



TAKING EFFECTIVE MEETING MINUTES

Meeting minutes serve as the official record of an organization's discussions, decisions, and action items. They help members stay informed, track progress between meetings, and provide continuity as leadership transitions from year to year.

There is no single correct format for meeting minutes. Some organizations prefer detailed summaries of discussions, while others focus primarily on decisions and action items. Regardless of the format you choose, meeting minutes should clearly document important outcomes and responsibilities.

When recording meeting minutes, be sure to capture:

- Meeting date, time, and location
- Names of attendees and absent members
- Major topics discussed
- Motions, resolutions, or formal decisions
- Voting results, when applicable
- Action items and the individuals responsible for completing them
- Important deadlines and next steps

The goal of meeting minutes is not to create a word-for-word transcript. Instead, focus on providing a clear and accurate summary of what occurred so members can easily understand the discussion and follow through on commitments.

AFTER THE MEETING

Once the meeting ends, review and finalize your notes as soon as possible while the discussion is still fresh in your mind. Prompt follow-up helps improve accuracy and makes it easier to remember important details.

As you prepare the minutes, keep the following best practices in mind:

- Focus on key discussions, decisions, and action items rather than documenting every detail.
- Ask for clarification during the meeting if something is unclear. It is much easier to verify information in the moment than after the meeting has ended.
- Share draft minutes with organizational leadership for review before distributing them to members.



- Use clear, concise language that accurately reflects the discussion and decisions made.
- Keep the minutes objective and factual. Record what was discussed and decided, not what participants wish they had said afterward.
- Clearly identify action items, deadlines, and the individuals responsible for completing them.
- Distribute approved minutes to members in a timely manner so everyone understands next steps and responsibilities.
- Maintain organized records of meeting minutes. These documents provide valuable organizational history and can help future leaders understand past decisions and actions.

At the next meeting, provide an opportunity for members to review and approve the previous meeting's minutes. Any necessary corrections can be discussed and incorporated before the minutes become part of the organization's official records.

