**Taking Meeting Minutes**

**An Important Skill**

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If your job entails going to meetings, at some point your boss will ask you to take minutes. Meeting minutes serve as an official record. This means you will have to take notes during the meeting and submit a report that provides details of what transpired. This isn't a task reserved for secretaries only. Any person who attends a meeting may be asked to take notes. Accuracy is of the utmost importance. Here are some pointers to help you handle this task with finesse. Find out what to do before, during and after the meeting.

### Before the Meeting

* Choose your recording tool: Decide how you will take your notes, for example pen and paper, laptop computer or tablet, or tape recorder. Make sure you boss doesn't prefer you to use a particular method. It is unlikely, but possible.
* Make sure your tool of choice is in working order and have a backup just in case. If you bring a laptop, for instance, have pen and paper handy as well. You don't want to have to stop the meeting while you search for something to write on if your computer crashes.
* Use the meeting agenda to formulate an outline. Leave some space below each item on it and write your notes there. This will make it easier to take accurate minutes, as long as the person running the meeting sticks to the agenda.

### During the Meeting

* Pass around an attendance sheet and make sure everyone signs in. You will need to include a list of all attendees at the beginning of the document.
* Make sure you know who everyone is. That way you will be able to identify who is speaking and correctly record that information.
* Note the time the meeting begins.
* Don't try to write down every single comment. It is okay to include only the main ideas but be careful not to leave out items with which you disagree. This is no time to flaunt your biases. Remember this is an official account!
* Write down motions, who made them, and the results of votes, if any; you don't need to write down who seconded a motion. Of course, the rules at your organization may differ so verify them first.
* Make note of any motions that must be voted on at future meetings.
* Note the ending time of the meeting.

### After the Meeting

* Type up the minutes as soon as possible after the meeting while everything is still fresh in your mind. If there's an error in your notes or if you have a question, you can get it cleared up quickly by talking to other attendees.
* Include the name of the organization, name of the committee, type of meeting (daily, weekly, monthly, annual, or special) and the purpose of it.
* Provide the time it began and ended.
* Include the list of attendees including a note about who ran the meeting. This is also a good place to indicate that you took the minutes. You can make a note in parentheses after your name. Alternatively, at the end of the document you can sign off by writing "Respectively submitted by," followed by your name.
* Proofread the minutes before you submit them. Ask someone else who attended to look them over as well. He or she will be able to let you know if you accidentally left something out.
* Submit the meeting minutes to the person who ran the meeting unless instructed otherwise