

Bend Neighborhood Associations

Training #1: Effective Meeting Management

Resource Packet

Minutes of the Meeting

When taking the minutes of the meeting, you should include:

- The persons attending and their capacity.
- A summary of all items presented and discussed and action to be taken.
- A record of all decisions made, including a record of votes taken.
- The votes on plans made, tasks assigned, etc.
- All items which refer to committees or to future meetings.

(Sample) NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION MEETING MINUTES

NA:	Date:
Board Members:	Quorum Present: Yes No
<input type="checkbox"/> Chair:	<input type="checkbox"/> Treasurer:
<input type="checkbox"/> Vice Chair:	<input type="checkbox"/> Recorder:
<input type="checkbox"/> Secretary:	<input type="checkbox"/> Land Use Chair:
<input type="checkbox"/> NA General Meeting	Membership Present: See sign-in
Meeting Start Time:	Meeting Adjourn Time:
Recorder's Signature:	Date:
Item Discussed:	
Discussion Points and Actions:	
Motion:	
Vote: # yes ____ # no ____ # abstained ____ Motion Passed <input type="checkbox"/> Failed <input type="checkbox"/>	
Item Discussed:	
Discussion Points and Actions:	
Motion:	
Vote: # yes ____ # no ____ # abstained ____ Motion Passed <input type="checkbox"/> Failed <input type="checkbox"/>	
Item Discussed:	
Discussion Points and Actions:	
Motion:	
Vote: # yes ____ # no ____ # abstained ____ Motion Passed <input type="checkbox"/> Failed <input type="checkbox"/>	

Date: March 1, 2007
 Time: 6 to 7:30
 Place: Indianapolis Neighborhood Resource Center
 # of Hours: 1.5

Note: This draft agenda was created by INRC and used as a tool with the Metro Public Safety Awareness Unit, a collaboration between Butler-Tarkington Neighborhood Association, Crown Hill Neighborhood Association and Meridian-Kessler Neighborhood Association. This unit was created as a result of the Butler-Tarkington Neighborhood Association Study Circle on Public Safety.

Time	Result	Approach
6:00	Build Relationships among the group	Meet and Greet/Refreshments/ Music
6:15	Build Relationships among the group	Ice Breaker on getting to know each other better
6:25	History of the Metro Safety Awareness Unit	Give a small presentation and provide handout
6:35	Confirm collaboration among partners	Pass out colored sheets of legal paper. Ask each stakeholder to write down their responsibilities and goals. Ask each participant to talk about what they wrote and tape it up on the wall. Debrief by the group pointing to how a greater impact could be done if we all worked closer together. Ask each stakeholder for their partnership
6:50	Consensus on Mission/Objective	Present group with the start of a mission ask for their input and work on the development
7:05	Generate program ideas	Unveil a prelist of ideas that the group could undertake and ask for their buy in and additional input for new ideas.
7:15	Explore next steps	Explore next steps for the group by soliciting from the group their thoughts and Flip charting responses. Assign task to participants.
7:20	Schedule next meeting	Gain consensus for the best time for as many as possible
7:25	Informal survey	Pre-board Questions for an informal survey and ask participants for their input. Record the result.

Tasks for Next Steps

Based on the outcomes from above, develop a task list for next steps.

Task	Responsibility	Due date
Type up final meeting agenda	Val	2/25
Contact special guest (One-on-one)	Callie	2/15
Send out save the dates/Invitations	Callie	2/20
Put together a marketing strategy (See sect. on marketing)	Callie and Ed	2/20
Start gathering needed materials	Val	2/25
Acquire a facilitator and Co-Facilitator	Val	2/15
Gather materials	Ed	3/1
Refreshments	Ed	3/1

Draft Agenda

Date:

Time:

Place:

of Hours:

Time	Result	Approach

Tasks for Next Steps

Based on the outcomes from above, develop a task list for next steps.

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Type up final meeting agenda		
Contact special guest (One-on-one)		
Send out save the dates/Invitations		
Put together a marketing strategy (See sect. on marketing)		

Meeting Design: As you set up your meeting based on what you want to accomplish, the following are examples of what you can do to get different types of meeting results.

Meeting Result	Type of Work	Approaches	Preparation
Relationships strengthened	People getting to know each other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eating together • Ice Breaker • Meet and greet/mingle • One-on-Ones Intro 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name tags/tents • Food • Gather Materials • Stress toys • Sign in sheet
Information shared	People learning new things	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Story telling • Hand out • Small Presentations to review highlights of a report • Facilitation discussion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose topic • Prepare report • Read report • Practice
Ideas generated	Creative thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post It Notes • Flip chart brainstorming • Draw pictures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather materials • Set context for participants and ask questions
Issues explored	Inquiry and dialogue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paired conversation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set context for participants and ask questions
Solutions developed	Problem solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define Problems • Flip chart brainstorming • Create options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set context for participants and ask questions • Define problems
Decisions made	Making choices together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consensus (rule of thumb) • Dot Voting • Listing topics and allowing for those who have an interest to emerge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn rule of thumb • ID sources of conflict • Set context for participants and ask questions
Commitments made	Negotiating requests/contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dialogue to ID barriers to actions and what is needed to overcome them • Flip chart brainstorming for list of task and solicit from the group support • Listing topics and allowing for those who have an interest to emerge • Follow-up and next steps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set context for participants and ask questions • Solution development • Decisions making • Relationship building
Feedback	Evaluations of the meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questionnaire/survey • Check – in with participants • Exit Poll 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare survey/questionnaire • Post question on flip chart, message board etc. and allow participants to mark their answers

Adapted from Resident Leadership and Facilitation Work Book, Sponsored by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. (Annie E. Casey Foundation, n.d., chap. 11).

Robert's Rules: Parliamentary Procedure for Meetings

Robert's Rules of Order is the standard for facilitating discussions and group decision making. Copies of the rule are available at most bookstores and at the library. Although they may seem long and involved, having an agreed-upon set of rules makes meetings run easier. *Robert's Rules* will help your group have better meetings, not make them more difficult. Your group is free to modify them or find another suitable process that encourages fairness and participation, unless your bylaws state otherwise.



Here are the basic elements of *Robert's Rules*, used by most organizations:

1. **Motion:** To introduce a new piece of business or propose a decision or action, a motion must be made by a group member ("I move that..."). A *second* motion must then also be made (raise your hand and say, "I second it."). After limited discussion, the group then votes on the motion. A majority vote is required for the motion to pass (or quorum as specified in your bylaws).
2. **Postpone Indefinitely:** This tactic is used to kill a motion. When passed, the motion cannot be reintroduced at that meeting. It may be brought up again at a later date. This is made as a motion ("I move to postpone indefinitely..."). A second is required. A majority vote is required to postpone the motion under consideration.
3. **Amend:** This is the process used to change a motion under consideration. Perhaps you like the idea proposed, but not exactly as offered. Raise your hand and make the following motion: "I move to amend the motion on the floor." This also requires a second. After the motion to amend is seconded, a majority vote is needed to decide whether the amendment is accepted. Then a vote is taken on the amended motion. In some organizations, a "friendly amendment" is made. If the person who made the original motion agrees with the suggested changes, the amended motion may be voted on without a separate vote to approve the amendment.

4. **Commit:** This is used to place a motion in committee. It requires a second. A majority vote must rule to carry it. At the next meeting, the committee is required to prepare a report on the motion committed. If an appropriate committee exists, the motion goes to that committee. If not, a new committee is established.
5. **Question:** To end a debate immediately, the *question* is called (say "I call the question") and needs a second. A vote is held immediately (no further discussion is allowed). A two-thirds vote is required for passage. If it is passed, the motion on the floor is voted on immediately.
6. **Table:** To table a discussion is to lay aside the business at hand in such a manner that it will be considered later in the meeting or at another time ("I make a motion to table this discussion until the next meeting. In the meantime, we will get more information so we can better discuss the issue."). A second is needed and a majority vote required to table the item being discussed.
7. **Adjourn:** A motion is made to end the meeting. A second is required. A majority vote is then required for the meeting to be adjourned (ended).
8. **Note:** If more than one motion is proposed, the most recent takes precedent over the ones preceding it. For example if #6, a motion to table the discussion, is proposed, it must be voted on before #3, a motion to amend, can be decided.

In a smaller meeting, like a committee or board meeting, often only four motions are used:

- To introduce (a motion);
- To change a motion (amend);
- To adopt (accept a report without discussion);
- To adjourn (end the meeting).

Remember, these processes are designed to ensure that everyone has a chance to participate and to share ideas in an orderly manner. Parliamentary procedure should not be used to prevent discussion of important issues.

ROBERT'S RULES FOR SMALL BOARDS

Robert's Rules of Order is the most effective tool to ensure efficient, civil, and effective meetings. However, sometimes the formality of Robert's Rules isn't necessary. For small board meetings it may not make sense to follow (the sometimes tedious) formal parliamentary procedure. Under Robert's Rules a "small" board is 12 individuals or less.

Robert's Rules recognizes that small boards may want to operate in a more relaxed and informal setting. Small boards may opt to use the "Informal Procedure for Small Boards" described in Robert's Rules, 10th Ed., p. 469-71. Here are the key differences between the formal and informal procedures:

1. Board members do not have to stand or be recognized by the chair in order to speak or make motions.
2. Motions need not be seconded.
3. A board member may speak any number of times on a question, and motions to close or limit debate are generally not permitted.
4. A motion does not have to be pending in order to discuss a subject informally.
5. Votes can be taken initially by a show of hands.
6. If a proposal is perfectly clear to everyone it may be voted on even though no formal motion has been made.
7. In putting questions to a vote, the chairman need not stand.
8. The chairman can participate in debate just as any other board member.

So, for small and informal board meetings it may make sense to use the informal procedures. If a majority of the board agrees to "opt-in" to the small board procedures, reflect that in the minutes and proceed under the informal procedures.

Roberts Rule (in full): <http://www.robertsrules.com/faq.html>

<http://www.rulesonline.com/index.html>

Source: Community Association Law Group <http://calaw.attorney/roberts-rules-for-small-boards/>

Speaking and Listening

The two things you do most at any given meeting are speaking or listening to others speak. Both are important skills that everyone involved in group work should master. They are key elements for successful meetings.

Speaking

People who are the most respected members of a group are often also the best speakers. This does not mean they are the most educated. They are, however, able to get an idea across to a group of people without dominating the meeting or rambling on and on.

Here are tips to help you improve your group speaking ability:

Know what you want to say. The secret to being a good speaker, whether it is part of an on-the-spot group discussion or a prepared speech, is knowing the point you want to convey. If you do not know what it is you are trying to say, surely the rest of the group will not know either! Clearly outline your ideas before you speak. Jot down your main points on a piece of paper.

Keep it short. No matter what kind of speech you are making, keep it short and to the point. People tend to listen to you if you make your point and stop. People who go on and on bore others and are not effective speakers.

Speak clearly. Don't mumble. Speak strongly and with confidence. If you speak as if you believe in yourself, others will too.

Practice. If you have to make a presentation to the group, try practicing in front of your mirror at home before the meeting.

Be concise. Don't try to jam too many ideas into one speech. Limit your points to no more than three per speech.

Make eye contact. Make eye contact with people as you speak. Don't talk to the floor.

Avoid distractions. Words like "um," "ah," "kinda," and "you know" detract from the real message. Also, avoid physical distractions like playing with your hair or glasses, or jangling your keys. Don't cover your mouth with your hand.

Listening

Listening to others has become a forgotten art.

However, a successful neighborhood organizer knows how to really listen to others' concerns - not just the words being spoken, but what those words mean. This is a skill that takes practice and hard work.

Don't get so caught up in your own ideas that you dismiss what someone else is saying without really listening.

The following guidelines will help you to become a better listener.

- **Listen for the unfamiliar.** You may just think you have heard it all before.
- **Learn to concentrate.** Do not let boredom get to you.
- **Rephrase important points** in your own words.
- **Be fair** when you disagree.
- **Pay attention** to details.
- **Shun preconceived ideas.**
- **Consider the source** of what you hear.
- **Listen unemotionally.**
- **Want to listen.** Do not let your eyes or ears wander.
- **Do not interrupt.** Hear a person out.
- **Avoid getting hung up on words.** If you are not clear on terms being used, ask the speaker to define them.
- **Ask clarifying questions such as:**
 - Do you mean...?
 - Are you saying that...?
 - Could you be more specific...?
- **Avoid endless discussions** or arguments about unsolvable items.

Evaluate Your Meetings

To improve the quality of your meetings (and ultimately the effectiveness of your neighborhood association), it is a good idea to evaluate what happened at the conclusion of your meeting.

An evaluation is simply a way to get people to say how well they think the meeting was conducted. In other words, were the tasks you set out to accomplish finished in an orderly and productive manner? Will people come back and participate again?

When you ask people to evaluate a meeting, listen to what they are saying and incorporate their ideas in future meetings, such as asking members how to improve the meetings and then not attempting to make the change as suggested. Even if everyone agrees on how to make improvements, don't be surprised if it takes time to change old habits.

A few simple ways to evaluate the meeting:

Oral Evaluation: Go around the room and ask everyone to comment.

Written Questionnaire: Prepare a simple questionnaire that you pass out at the conclusion of the meeting. Have everyone complete the form, and don't forget to bring pencils. A sample meeting evaluation form follows on the next page for your use.

Plus/Delta: Use a white board or flip chart and capture 'what worked' in one column, and 'what we want to change' in another column

Neighborhood Meeting Evaluation

Date _____

Name of Member

Phone number or e-mail address

Thank you for attending our neighborhood meeting. We appreciate knowing how well we have met your needs and expectations, and thank you for your candid evaluation. Please let us know what you thought about our meeting by checking the appropriate boxes in the categories below. We encourage you to write specific comments provided at the bottom of the page.

Program	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory</i>	<i>Not Applicable</i>
▪ Length	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Packet materials (if provided)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Audio/visual materials (if available)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Content	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments _____

Meeting Discussions

▪ How was information conveyed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ How was participation encouraged?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ How was the response to questions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ How did the meeting follow the agenda?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments _____

Volunteering

____ Yes! Please contact me. I am interested in helping our Neighborhood Association.
I am interested in the following:

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone tree | <input type="checkbox"/> Fliers and notices | <input type="checkbox"/> E-mail services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Programs | <input type="checkbox"/> Contacting businesses | <input type="checkbox"/> Committees |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Making cookies for meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> Hosting coffee | <input type="checkbox"/> Working on a project |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | | |

My special skills and interests are _____

Overall Program Quality

What did you like most about this meeting?

How can our meetings be improved?

MEETING SITUATION SOLUTIONS

1. Dominating the Discussion:

A person talks too often, too long, or too loud, making it difficult for others to participate.

Stop the person, thank him or her and say you would like to hear from someone else; call attention to the agenda and timeframes; break eye contact; move away from the person; stop giving him or her focused attention; move closer and closer to the person, maintaining eye contact; get in front of him or her.

The problematic behavior will start to stand out (even to the person).

Summarize what the person has said and move to someone else; give the person a time limit; before the discussion starts, pose a standard for the length of comments. For example, "Let's hear from a few people for no more than 2 minutes each."

Propose a ground rule that asks people to monitor their airtime, explain that for some this means talking less, for others, it means talking more.

2. Inserting Personal Agendas

A person continually inserts a concern a disagreement, or an alternative or additional agenda item.

Ask the person how what he or she is saying relates to the current agenda item, record the point, thank the person and move on; ask the person what he or she wants the group to do with the input; give the person a time limit.

3. Repeating the Same Point Over And Over

A member of the group keeps repeating the same thing.

Acknowledge the importance of the point and the person's passion, advocacy, or determination; demonstrate that he or she has been heard and the point recorded; explain how and when the point will be addressed; ask directly if the person can "let it go for now;" give the person a final time-limited opportunity to make the point.

4. Talking Off The Subject

A member's talking is irrelevant to the group's task or out of sequence with the agenda.

Ask them to relate what they are saying to the current agenda; ask if the group can come back to their point and record it on a parking lot sheet; ask others if they have anything to add to what the person said; stop them, tell them it is not appropriate now; bring it up later under a different part of the agenda.

5. Having Side Conversations

There are people making private comments to one another.

Invite them to share what is being said; stop the conversation, be quiet, and look at the people talking; ask them to stop, ask if they would please join the group; move closer to the people having the side conversation; repeat the topic under discussion and ask if

everyone can focus on having just one conversation at a time; point out that the whispering and talking is distracting.

6. Being Constantly Negative, Antagonistic, or Presenting Hostile Demeanor.

Some members are constantly naysayers, doubters and cynics. Nothing is OK and nothing will work.

Acknowledge their points of view; make a special point of thoroughly paraphrasing their view the first couple of times they speak; stick very close to their exact wording; point out the negative pattern; ask if there is any part of the work that they feel good about; ask for their opinions about what is needed; record the opinions; ask the group to respond.

7. Interrupting Others

People are cutting one another off or jumping into a conversation too soon.

Enforce any related ground rule; stop the interrupter and ask him or her to wait while the group allows the speaker to complete his thought or point; ask people who feel impatient to write down their thoughts rather than blurt them out; when your group has nine or more members, establish a hand-raising rule; be neutral and consistent, do not allow some to interrupt but not others.

8. Attacking, Criticizing, or Picking an Argument

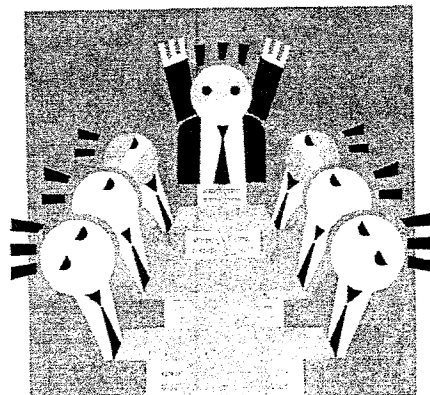
Some people are going after other members, the speaker or the facilitator.

Describe, non-judgmentally, what the person is doing; ask if the criticism or judgment (attack) is based on something that has occurred at the meeting; stop any argument; ask for and record a statement of each position; engage the other group members in discussing their positions; ask the person what the group could do to respond to his or her concern.

9. Clowning

Sometimes a person may overuse humor, act silly, or joke about everything.

These are usually attention-getting behaviors if they are regular and patterned; ignore the behavior and the person; ask the person to stop; describe what is going on and point out its distracting quality; talk to the person privately, after the meeting or during a break; if the person is really disrupting the meeting, take a break; talk to him or her; come back with a structure and focus on the agenda.



Facilitator Interventions *(continued)*

General Approach	Ideas of what to say or do
<i>Maintain/regain focus</i>	Groups get off track and sometimes multiple conversations are going on. "Wait a minute, one person at a time. Sally first and then Don..." "It really helps if we're all having the same conversation..." "Let's get back on the agenda..." (POINT to poster version)
<i>Echo back questions</i>	Don't answer questions for the group (at least not right away). Group: "What are you going to do with these ideas?" Facilitator: "What themes do you hear your neighbors expressing?" Group: "Why are we even talking about this?" Facilitator: "Who can answer that question?" Group: "Where do we start?" Facilitator: "What do you think is the best place to start?"
<i>Play dumb</i>	Take ownership when things go awry with a process. "I'm confused, I thought we were going to be doing X and you seem to be doing Y, did I misunderstand?"
<i>Dismiss and redirect</i>	When comments aren't relevant to the topic at hand. "Hold that though until we get to the next agenda item." "I didn't know that, can we discuss it more at the next meeting?" "Good idea. Let me capture that on the 'other issues' sheet."
<i>Checking out your observations</i>	Scan the group's body language for clues on how things are going. ASK! "I sense it's time for a little break to get that blood moving to our brains again. What do you say?" "A couple people look perplexed, do we need to stop and clarify the proposal?" "Mary, I don't recall you speaking on the topic. Is there something you think we're missing?"
<i>State the obvious</i>	Sometimes identifying a destructive behavior is enough. "You're not letting John finish what he's saying." "I think you're trying to force a decision before the group is ready." "My sense is there's something you're not saying."
<i>Make agreements explicit</i>	Never assume you have agreement unless you check in with the group first. "Everybody agree?" "Let's see some head nods around the table." "Are there any objections?" "Anyone have anything to add before we move on?"
<i>Avoid process battles</i>	Although you've spend hours developing a process, others may have a different idea. "Your idea is an interesting one, which way does the group want to proceed?"
<i>Enforce process agreements</i>	Once you've got agreement on the process, you need to ensure its integrity while it's in effect. "Hey, we agreed to brainstorm. Evaluating ideas comes later." "Sorry, Carol. We agreed we'd only talk for 3 minutes each."

Facilitator Interventions

General Approach	Ideas of what to say or do
<i>Encourage participation</i>	Sometimes it's hard to get conversation started or to have people elaborate on their opinion.
	"Please, David, won't you get us started on this topic?" "I'm not sure I understand your idea, would you say more?" For an ongoing group, this is something you can do after the meeting in preparation for the next one. Check in with those who didn't participate. "Thanks so much for coming. I hope next time you'll feel more comfortable joining in the dialogue. Let me know if I can help that in any way."
<i>Don't be defensive</i>	If you're challenged, accept the criticism, thank the person for their observation, and check in with the group.
	"Oh, you think I'm pushing too hard? Thanks for bringing it up. Do others of you feel that way? OK, let's talk about where to go from here." (If scribing comments) "I'm sorry I didn't capture what you said correctly. Please, tell me how to edit what I've got."
<i>Discourage those meeting hogs</i>	Some people just can't stop talking . . . There are things to say:
	"Sorry to interrupt you, John, but I think you've gotten your point across. Let's hear from some of the other people here tonight." "Sally, I hear your anger around this issue. I want to check in with the rest of the group to learn if their experiences are similar." "I'm sorry to be 'the heavy' here, but we've only got 5 more minutes for this topic on the agenda and I can see there are other people who want to weigh in on the topic."
	There are things to do.
	I've moved so I'm close to the person talking, even put my hand on their shoulder, as a way to get them to stop. Call for a break. Talk to the person one on one after the meeting and share your observations so it doesn't happen next time. Point out that a person loses influence if they are too dominant.
<i>Don't talk too much</i>	Every moment the facilitator takes is a moment the group's work is not being done. Be succinct.
	Silence is a motivator for others to speak. Don't jump in too soon!
<i>End the meeting on time</i>	Move agenda items to the next meeting.
	Summarize and say "thank you" and let people go home. You need to be true to the time commitment you've asked others to make or, over time, they will find reasons to not come at all.
<i>Use your body language</i>	Actions really do speak louder than words.
	Move to "center stage" if you need to gain control of the group. Hold up your hand to "stop" interruptions.
<i>Avoid process battles</i>	Although you've spend hours developing a process, others may have a different idea.
	"Your idea is an interesting one, which way does the group want to proceed?"
<i>Show enthusiasm!</i>	Groups will take a cue from your optimism...
	Be energetic, attentive and encouraging.

Additional Resources and Links

Indianapolis Neighborhood Resource Center

Their Community Organizer's Workbook is excellent!

<http://www.inrc.org/toolkit>

Information about the Saguaro Project on Civic Engagement

<http://www.bettertogether.org>

Neighborhoods USA (NUSA)

This national organization of neighborhood associations, and government partners holds an annual conference. Associate membership is free!

<http://www.nusa.org>

Elements of Thriving Neighborhoods

This site has been under development for a number of years but it has some interesting ideas about what makes the physical design of spaces support social aspects of neighborhoods. Based on Christopher Alexander's A Pattern Language.

<http://www.livingneighborhoods.org/ht-0/bln-exp.htm>

The Co-Intelligence Institute

This site includes hundreds of articles and references describing proven methods, innovative models, practical visions and the theoretical frameworks that weave them all together.

<http://www.co-intelligence.org/index.html>

The Community Toolbox

Many good suggestions, tips, and tools on community organizing. Applicable broadly, and geared toward community health initiatives.

<http://ctb.ku.edu/en/tablecontents/index.aspx>

The Center for What Works

See "Community organizing" outcome measures.

<http://www.whatworks.org>

Good Group Decisions

Tips, videos and handouts on meeting facilitation and decision making

<http://www.craigfreshley.com/>

JWN Guide to Meetings: Understand your neighborhood charter and bylaws

<http://jwneugene.org/documents/JWNGuideToMeetings.pdf>