

CHAPTER 13

UNIT 211 – Organise and support meetings



All businesses get involved in meetings. Some have a wide variety of meetings while others, like small businesses, may only participate in a few meetings.

Meetings can be formal or informal, but if they are to have any significant effect they will need to be recorded. A meeting that is not organised before it happens, structured while it is happening and the main points of agreement recorded and followed up after it has happened, is only a discussion.

Before a meeting can be held it is necessary to decide what sort of meeting it is going to be and what the purpose is. There are all sorts of reasons to hold meetings, for instance:

- **Annual General Meetings** - All companies with shareholders are obliged to hold a meeting at least once a year where all shareholders are invited to attend. Their purpose is to give shareholders the opportunity to question directors and vote on resolutions

- **Extraordinary General Meetings** - Additional meetings can be called if the holders of at least 10% of the shares require them. Their purpose is to discuss issues that have arisen since the last Annual General Meeting that can't wait until the next, e.g. dismissal of CEO or Management
- **Board meetings** - The directors of the company meet regularly to discuss the general running of the organisation
- **Management meetings** - The managers meet to discuss the day-to-day running of the organisation. The purpose of the meeting is to decide how the strategy agreed by the Board is to be implemented
- **Team meetings** - These may include the sales team, the production team, the customer service team, the design team or the accounts team each discussing the issues that affect them directly. At these meetings team leaders will 'cascade' information from the management
- **Staff meetings** - These are held less often than team meetings. Their purpose is to inform all of the staff simultaneously of major issues that will affect everybody
- **Committee meetings** - These range from official public committees such as Parish Councils to things like Social Club committees or the Health and Safety committee within the organisation

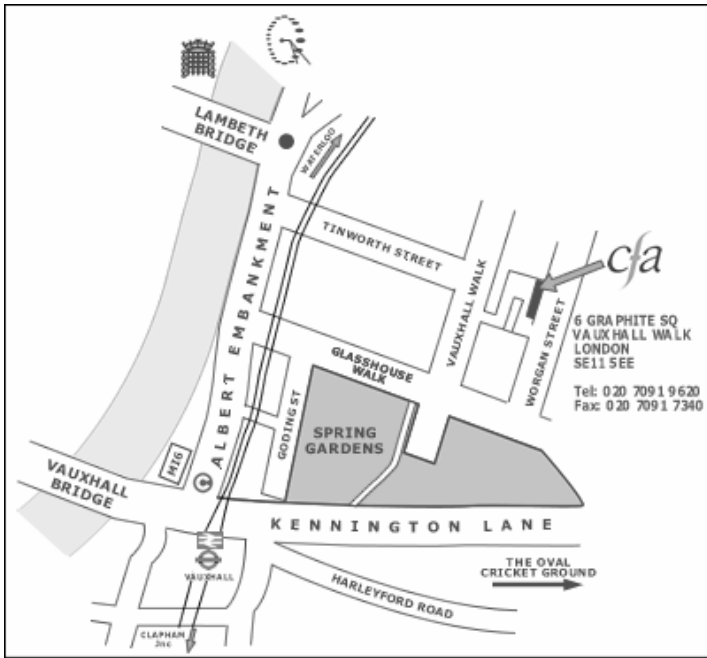
It is not always necessary for all the participants in a meeting to be in the same place. Modern technology allows for video-conferencing, where people can see and hear each other via cameras and microphones, and teleconferencing where any number of people can be connected by telephone simultaneously. These can save travelling time and costs, especially if some of the participants are from overseas. These should be arranged with care as some people find the technology intimidating and the lack of physical interaction can reduce the effectiveness of the meeting.

Meetings require organising, to ensure that all attendees know the time, place and purpose of the meeting. As far in advance of the meeting as possible send out invitations to attend. This will give time for people to diarise the meeting and advise whether or not they are able to attend. They can

also advise if they have any special requirements so that you have plenty of time to make the necessary arrangements.

At this time also send a map showing the location of the meeting, car parks, the nearest railway station together with directions to the venue.

A week before the meeting send an agenda and copies of any meeting papers to those who indicated they would be attending.



The agenda of a meeting sets out in a logical order what is to be discussed at the meeting.

Ask people to confirm their attendance and make a note of replies so that you can prepare the apologies for absence.

Meetings also require recording, so that attendees and others can be sure what future actions were agreed, who is to carry them out, and to what timescales. The record of the meeting is known as the minutes, which must then be circulated to all those who were present and those who sent their apologies.



When organising and supporting meetings you will use the following skills:

- Negotiating
- Planning
- Organising
- Communicating
- Checking
- Interpersonal skills
- Problem solving
- Writing
- Monitoring
- Managing time
- Managing resources
- Evaluating

These skills are covered in chapter 1.

Preparing for meetings

Meetings are held to discuss ideas, identify problems, pass on information, generate interest, reach conclusions or co-ordinate activities. If you are required to arrange a meeting you will need to know:

- Where the meeting is to be held
- When the meeting is to be held
- Who will be attending
- The purpose of the meeting
- What resources are required
- Whether any catering arrangements need to be made
- Any special requirements for attendees

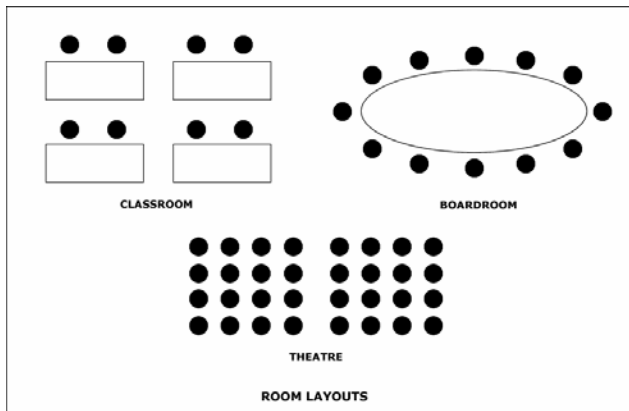
The decision on the venue will depend on factors such as:

- The purpose of the meeting
- The number of attendees
- The seniority of the attendees
- The geographic location of the attendees
- Whether your organisation has in-house facilities for such a meeting
- Potential disruption to the business

Selecting a venue within your own premises or nearby has the advantage of saving travelling time and cost for people based on the premises, as well as the convenience of being able to refer to any information held on the premises. Having decided on the venue you will need to book the meeting room, any necessary equipment and catering requirements. If the venue is outside of the organisation obtain quotes from suitable suppliers and, if possible, contact other people who have used the venue previously. This will give you an idea of the standards you can expect. It is important to ensure that the standard of hospitality and catering is appropriate. Make sure it is clear exactly what the venue is providing. Is equipment and catering included or does that need to be organised separately? Stay in regular contact with the venue so that you can be aware of any potential problems that may arise and inform them of any changes in the number of attendees.

The layout of the room will depend on the purpose of the meeting. There are three common layouts for meeting rooms:

- **Classroom** - This is where a speaker stands in front of an audience seated round a number of tables. This layout is useful if people are to take part in 'workshops'
- **Boardroom** - This is where the whole group sit round a table. If people attending are to discuss ideas, reach conclusions or co-ordinate activities this layout may be most appropriate
- **Theatre** - This is where a speaker stands in front of an audience seated in rows of seats. This layout may prove more suitable if information is to be passed on



Where a screen or flipchart is being used it is essential that everyone can see it. If you are arranging a meeting for a large number of people consider whether microphones are necessary to enable everybody to hear what is being said, but remember not to place speakers where people will be deafened by the sound.

Other equipment you may need to have available includes:

- A laptop, to allow a PowerPoint presentation to be shown
- A multi-media projector
- Whiteboards and dry-wipe markers, for brainstorming sessions
- An easel, to put the flip chart on

Don't forget the small stuff; pencils, paper and maybe a dish of sweets to keep the voice box lubricated.

Laptops and multi-media projectors have virtually replaced the use of overhead projectors in recent times. The opportunities to include sound, animation and video clips, as well as the ease with which the presenter can move from one slide to the next by remote control make overhead projectors obsolete.

Having organised the venue you will need to prepare and agree an agenda and collate meeting papers. In a regular formal meeting the first three items of the agenda are usually:

- Apologies for absence
- The minutes of the last meeting
- Matters arising

The last two items are always:

- Any other business (A.O.B.)
- The date of the next meeting

The actual business of the meeting is sandwiched between the first three and the last two items.

**Social Club Meeting held on 19th May 2004
West Hotel, Pendleton. 2.30pm.**

Agenda

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the last meeting
3. Matters arising
4. Chair's report
5. Treasurer's report
6. Recruitment of Chair discussions
7. A.O.B.
8. Date of the next meeting

Copies of any documents the people attending will need in advance of the meeting will have to be produced and sent to them with the agenda, as this will give them time to read and consider them. If they are to discuss the content of the papers they will need to receive them well before the meeting in order to prepare.

The person chairing the meeting (the Chair) will need to know before the meeting what the desired outcomes are, so ask the attendees to also let you know if there are any major issues that they wish to discuss. In many cases the Chair will have been involved in the initial planning of the meeting and will be well aware of its purpose, but there will be occasions when they will need to be briefed on the particular stances or viewpoints of the attendees.

Also ask people to let you know if they have any special requirements. These may include dietary, mobility, hearing or vision impairment, travel and accommodation. If you are told that anybody has a particular need, liaise with the venue organiser to ensure that it can be met. You will also need to ensure that all Health and Safety and security requirements have been taken into consideration.



What you need to know

The differences between various types of meetings

What five items are on every agenda?

The Chair's needs prior to the meeting

Why do you need replies from attendees confirming their attendance?

The types of equipment that may be needed for a meeting

What are the advantages of holding a meeting on your own premises?

Before arranging a meeting you need to know where it will be, when it will take place, who will attend and the purpose of the meeting

What would be the best room layout for a social club committee meeting?

What attendees will need prior to a meeting

How would you arrange a venue for a national sales conference?

On the day of the meeting

- Arrive well before the start time of the meeting. This will allow you to check that all the arrangements are in place
- Check that the catering is organised for the times that the agenda states it will be available
- Check that all of the equipment is in place and that it works
- If the meeting is not on your premises:
 - make sure you know where the toilets are
 - whether there is a fire alarm test arranged that day
 - where the fire exits are
 - where the assembly point is
 - where lunch is going to be served
 - if there are facilities for smokers
 - if there is disabled access
 - who is responsible for first aid and how to raise the alarm if you need to

Make sure that you have spare copies of the papers you sent prior to the meeting available for those who have lost them, forgotten them or claim never to have received them. There may be other items for discussion at the meeting, which were not included on the agenda. If this happens, make sure you have sufficient copies of relevant papers for the meeting, because these have not been circulated in advance. These should be collated into the order in which they will be discussed and placed in position on the tables. Sorting the papers into order will enable people to follow the agenda more easily and reduce the distraction that searching through piles of paper causes. Make sure everyone has a full set of papers.

When people start to arrive make sure someone is on hand to greet them, sign them in and give them a delegate's badge if necessary, tell them where the cloakroom is, where refreshments can be found, the location of the meeting room and answer any questions they may have.

The level of recording of the meeting will depend on the type of meeting. The more formal the meeting, the more detailed the notes that must be kept. Notes of all meetings, however, must be accurate as they may be used later in a variety of circumstances. The most formal meetings will require

minutes to be taken and signed by the Chair as a true record. There are various ways in which minutes can be taken including:

- **Verbatim** - Everything is recorded word for word
- **Narrative** - A summary of the meeting including discussions and conclusions. Formal resolutions are recorded verbatim
- **Resolution** - A resolution is a motion which has been voted on and passed. Details of the proposer and seconder are recorded with a verbatim recording of the resolution

Minutes are a written record of what took place at a meeting, and whichever form is used they must contain everything of importance. They must be written in a neutral fashion and always in the past tense. For instance, if Mr. McTavish says, "I am pleased to report that sales are up by 25% this year compared to last", the minutes would record, 'Mr. McTavish reported that sales in the current year were 25% up compared to the previous year'. The words 'I' and 'we' are not used in minute taking.

While taking the minutes:

- It is better to write too much than too little
- Record what is said and agreed in the order that it happens, not necessarily in the order the items appeared on the agenda
- Try to persuade the Chair to stick to the agenda
- If you are uncertain what someone has said, ask them to repeat it and read it back to them before you record it to check that you have it right
- Where someone refers to something that has been discussed at a previous meeting, cross-refer this in the minutes
- Record names and times of late arrivals and early departures
- If formal resolutions are being voted on, record the names of the proposer and seconder
- If asked, record details of any opposing view to the majority
- Make sure all agreed actions state who is responsible for carrying them out and the target date
- If necessary record the agreed date, time and place of the next meeting

- Include a list of all attendees
- Ensure that all attendees and those whose apologies for absence were noted receive a copy

Minutes of Social Club Meeting held on 19th May 2004 West Hotel, Pendleton. 2.30pm.

Those present

Bill Banstow	Chair
Mike Willis	Secretary
Pete Axt	Treasurer
Carol Carter	
Brian Williams	
Kevin Bissle	
Janet Hewitt	

Apologies for absence were received from: Michael Ford

Late Arrivals were Kevin Bissle and Janet Hewitt

Minutes of the last meeting were approved.

The Chair reported that discussion with management started with regard to the possibility of using the staff canteen for future events.

The Treasurer reported that there were 7 subscriptions still outstanding. It was agreed that letters be written to the appropriate members advising them that if payment was not received by 6th June their membership would be terminated.

Kevin Bissle proposed that Bill Banstow should remain Chair for a the next 12 month period. Seconded by Janet Hewitt.

Bill Banstow accepted the extension of his period as chair.

A.O.B.

Carol Carter suggested that a staff outing to the seaside in August could be arranged.

It was agreed that she would look into the costings of such an event.

The next meeting will be on 16th June 2004 at 2.30pm at the West Hotel, Pendleton.

As well as taking minutes it will probably be your responsibility to:

- Make sure everybody knows where the toilets are
- What to do in case of a fire alarm
- Where and when refreshments are available

If it is a formal meeting you may need to:

- Advise the Chair on legal issues or matters of convention
- You may have to arrange for the photocopying of papers during the meeting
- Deal with failures of power, equipment or caterers

If the meeting is not being held on your own premises you will need to have checked who to contact in any given set of circumstances. If the fire alarm should sound you will need to guide everyone to a place of safety.

Less formal meetings will still require that notes be taken of the actions agreed action. The item discussed, the outcome or action required and the name of the person or persons responsible for carrying out the action are recorded. The discussions are not recorded.

ITEM No.	ACTION REQUIRED	BY WHOM	BY WHEN
1	New office furniture to be ordered	Bill Welch	30.04.06
2	Year end procedures to be completed	Everybody	28.05.06
3	Office junior to be recruited	Karin Begum	28.05.06
4	Invoicing to be brought up to date	Mark Lennon	28.05.06
5	Filing to be brought up to date	Rachel Starr	30.06.06
6	Quarterly newsletter to be produced	Pete Biggs Samantha Wilson	13.10.06



What you need to know

Which type of minutes are required

Why is it necessary to record late arrivals and early departures?

Who to send copies of the minutes to

What duties other than recording the minutes might you have during the meeting?

What to include in and what to exclude from the minutes

What is meant by the terms 'proposer' and 'seconder'?

The importance of recording who is responsible for carrying out agreed actions and by when

In what circumstances would you record an opposing view to a majority decision?

After the meeting

When you have typed-up the minutes take them to the Chair and ask their approval of the content. Make any amendments that are necessary to ensure that the minutes are an accurate record of the meeting and agreed action points. Distribute the minutes to the attendees and those who submitted apologies for absence as soon as possible and before the agreed deadline. Some organisations have particular ways of highlighting action points to be completed before the next meeting as it is important to ensure everyone understands who's doing what and by when. Don't forget to keep a copy for the file. Check through the action points to see if there were any papers to be forwarded following the meeting and make sure these are enclosed. You may also need to send copies of papers distributed at the meeting to those who submitted their apologies.

**Minutes of Social Club Meeting held on 19th May 2004
West Hotel, Pendleton. 2.30pm.**

1.0 Those present

Bill Banstow	Chair
Mike Willis	Secretary
Pete Axy	Treasurer
Carol Carter	
Brian Williams	
Kevin Bissle	
Janet Hewitt	

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from: Michael Ford

1.2 Late Arrivals were Kevin Bissle and Janet Hewitt

1.3 Minutes of the last meeting were approved

2.0 The Chairman reported that discussions with management had started with regard to the possibility of using the staff canteen for future events

3.0 The Treasurer reported that there were seven subscriptions still outstanding. It was agreed that letters be written to the appropriate members advising them that if payment was not received by 6th June their membership would be terminated

4.0 Kevin Bissle proposed that Bill Banstow should remain Chair for the next 12-month period. Seconded by Janet Hewitt

4.1 Bill Banstow accepted the extension of his period as Chair

5.0 A.O.B.

5.1 Carol Carter suggested that a staff outing to the seaside in August could be arranged

5.2 It was agreed that she would look into the costings of such an event

6.0 The next meeting will be on 16th June 2004 at 2.30pm at the West Hotel, Pendleton.

You may receive requests to alter the contents of the minutes after you have distributed them. These must always be referred to the Chair. If they agree that the amendment will produce a more accurate record of the meeting, you will need to produce an amended set of minutes and circulate those. If the Chair is unwilling to have the minutes amended, you will need to advise the attendee accordingly and they will have to raise the matter at the next meeting.

You may need to diarise the action points so that you can contact the person responsible for taking the actions and check what progress has been made. Where there appears to be a potential problem, you may need to report this to the Chair or ask if there is any assistance that you can give to help achieve the desired result.



What you need to know

Whose approval of the minutes is necessary before they are distributed?

Why is it essential to keep a file copy of the minutes?

The actions to take if you are asked to amend minutes after they have been distributed?

What might you have to send to people who submitted their apologies?

Whose responsibility it is to follow up action points between meetings?

Why is accuracy vital in minute taking?

Whether any documents will need to be distributed to enable action points to be completed?

When should you distribute minutes of meetings?

The efficient organisation and accurate recording of meetings is essential to the effective running of a business. Meetings do not just happen, they require a great deal of work before, during and after the event. You will need to know and be able to spell the names of everybody at the meeting, as well as having at least a passing knowledge of the business being discussed. You must be able to concentrate throughout the meeting, remaining alert and be organised so that you can record what is happening without missing anything.

To be a successful meetings organiser requires the organisational ability of a general and the patience of a saint



Are you ready for assessment?

To achieve this unit of a Level 2 Business & Administration qualification you will need to demonstrate that you are competent in the following:

- Agree the meeting brief
- Organise and confirm the venue, equipment and catering requirements
- Prepare and agree an agenda and meeting papers
- Invite attendees and confirm attendance
- Make sure attendees' needs are met
- Collate and despatch papers for the meeting within agreed timescales
- Produce spare copies of meeting papers
- Arrange the equipment and layout of the room
- Make sure attendees have a full set of papers
- Take accurate notes of the meeting including attendance
- Provide information, advice and support when required
- Produce a record of the meeting
- Seek approval and amend the meeting record as necessary
- Circulate the meeting record to agreed timescales

(Remember that you will need the skills listed at the beginning of this chapter and that these are covered in chapter 1.)

Your Assessor will need you to produce evidence from a variety of sources. If you carry out the activities that follow they will provide some of the evidence for you.

Activity 1

You have been appointed the secretary of your organisation's Social Club. They are holding a committee meeting next Wednesday to discuss future events. Produce an agenda for the meeting and the notice you would send to the committee.

Activity 2

The following action points were recorded at the above Social Club meeting.

Bill Grates is to organise the firework display for November 5th.
Sharon Sloane is to make arrangements for the visit of Father Christmas to the local hospice on Christmas Eve.

Michael Fisher is to purchase the masks for the Halloween Ball.

Victoria Ashman has agreed to hire the Father Christmas outfit for the staff Christmas party.

Brian Graham has offered to arrange the transport home for people attending the New Year's Eve party.

Matthew Christian is going to buy the prizes for the Christmas Party raffle.

As secretary it is your responsibility to follow up the action points. Diarise the actions that you need to take.

Activity 3

Minutes must not be written in the first person and must always be in the past tense. Re-write the following statements to make them acceptable as minutes.

Bill Rich said, "I will have that report ready by Wednesday".

Anthony Banks feels that Wednesday will be too late.

The sales figures were produced yesterday.

It is essential that the work is carried out today.

Tomorrow is the deadline for completing the agreed action.

We have all agreed that the deadline needs to be extended.

Point six on the agenda will be carried forward to the next meeting.

Our prices have not increased over the last twelve months.

Rachel Matthews said, "I will be on holiday when the next meeting is held".

The Treasurer intends to resign at the next meeting.

Activity 4

You have been asked to organise a sales meeting to be held at work. Identify who should be invited to attend, the most suitable location, how long the meeting should last and the agenda items. Calculate the cost of refreshments and list the resources that will be required. Locate a suitable external venue and get quotes for holding the meeting there. Compare the costs of holding the meeting internally and externally.

Activity 5

You have been asked to arrange an all day meeting for 40 people with lunch and coffee/tea included. The purpose is to inform them of a new product that your organisation is about to launch onto the market. Research local venues for the meeting, obtain quotes and suggested room layouts. Two of the attendees are in wheelchairs and one is a vegetarian. Take their needs into account.

Activity 6

Attend a meeting (this could be a team meeting at work, a social club meeting, a meeting at college) and take notes of what is said. Produce minutes from your notes. Ask someone else who attended the meeting to review the minutes and check that you have included all the important points (if there are official minutes produced you could check yours against them).

Remember: While gathering evidence for this unit, evidence **may** be generated for units 110, 201, 202, 209, 210, 212, 213, 214, 216, 219, 220, 221, 222, 224 and 225.