

# PRESIDENT'S NEWS DIGEST

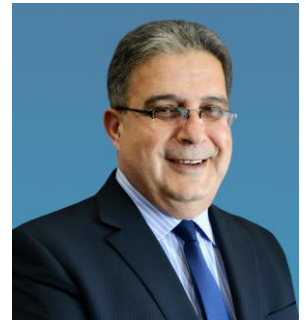
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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to the 46th issue of the 4th volume of the President's News Digest. In this issue of the News Digest, I will address the subject of “**Running Successful Meetings**”.



Running a successful meeting is in part art and in part science. The art is related to make the meeting enjoyable by engaging people who are involved. The science is related to the preparation for the meeting, the conduct of the meeting, and the follow up after the meeting.

**The DIY committee guide proposes the following approach which is really helpful:**

### Before the Meeting

- Plan the agenda with the relevant officers and decide on the order and timing of each item.
- Identify which agenda items are for information, discussion or a decision.
- Be well briefed about each item, and actions taken since the last meeting.
- Ensure all necessary background papers (including the last meeting's minutes) are sent out with the agenda beforehand.
- Check with staff that all relevant practical arrangements have been made, e.g. room layout, visual aids, etc.
- Arrive in good time before the meeting is due to start.

  
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## **During the Meeting**

### **Communicate**

- Start the meeting. Welcome any new members. Make any necessary introductions.
- Receive apologies for absence.
- Check for conflicts of interest on the items on the agenda.
- Ensure that additions or amendments to minutes are recorded.
- Set the scene. State the objectives of the meeting and each item.
- Try to be brief when making a point.

### **Control**

- Maintain control. Set out any time limits.
- Allow flexibility and freedom of expression.
- Keep to the agenda.
- Ensure quorum is present.
- Ensure time is used effectively.
- Ensure that proper minutes are taken.

### **Coax**

- Ensure full participation.
- Draw out quieter members and discourage those who are monopolising the meeting.
- Be prepared to highlight issues that no-one else will, and to be the one who always has to ask the awkward questions.

### **Compare**

- Weigh up contributions impartially.
- All points in favour of a point should be summarised against all points not in favour.

### **Clarify**

- Ensure everyone understands what is being discussed.
- Summarise.
- Ensure that if jargon and abbreviations are used, all present understand them.
- Ensure that decisions are recorded, together with who is going to implement them. It can be useful to record decisions on a flip-chart as they are made.

### **Decision Making**

- Ensure that decisions are taken in the context of the organisations strategy and that they are recorded, together with who is going to implement them.

## Guide

- Remember that above all you are there to guide the meeting.
- Steer members to work harmoniously and purposefully as a team.
- Keep an eye on time.

## At the End of the Meeting

- Summarise decisions taken and action points to be followed up e.g. who's responsible, by when.
- Agree a date for the next meeting - it is usually best to set dates for the year's meetings well in advance.
- Agree what special items will be put on the agenda of the next meeting and what work needs to be done, by whom etc.
- Ensure that the minutes are written up, checked by the Chair and sent out in good time.

A well designed documentation system is essential to store minutes of meetings that are accessed by people with rights to check and monitor progress.

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## References

<https://www.realregulatory.com/reports/documentation-good-documentation-is-the-foundation-of-a-qms/>

<https://www.diycommitteeguide.org/resource/chairing-meetings>

## QUOTE OF THE WEEK

*“Meetings are at the heart of an effective organization, and each meeting is an opportunity to clarify issues, set new directions, sharpen focus, create alignment, and move objectives forward.”*

**Paul Axtell**

*Happy Reading!*