

SETTING A CLUB AGENDA

The most important aspect of a well-run club meeting is organization. As club presidents would agree, having a detailed agenda is critical to a successful meeting. The president of your club should choose to include in the agenda all-important items; however, the president should also limit and shape the agenda so that it is relevant to what is coming up. For example, announcing and having a report on an activity coming in the month of May, may not be an efficient use of club's meeting time in January. The presiding officer must be very careful in choosing what should be included on an agenda. Also, club leaders often feel that their particular project or activity is most important. A tactful club president must make sure that the leader has an adequate opportunity to brief the club on the activities, without consuming the overall agenda.



Below is a typical outline for a dinner type meeting. As a rule of thumb, this meeting anticipates the club gathering for no more than one and one-half hours, including the meal. Most reviews and statistics have shown that if a club meeting is of longer duration, the membership will grow restless. It is the role of the club president to keep meetings timely.

A typical agenda:

7:00 President Promptly Calls Meeting to Order

(Even if members are still mulling around and not all are in their seats)

7:01 Invocation

7:03 Pledge to the Flag

7:04 Welcome and Introduction of Guests

7:07 Sunshine Report

(Report of illnesses, special events in Lions and their families)

7:10 Secretary's Report

(If business is normally conducted only at Board of Director's meeting, the secretary's report should not be included in a full club meeting)

7:14 Meal

(Leader should make sure that he is toward the front of any line of buffet or is served first by wait staff. Only 20 minutes should be left for parties to get served and their meals. Members and guests should be reminded to feel free to finish their meals, but that in the interest of time, the evening's meeting will continue. It is highly inappropriate and insulting to other persons to wait before starting the club program, to make sure the last person has finished his meal. Twenty minutes is adequate time for service and/or buffet line to be complete before the program resumes. This keeps meetings flowing and prevents those who finished first from feeling bored waiting on the last to finish.)

7:34 Introduction of Program

(The introduction of the speaker should be very brief. The speaker's comments are what are important.)

7:37 Program

(Before inviting a person to speak at the club, the program committee should make it perfectly clear that the speaker has no more than 20 minutes to complete their presentation. Making this clear in advance prevents embarrassment of the club president and the speaker. The speaker should be reminded that when the president stands up, his time is finished.)

7:57 President's Appreciation Remarks to Program Presenter

8:00 Tale Twister

(The Tale Twister, just like the speaker, should be given strict instructions as to the amount of time allowed. Effective Tale Twisting is brief and fast paced. Long-winded Tale Twisters that take more than the 10 minutes indicated here only drag meetings on.)

8:10 Business Portion of the Meeting

(This is when committee reports are given and the business of the club is conducted. During this portion of the meeting, the president should take special care to keep reports and business as concise and to the point as possible.)

8:25 President's Wrap Up

(The president should conclude the meeting with a brief recap of important dates and events coming up. The president should avoid restating all of the previous reports. For example, the president might say, "as a friendly reminder, the Health Fair is next weekend; White Cane Day is on April 25; etc.)

8:30 Adjournment

In setting the business portion of the agenda, it is important for the president to ask the following questions:

- What are the items currently on the typical agenda?
- Did the club members surveyed, identify agenda items that they feel are extraneous, and make the meetings boring or too long?
- Do the items on the agenda reflect your club's personality?
- Are the most important, upcoming events put first in the business session so that if time is running out, later events can be dropped from the agenda?

Keeping your agenda as lean as possible is a hard job; however, trimming the time will reward both you and the members of your club. A club president discussing, at Board meetings, the need for brevity can go a long way toward streamlining a meeting.