

How to chair a meeting – an overview

Chairing a meeting is about preparation and begins well before the meeting starts. With the experience of chairing meetings in this club, you'll be able to chair any other meeting you're likely to encounter.

A word of warning, taking short cuts and trying to "wing it" usually ends up in a less than satisfactory performance so follow the checklist below to build up your experience.

The Week Before

- Decide what style of meeting (Formal or Informal) you are chairing. (Note: An "Informal Meeting" is by far harder to manage because you don't have the tools of a "Formal Meeting" at your disposal. It is advised that "Informal Meetings" be only attempted by experienced members.)
- Refresh your knowledge of motions and meeting procedures.
- Printout a Blank Meeting Agenda or Download a blank Meeting Agenda from the Rostrum Club 6 website
- Fill in the agenda
- Look for items of "Special Business" such as Inductions or Elections. See the following for how these items need extra preparation.

Induction

- Check to see the Master of Ceremonies has been arranged.
- Print-off an Induction Procedure sheet and become familiar with it. Have it on hand in case the M.C. fails to turn up. You may organise a reserve for such an occurrence.
- Confirm Induction with the President and that New Membership Kit and badge has been arranged.
- Confirm Inductee is aware of arrangements

Election

- Know what the Election Procedure is for the club.
- Have tellers organised with clear instructions.
- Have Ballot Papers prepared.
- Have a copy of a blank Attendance Sheet available for circulation. (See the Membership Officer for a copy.)
- Have copies of the Coach's Feedback Sheet available for coaches. (In case they run short or are asked to coach at short notice.)
- As late as possible, re-check the program for late changes.

Prior the Meeting (30 Minutes)

- Check the room is prepared. (Plates, cutlery, glasses and water have been set out.)
- Set out the Rostrum items. (Dictionary, gavel, gong, clock and banner.)
- Set out badges. (Place on the table nearest the door.)
- Note that, people rostered, including coaches have turned up and start preparing for a substitute if required.

During the Meeting

With the preparation that you have put in by this time, most of your work will be done and chairing the meeting will be quite easy. Only if you've put in the preparation though!

Make sure you clearly invite visitors to participate in the meeting if they wish. (Otherwise, they may be unsure if they can, leaving a less than friendly impression of the Club.)

Check to make sure the following are circulated during the meeting.

- Charity Box.
- Attendance sheet.
- Visitors Book (for first time visitors)
- The Crook Book

After the Meeting

- Check the room for items left behind.
- See that all the Rostrum property is put away in the box and stowed in the next room.
- Finally, go downstairs and have a well earned drink for a job well done!