

Creating a Meeting Agenda

A meeting agenda is the document that guides board meetings by setting out a list of topics to discuss and allotting time for discussion. Every meeting agenda should have standard items such as:

A Call to Order: Is used to formally begin the meeting.

Approval of the Agenda: This simply confirms that the agenda is going to be used to direct the board meeting.

Approval of the previous meeting's minutes: Approving the previous meetings minutes confirms that the minutes are an accurate representation of what happened at the meeting. Please read further for more information about the importance of keeping minutes.

Determination of a quorum: Determining a quorum ensures that enough directors are present to make formal and binding decisions for the organization.

Reports from standing committees: These reports keep directors up to speed on the work that various committees are undertaking. Sometimes the reports will be short and provided as a mere update, other times the committee may have issues to discuss with the board. If that is the case, consider allocating time in the agenda for the specific issues.

Report from the Executive Director: The ED's report is a chance for the board to hear about the daily operations of the organization, it is through this report that the board of directors can gauge how the organization is functioning and if policies and plans are being implemented successfully.

Each of these elements help maintain a standardized process at board meetings to allow the board to move on to new business. After the procedural aspects of the agenda are addressed, the board can move on to new business. Anything that needs discussion can be added to the agenda. It is a good idea to assign a time limit for the discussion, and highlight if there is a specific person leading the specific issue.

Once the agenda has been finalized, a copy should be sent out to all directors well in advance of the board meeting. This ensures directors have time to acquaint themselves with the issues and prepare to discuss them.