Leadersources
Baker University
Office of Student Life

Taking minutes

Meeting minutes serve as an important record of keeping track of what is going on in an organization. They are used to show what happened in each meeting, what types of problems/issues were discussed and what further actions need to take place.

Here are four important things to keep in mind while taking minutes:

1. The role of the minute taker – Usually the secretary of an organization is the person taking the minutes but really just depends on what the organization decides on. Some people taking minutes may think that because they are taking minutes they get to sit back and just take the notes, but people taking notes should make sure their voice is being heard since they are a member of the organization as well.

TOP TIP – If you're worried about writing something down when you want to say something, bring a tape recorder and record the meeting so you can listen to it later.

2. Choose your weapon wisely – There are plenty of ways to take minutes and it all depends on how the minute taker is most comfortable. Typing the minutes directly onto a laptop may be what you want to do. Or you may find that writing by hand is more your style. Recording the meeting with a voice recorder may be helpful in case you need to go back later to see exactly how something was worded.

TOP TIP – If you're using a laptop remember the charger in case the battery dies! Also, remember to bring a pen and paper just in case you need a back up!

3. Standard meeting minutes template – Every set of meeting minutes should contain the following things:

- Time, date and location of the meeting
- Type of meeting (executive board, general assembly, etc)
- Members absent and present
- Time the meeting was called to order and by whom
- Approval/Amendments to previous minutes
- Officer/committee reports
- Business completed
- Unfinished business
- Issues that require follow-up and members assigned to follow-up
- Decisions made
- Announcements
- Time of adjournment
- Next meeting
- Name of secretary/recorder

TOP TIP – Most meetings will have an agenda made before the meeting takes place so the organizations minute taker can use that as an outline for their minutes.

4. Check and send – The minute taker should go back and put the finishing touches on the minutes within a few hours of the meeting adjournment so everything is still fresh in their mind. Make sure to edit for spelling and grammatical errors, it may be helpful to send the completed minutes to another executive board member to spell check before you send them to the general assembly.

TOP TIP – Meeting minutes should be distributed to organization members within a few days of the meeting so they have them to read over before the next meeting. The minutes will be approved at the beginning of the next meeting but it is helpful for members to have a longer period of time to read the minutes in case any errors were made by the minute taker.

Adapted from Management for the Rest of Us
http://www.mftrou.com/meeting-minutes.html
and from the University of Kansas
http://www.silc.ku.edu/leaderbits/minutes.pdf