOLUME

—the audience will lose interest if they can't hear you. When you begin, be sure to ask if everyone in the room can hear you—especially those in the back.

ESTABLISH EYE CONTACT

to help your audience feel involved in what you're saying. Staring at the floor or back wall detracts from your speech.

USE VISUAL AIDS

if appropriate, and make sure everyone can see them. Avoid displaying too much information at one time.

BE AWARE OF NERVOUS HABITS

that can be distracting, such as repetition of certain words, fidgeting, and long pauses.



BRINGING THE MEETING TO A CLOSE

People appreciate meetings that end on time, but no meeting should adjourn without:

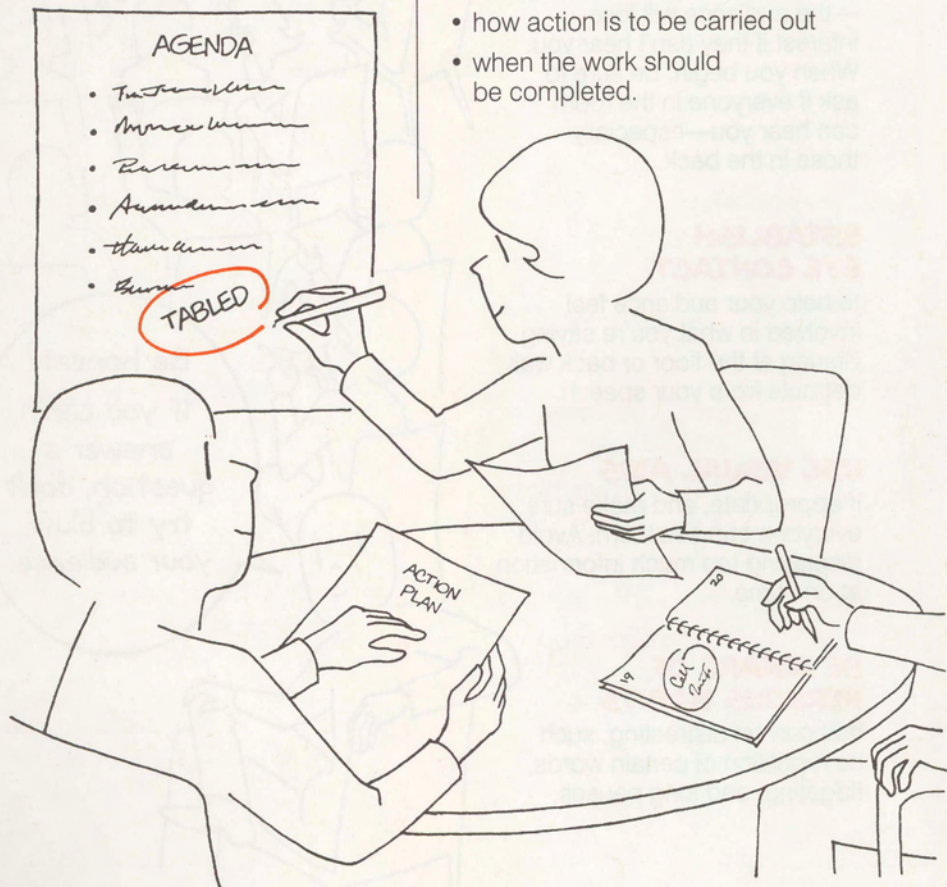
TYING UP ANY LOOSE ENDS

Sometimes it's impossible to cover every item on the agenda. However, avoid hasty decisions that may be regretted later. Instead, table unresolved issues until the next meeting.

FOLLOW-UP ASSIGNMENTS

To help guarantee that action is taken on decisions, it's important to know:

- who is responsible for carrying out the decision
- what is to be done
- how action is to be carried out
- when the work should be completed.



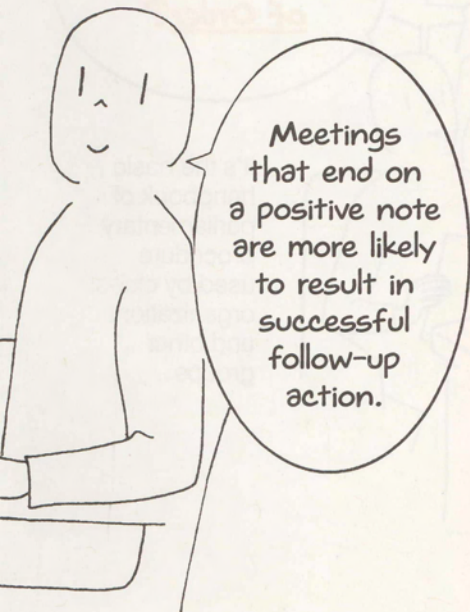
A SUMMARY OF DECISIONS

To help refresh the memories of group members, a quick recap of decisions made and actions to be taken can be helpful. This review can also help prevent confusion later.

PLANNING THE NEXT MEETING

To get a head start on the next meeting, plan now.

- Set the date.
- Select the place.
- Develop a preliminary agenda.



Meetings that end on a positive note are more likely to result in successful follow-up action.

AFTER THE MEETING ENDS,

plans must be put into action.

- ✓ **REVIEW MINUTES**
or memos of the meeting, if they're available.
- ✓ **COMPLETE ANY ASSIGNMENT**
you've been given. Unless you take your responsibility seriously, the time everyone has invested may be wasted.
- ✓ **ASK QUESTIONS**
about anything in the memos or minutes that confuses you. Seek help if you don't understand your assignment.

Now is the time to put ideas to work!

Some questions
and answers about

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

**When is
it used?**

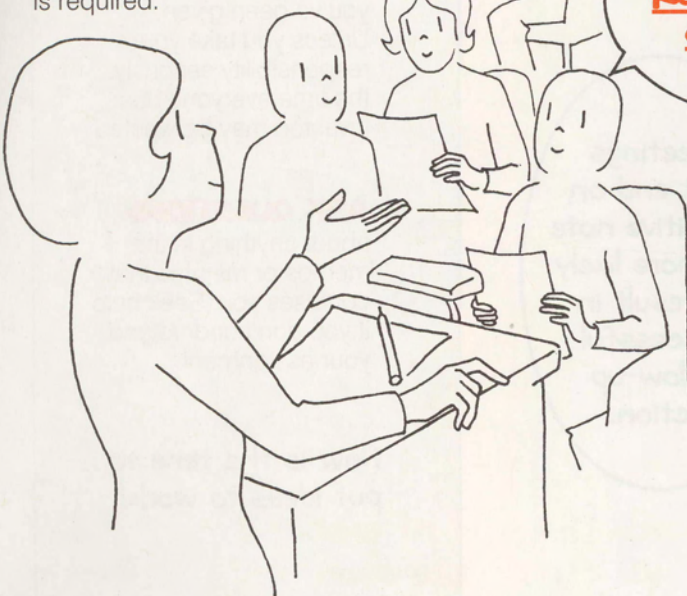
Parliamentary procedure can be adapted to meet the needs of any group or organization. However, it's most useful when a large group meets or when formal debate is required.

**What is
parliamentary
procedure?**

It's a set of rules governing conduct at meetings. The rules protect everyone's right to be heard and allow decisions to be made without confusion.

**What is
Robert's Rules
of Order?**

It's the basic handbook of parliamentary procedure used by clubs, organizations and other groups.



So—

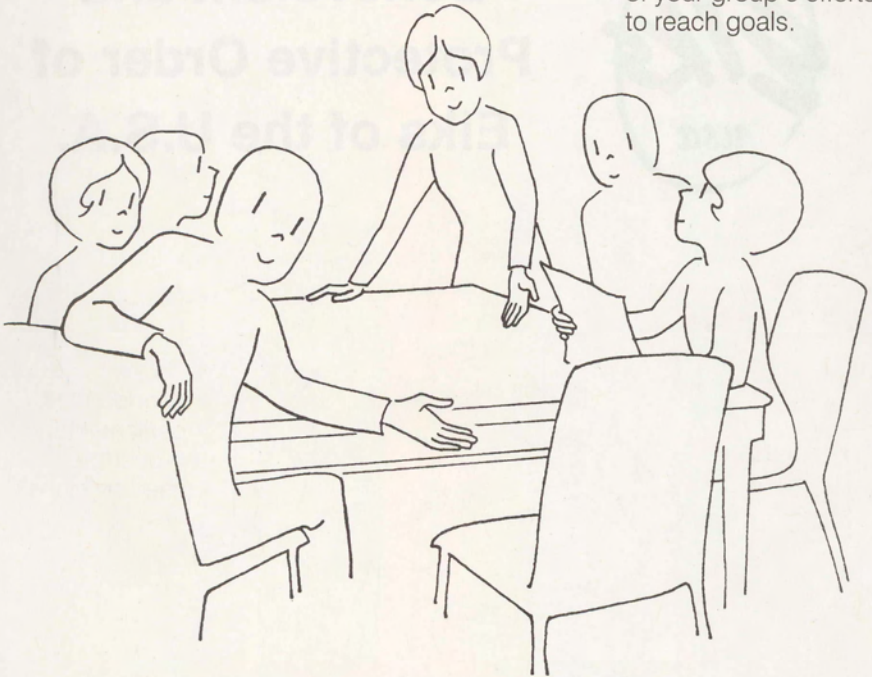
MEETINGS CAN BE THE FOUNDATION FOR SUCCESS

—for you and your organization!

✓ **BE PREPARED**
to do your part.

✓ **BE EFFECTIVE,**
by using good
communication skills.

✓ **BE SUPPORTIVE**
of your group's efforts
to reach goals.



**Become the kind of meeting
member others can count on!**



Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the U.S.A.

