

# Alumni Leader Best Practices

## Conducting a Chapter Meeting

Efficient meetings are the backbone of a successful alumni chapter. They ensure that officers remain aligned, events are planned effectively, and the chapter's momentum is maintained. Follow these guidelines to structure productive and respectful meetings.

### Scheduling and Logistics

Consistency and comfort are the keys to high attendance.

- **Timing:**
  - **Consistency:** Establish a recurring meeting time (e.g., "The first Wednesday of every month"). This helps officers plan their personal schedules around the chapter.
  - **Day & Time:** Weekday evenings are generally the most effective.
  - **Duration:** Respect your volunteers' time. Start exactly on time and limit the meeting to one hour.
- **Location:**
  - Select a convenient, central location that is comfortable and conducive to conversation.
  - **Restaurants:** If meeting at a restaurant, ensure a private room is available. Main dining areas are often too distracting for effective communication.
  - **Homes:** Consider rotating meetings between board members' homes for a more personal and quieter atmosphere.
- **Notice:**
  - Notify officers and directors of the time and place at least two weeks in advance.
  - Use multiple channels (email, social media, and phone calls) to ensure the message is received and to drive attendance.

# Agenda

Never go into a meeting without a plan. Have a printed agenda available to distribute to all attendees. This keeps the conversation focused and minimizes side-bar discussions. Your agenda format can look like:

1. **Roll Call:** Record who is present.
2. **Approval of Minutes:** Review and approve the record of the previous meeting.
3. **Officer Reports:** Updates from leadership.
4. **Committee Reports:** Updates on specific projects (e.g., Scholarship Committee, Event Committee).
5. **Unfinished Business:** Items carried over from previous discussions.
6. **New Business:** New topics for decision-making.
7. **General Discussion:** Open floor for comments or ideas.
8. **Adjournment:** End the meeting formally and on time.

## Content and Purpose

A meeting must serve a distinct purpose to feel valuable to attendees.

- **Review & Plan:**
  - Retrospective: Review recently held events. Ask critical questions: What went right? How can we improve next time?
  - Forward-Looking: distinct planning for upcoming events.
- **The "Light" Agenda Strategy:**
  - If there is little official business to discuss, do not cancel. Instead, pivot the meeting to brainstorming.
  - Use this time to discuss high-level strategy: How can we involve more alumni? How can we expand the group's scope? How do we get more out of current alumni programs?

## Record Keeping

Designate someone to take clear minutes during the "Approval of Minutes," "Reports," and "Business" sections. These records are essential for chapter history and continuity.