

Agendas, Meetings and Minutes

Target Audience

All staff required to participate in meetings, for those who want to ensure full participation and commitment from meeting attendees, effectively manage the flow of the meeting, develop skills in effective listening, prepare and plan meetings with clearly defined Agenda items and objectives, take records of meetings, develop minute taking skills and prepare and present a set of Minutes.

Key aims

- Prepare and plan for an efficient meeting where all participants are clear about their role and what is to be achieved.
- Ensure that a well-structured agenda has been created which states clear objectives and purpose of each agenda item.
- Identify what can go wrong in meetings and know what action to take to ensure participants maintain focus and enable the minute taker to record
- Address the difficulties caused by technology in meetings.
- Consider and plan what preparation is needed before and during the meeting
- Understand the role of the Minute Taker, the person chairing and other participants.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the purpose and importance of minutes
- Develop listening skills
- Review different methods of note-taking
- Draft minutes of a meeting

Course Content

Introduction and Overview

- Why hold meetings
- Why meetings may be ineffective
- Chairperson's role, before, during and after the meeting

Purpose and importance of Minutes

- What are Minutes and what they are used for
- Level of importance
- Who needs them - distribution list
- Important factors in their writing
- Role of the Minute Taker

Before the meeting

- Formulation of formal/informal agendas
- Drafting the meeting agenda
- The chairperson's agenda
- Allotting topic times
- Preparing yourself
- Preparing the room

At the meeting

- Taking Minutes
- What to write
- Techniques for speed writing
- Developing your own shorthand
- How to write it
- Listening and Concentration
- Difficulties during a meeting
- Interrupting - the right to do so and how to do it

Writing the minutes

- Grammar - sense
- Reported speech - tenses, third person
- Variety in verbs
- Active and passive voice
- Spelling and punctuation checks
- Techniques for summarising
- Positive language, mood / opinions / jargon / slang
- Action / approved / proposed / seconded

