

Section 3
New Concepts in
Meeting Management

Getting On the Same Page

For the 2012-2014 Biennium, International President Lynn McKenzie, has decided to focus on Credibility, Visibility and Leadership as her main goals. This theme is carried throughout her entire stated goal presentation she will present to the body at convention. In accordance, the district goals will include these stated goals and ideally each club should have goals that are in line with International. This maintains cohesiveness throughout the entire organization.

Along those lines, a request has been made that we reintroduce the idea of clubs considering going to two-year terms, if they aren't already, to coincide with Zonta International. If your club is using one year terms, or an alternate schedule, please have a conversation to make sure that still makes sense for your club. These things start sometimes for specific reasons and then are just perpetuated without it really being questioned.

The Building Blocks of Your Club

At least every two years, at the beginning of the new biennium, or whenever something substantial happens, the club bylaws and standing rules should be reviewed and changes made. In October, Zonta International publishes a list of all the changes to the bylaws that were voted on at convention. You can use this list, found at www.zonta.org to update your club bylaws (the club bylaws should mirror ZI) and then present the updated documents to your membership for a vote.

In addition, your club strategic plan should also be reviewed and updated at least annually. You will find a worksheet that will aid you in creating a strategic plan. The idea of this worksheet is to get you thinking about more "nuts and bolts" of each of your goals as opposed to creating a document that isn't "living". You will want to create a list of short term, biennium and long term goals for your club and then utilize this sheet to map out the goals that are in the short and biennium category. Make sure that you are reviewing your goals at a regular interval, each month may not be too often.

Your Meeting Format

When you think about your club meetings what is the first thing that comes to your mind? Long, routine, color by numbers? Today people are exposed to more information than ever. Communication worldwide has increased in every sphere, yet most of our clubs are still operating with the concepts from before the computer age.

We need to think about the time that all of us are spending in face to face meetings. These times should be spent discussing the issues and topics before us, not necessarily approving minutes and other routine things. Consider using a consent agenda for your meetings. This would include your minutes, committee reports and other routine items. These items would be sent by email for example, with the agenda, several days before an upcoming meeting. At the meeting, there would be an opportunity discuss any confusing or unclear areas.

With a consent agenda in place there is more time for your board and your members to discuss more relevant topics. Think about the reason you are having your meeting, what needs to be accomplished. Spend the first minutes of your meeting getting your members engaged and thinking. This will require that you have prepared some on the topic you bring. Make sure that you have enough time to

discuss/debate the topics at hand and that you spend some time playing the devil's advocate. Provoke debate among your members. You might consider asking a few members to present opposing views to yours initially, until people get used to this style of meeting. Every opinion is a valid one and should be heard. An opinion is not a decision, the group needs to agree to disagree!

Remember we always debate in the room and leave unified!

Recording Your Outcomes

Minutes need to be done for all club meetings and board meetings. There are several ways to take minutes. Traditionally, one person is charged with interpreting the meeting and sending minutes. This way is acceptable, but consider options such as in the attached example. These minutes utilize one person collecting the data from multiple sources and sending it out as one document. This has some efficiency such as accurate information coming directly from the chair that produced the information to start with. Find a method that works for your group and provides concise, accurate information for your members as well as a permanent record for your club.

Attendance – how do we improve meeting attendance.

- Send agenda with back-up documents no later than two-weeks before the meeting.
- Use computer disks rather than paper – Recycle at next meeting.
- Call each member the day before and/or the day of the meeting.
- Meetings are no longer than ninety minutes.
- Use outcome agendas and consent agendas.
- Eat and have fun during the meeting.
- Use name plates at every meeting. Mission faces member - name faces out.
- Client testimony or a Learning Opportunity is always a part of the meeting.
- Change locations if you have satellite offices. Change locations if you don't.
- 2 Manuals (one goes with the member one stays with the staff).
- Ask a member or stakeholder to host each meeting.
- Meet every other month.
- Elect good a good chair, if none is available – develop a good chair.
- One meeting each year is celebrating and recognition for staff and clients.
- Invite parents, children or spouses for a meeting especially if near a holiday.
- Use color coded handouts that correspond to the board manual tabs.
- Explain and enforce attendance policy.

Productive Board Meetings

Mission Based Meetings

Primary purpose of each meeting is to make policy level decision that help the org fulfill its mission. "Will doing this help fulfill our mission better than the alternatives that may be available?"

The Presiding Officer

The Chairman sets the tone, the pace, and the process for board meetings. The strongest indicator for successful meetings is selecting the right chairman. Assertive yet accommodating and respect is key.

Frequency

Meeting times depend on many factors. Number is less important than quality. Boards that meet monthly are rarely as effective as those that meet less frequently – the exception to this is an all volunteer organization.

Meeting Cycles

The operations calendar is essential to the regular cycles of work. When the work is planned and dates are decided ahead of time – participation increases and quality work is accomplished in short time.

Preparation

Proper planning is the benchmark for any meeting. If your organization is racing to collate board materials one week before a meeting – then it's time to evaluate and discuss other alternatives.

Consent & Outcome Agendas

Dispensing of routine items makes for more effective meetings. Consent agendas must be presented well in advance and the chairman must always ask if an item needs further review or discussion. Outcome agendas keep the focus and dialogue toward the desired result.

Reports

Prepared, in writing, in advance and circulated. Dialogue is invited but usually not twice.

Proposals – Appendix 1

Too often, proposals for major board action are conceived, constructed, articulated and approved during board meetings. Policy proposals can be issued ahead of time.

Dashboards – Appendix 2

Simple, one-page documents conceived by Lawrence Butler of Board Information Systems and the Cheswick Center. They present a synopsis of vital signs for the org in graphic form including historic comparisons and relationships with budgets and plans.

Policy Compendium

Create a compendium of all policies ever adopted by the board with an index for easy location. It can be electronic and searchable. This is good work for an intern or volunteer. Board members can research past policy and history before presenting new policy.

New Technology

Using email and LCD projectors allows for more productive use of meeting records and management. Make sure your by-laws are updated to reflect current IT uses within your org. Some states may have laws prohibiting use of email for legal voting.

Rules of Order

The by-laws should specify the rules under which the org operates; however, they should also allow or empower the board to use more casual tone as a matter of routine applying Robert's only when necessary.

Meeting Minutes

What was done not what was said. It is the official record and once approved becomes legal documents. Minutes are serious documents regarding serious business and should be worded carefully and written accurately,

Meeting Evaluation – Appendix 3 & 4

Anonymous, written, short evaluations should be gathered at the end of each meeting. Authentic analysis and suggestions for improvements are the purpose for evaluating.

Questions:

- 1. Are board agendas carefully planned to ensure focus on priority areas/issues?**
- 2. Do board members receive sufficient information and written proposals in advance of meetings?**
- 3. Do board members have access to clear and concise information that enables them to understand how well the org is functioning?**
- 4. Is service on the board enjoyable and satisfying?**

BEFORE

Women's Workforce
Board Meeting
February 3, 2000

AGENDA

- I. Call to Order (Chairman)
- II. Approval of Minutes (CEO)
- III. CEO Report
 - a. New resume program
 - b. Update on private sector sponsorship
 - c. Personnel changes
 - d. Review of Five Points Project
 - e. Reunion planning
- IV. Finance Committee Report (Finance Committee Chair)
- V. Presentation: Women's Shelter Director (Staff)
- VI. Uptown Programs (CEO)
- VII. New Business
- VIII. Adjournment

The agenda has no question marks. An agenda without question marks is a true indicator of a meeting that will not properly engage the board.

Minutes and written reports can be included in a "consent agenda". The CEO's time with board members should engage more and report less.

An important presentation should be title properly to indicate its true value. The presenter should be prepared with information as well as presenting the questions/challenges that the research generated. The board members should be encouraged to participate in discussing the questions/challenges.

In many cases, the most important issues are presented late in the agenda. Again, the title gives no indication of the importance or content of the agenda item. The board is often tired or feeling rushed late in a meeting, therefore it would be better to move this towards the beginning of the meeting.

AFTER

Women's Workforce
Board Meeting
February 3, 2000

AGENDA

- I. Call to Order, welcome, overview of agenda (Chairman)
- II. Consent Agenda (Chair)
- III. Outlining the Work of the Up Town Project Task Force (Chair/Task Force Chair)
 - *What are the three critical issues the Task Force should investigate?*
 - *What are the questions the board will need answered to decide the future of the Up Town property and programs?*
 - *POSED QUESTION – Would we purchase the property we currently own, at its present value, to start a program?*
- IV. Finance Committee Report (Finance Committee Chair)
- V. One-minute essay
- VI. Board evaluation
- VII. Adjournment

Women's Workforce Board of Directors Meeting

Revised Agenda Details

Item	Notes for Implementing
Welcome and Overview of Agenda Items (5 minutes)	<p>Give meeting participants a quick overview of the agenda.</p> <p>Note that you have changed the layout of the agenda and briefly explain the new techniques to improve the quality of the board's deliberations.</p> <p>Explain that the board's self-assessment is a new approach to improving board meetings.</p>
Consent Agenda (5 minutes)	When sending the consent agenda, be sure to include a summary of what a consent agenda is, and how it works. Explain that all members must carefully review the items included and can raise questions or concerns at the meeting.
Outlining the Work of the Up Town Project Task Force (75 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background of the issues related to the project • Process for decision-making and deciding. • Important questions for debate in smaller groups. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>What are the three critical issues the Task Force should investigate?</i> 2. <i>What are the questions the board will need answered to decide the future of the Up Town property and programs?</i> 3. <i>POSED QUESTION-Would we purchase the property we currently own, at its present value, to start a program?</i> 	<p>The CEO will refer to the memo discussing the background and discuss briefly why the issue is being brought to the table today.</p> <p>The Chairman will outline the process the board will use to deliberate/discuss/decide the issue; how the decision was made to appoint a task force, and who the members are; TODAY'S WORK- identifying important issues to investigate over time; reassure the board that the task force will return as it develops a solution-before a final recommendation to the board.</p> <p>Have pre-assigned groups (4-6 people max), meet and develop initial ideas in response to questions put forward in the agenda. Groups will have a facilitator and a recorder designated to the group.</p> <p>SILENT START: Before the "work" of the meeting begins, ask each member to write one thought or question they might have on the topic. This will help members get into a "frame of mind" for discussion and help them connect with the topic.</p> <p>Reconvene the groups and have them present ideas and responses. Plenary discussion should revolve around finding common themes.</p> <p>Notes of small groups can be collected by the task force and used to in their critical issue investigations.</p>
Finance Committee Report (15 minutes)	If questions or issues arise during the presentation of the report, use the allotted time to identify key issues and the process that will be used for following up and reporting back. Report back can be before or during the next meeting.

Item	Notes for Implementing
One Minute Essay (1 minute)	At the conclusion of the meeting, ask each member to answer this question on a blank piece of paper (anonymously). "If the discussion continued, what would you ask next?" CEO, Chairman, and/or the Task Force can use the responses to help explore unresolved or unanswered question. It is important that this process be anonymous so it can offer insight to sensitive issues that may not be discussed openly.
Board Evaluation (1 minute) • Use/complete assessment sheet	Use this form anonymously to get "true" feedback. This information will help you see what you may want to improve on for future meetings.

Prep and Meeting Supplies

Pre-meeting:

- Assign small group for "break-out". 4-6 members with a diverse mix of personalities and views.
- Choose recorder and facilitator for each group and explain their roles.
- Ask Task Force members to be open and especially diligent during small group reporting.

Supplies:

- Flip charts and markers for each small group.
- Blank index cards at each seat for use before and after meeting.
- Board Evaluation forms at each seat for use at the end of the meeting.

TIPS FOR ROBUST DISCUSSION DURING MEETINGS

Patrick Lencioni, author of the best-selling book *Death by Meeting* offers insights on how to make meetings more productive and less painful.

1. Know the purpose of your meeting. Is it about solving a tactical, short-term problem, or a critical strategic issue? Are participants meant to brainstorm, debate, offer alternatives, or just sit and listen?

Don't let your meeting devolve into a combination of all of these, leaving people confused about what is going on and what is expected of them.

2. Clarify what is at stake. Do participants understand the price of having a bad meeting? Do they know what could go wrong if bad decisions are made? If not, why should they care?

3. Hook them from the outset. Have you thought about the first 10 minutes of your meeting and how you're going to get people engaged? If you don't tee up your topic and dramatize why it matters, you might as well invite participants to check-out.

4. Set aside enough time. Are you going to be tempted to end the meeting before resolution has been achieved? Contrary to popular wisdom, the mark of a great meeting is not how short it is, or whether it ends on time. The key is whether it ends with clarity and commitment from participants.

5. Provoke conflict. Are your people uncomfortable during meetings and tired at the end? If not, they're probably not mixing it up enough and getting to the bottom of important issues. Conflict shouldn't be personal, but it should be ideologically emotional. Seek out opposing views and ensure that they are completely aired.

These five tips alone can improve the quality of your meetings, both in terms of the experience itself as well as the outcome. And considering the almost universal lethargy and disdain for meetings, they can transform what is now considered a painful problem into a competitive advantage.

Powerful Questions

Anticipation

What is possible?
What if it works out exactly as you want it to?
What is the dream?
What is exciting to you about this?
What is the urge? What does your intuition tell you?

Assessment

What do you make of it?
What do you think is best?
How does it look to you?
How do you feel about it?
What resonates for you?

Clarification

What do you mean?
What does it feel like?
What is the part that is not yet clear?
Can you say more?
What do you want?

Elaboration

Can you tell me more?
What else?
What other ideas/thoughts/feelings do you have about it?

Evaluation

What is the opportunity here? What is the challenge?
How does this fit with your plans/way of life/values?
What do you think that means?
What is your assessment?

Example

What is an example?

For instance?

Like what?
Such as?
What would it look like?

Exploration

What is here that you want to explore?
What part of the situation have you not yet explored?
What other angles can you think of?
What is just one more possibility?
What are your other options?

For Instance

If you could do it over again, what would you do differently?
If it had been you, what would you have done?
How else could a person handle this?
If you could do anything you wanted, what would you do?

Fun as Perspective

What does fun mean to you?
What was humorous about the situation?
How can you make this more fun?
How do you want it to be?
If you were to teach people how to have fun, what would you say?

History

What caused it?
What led up to it?
What have you tried so far?
What do you make of it all?

Implementation

What is the action plan?
What will you have to do to get the job done?
What support do you need to accomplish it?
What will you do?
When will you do it?

Integration

What will you take away from this?
How do you explain this to yourself?
What was the lesson?
How can you make sure you remember what you have learned?
How would you pull all this together?

Learning

If your life depended on taking action, what would you do?
If you had free choice in the matter, what would you do?
If the same thing came up again, what would you do?
If we could wipe the slate clean, what would you do?
If you had it to do over again, what would you do?

Options

What are the possibilities?
If you had your choice, what would you do?
What are possible solutions?
What will happen if you do, and what will happen if you don't?
What options can you create?

Outcomes

What do you want?
What is your desired outcome?
If you got it, what would you have?
How will you know you have reached it?
What would it look like?

Perspective

When you are ninety-five years old, what will you want to say about your life?
What will you think about this five years from now?
How does this relate to your life purpose?
In the bigger scheme of things, how important is this?
So what?

Planning

What do you plan to do about it?
What is your game plan?
What kind of plan do you need to create?
How do you suppose you could improve the situation?
Now what?

Predictions

How do you suppose it will all work out?
What will that get you?
Where will this lead?
What are the chances of success?
What is your prediction?

Resources

What resources do you need to help you decide?
What do you know about it now?
How do you suppose you can find out more about it?
What kind of picture do you have right now?
What resources are available to you?

Starting a Conversation

What's occurred since we last spoke?
What would you like to talk about?
What's new/the latest/the update?
How was your week?
Where are you right now?

Substance

What seems to be the trouble?
What seems to be the main obstacle?
What is stopping you?
What concerns you the most about . . . ?
What do you want?

Summary

What is your conclusion?
How is this working?
How would you describe this?
What do you think this all amounts to?
How would you summarize the effort so far?

Taking Action

What action will you take? And after that?
What will you do? When?
Is this a time for action? What action?
Where do you go from here? When will you do that?
What are your next steps? By what date or time will you complete these steps?

Sample of Board Meeting Minutes
Name of Organization
(Board Meeting Minutes: Month Day, Year)
(time and location)

Board Members: Attendance: 90% YTD: 60%

Giving: \$11,200.00 Goal: \$25,000.00 %: 30%

Present: Bhata Bhattacharia, Jon White Bear, Douglas Carver, Elizabeth Drucker, Pat Kyumoto, Jack Porter, Mary Rifkin and Leslie Zevon

Absent: Melissa Johnson

Quorum present? Yes

Others Present:

Exec. Director: Sheila Swanson

Other: Susan Johns, Consulting Accountant

Proceedings:

- *Meeting called to order* at 7:00 p.m. by Chair, Elizabeth Drucker
- (Last month's) meeting minutes were amended and approved

· *Chief Executive's Report:*

- Addition to report; Recommends that if we are not able to find a new facility by the end of this month, the organization should stay where we are in the current location over the winter. After brief discussion, Board agreed.
- Staff member, Jackson Browne, and Swanson attended the National Practitioner's Network meeting in Atlanta last month and gave a brief extemporaneous presentation. Both are invited back next year to give a longer presentation about our organization. After brief discussion, Board congratulated Swanson and asked her to pass on their congratulations to Browne as well.
- Drucker asserts that our organization must ensure its name is associated with whatever materials are distributed at that practitioner's meeting next year. The organization should generate revenues where possible from the materials, too.
- Swanson mentioned that staff member, Sheila Anderson's husband is ill and in the hospital. MOTION to send a gift to Anderson's husband, expressing the organization's sympathy and support; seconded and passed.

· *Finance Committee report* provided by Chair, Elizabeth Drucker: Additions;

- Drucker explained that consultant, Susan Johns, reviewed the organization's bookkeeping procedures and found them to be satisfactory, in preparation for the upcoming yearly financial audit. Johns recommends that our company ensure the auditor provides a management letter along with the audit financial report.
- - Drucker reviewed highlights, trends and issues from the balance sheet, income statement and cash flow statement. Issues include that high accounts receivables require Finance Committee attention to policies and procedures to ensure our organization receives more payments on time. After brief discussion of the issues and suggestions about how to ensure receiving payments on time, MOTION to accept financial statements; seconded and passed.

· *Governance Committee's report* provided by Chair, Douglas Carver: Additions;

- Carver reminded the Board of the scheduled retreat coming up in three months, and provided a drafted retreat schedule for board review. MOTION to accept the retreat agenda; seconded and passed.
- Carver presented members with a draft of the reworded By-laws paragraph that would allow members to conduct actions over electronic mail. Carver suggested review and a resolution to change the By-laws accordingly. Kyumoto suggested that Swanson first seek legal counsel to verify if the proposed change is consistent with state statute. Swanson agreed to accept this action and notify members of the outcome in the next Board meeting.

· *Other business:*

- Porter noted that he was working with staff member, Jacob Smith, to help develop an information management systems plan, and that two weeks ago he (Porter) had mailed members three resumes from consultants to help with the plan. In the mailing, Porter asked members for their opinions to help select a consultant. Porter asked members for their opinions. (NOTE: Zevon noted that she was also a computer consultant and was concerned about conflict of interest in her Board role regarding this selection, and asked to be ABSTAINED from this selection. Members agreed.) The majority of members agreed on Lease-or-Buy Consultants. MOTION to use Lease-or-Buy Consultants; seconded and passed.

- Swanson announced that she had recently hired a new secretary, Karla Writewell.

· *Assessment of the Meeting:*

-Kyumoto noted that the past three meetings have run over the intended two-hour time slot by half an hour. He asked members to be more mindful and focused during discussions, and suggested that the Governance Chair take an action to identify solutions to this issue. Governance Chair, Carver, agreed.

· Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

· Minutes submitted by Secretary, Bhata Bhattacharia.

Club Strategic Plan Outline

Zonta Club of _____

Date Range: _____

Objective(s): **Credibility, Visibility and Leadership** _____ Multiple pages can be used to include all of the projects each club is doing. Another option may be to use Credibility, visibility and leadership and list only those activities that fall into those categories on that sheet. When planning start with the Outcome that you want to achieve and then completely flesh out the idea. When you finish and the club has approved, please send to Cindy and Shelli.

Start here and work to the left or right. Use bullets and quantify information where possible.

Program Planning Section				Evaluation Section	
Inputs	Activities	Outcomes	Targets or Objectives	Indicators	Methods/Tools
Ingredients needed to conduct the activities and accomplish the outcomes (Examples: participants, staff, volunteers, materials, equipment, \$)	How, or, the methods and actions undertaken to achieve the outcomes	The benefits, changes or improvements that will result from your implemented program or project	Projected level of success or result you hope to achieve	The way change is observed and the data you will collect to measure the progression towards an outcome	The way in which you will collect the indicator data. How?