Meeting In a Box

**Purpose**
What is Meeting in a Box (MIB), anyway?
MIB helps experienced and inexperienced leaders run an effective meeting with volunteers,

**Goal**
What does MIB do for me?
MIB helps leaders have an effective meeting which makes the best use of everyone’s time.

**Preparation**
How does MIB help me get ready for meetings?
Have these items confirmed/completed, before each meeting:

1) Venue
   a. Make sure the address, directions, parking, RTD, ADA and any quirks about the venue are known, communicated and available to all attendees.
      i. Quirk EX: parking on the street in front of the venue is by permit but the side streets are fine.
   b. Verify the weekday and weekend contact for the building facilities staff
   c. If this is a new venue or you haven’t been there in a few months, make an appointment to see it, just to make sure nothing has changed
      i. If the venue has to change for whatever reason send two notifications:
         1. Advise the venue will change
         2. Advise the new venue when the location is known
      a. This helps people plan ahead and feel included

2) Purpose
   a. Why is this meeting happening?
      i. Is it needed?
      ii. Would an email be better?

3) Remote attendance
   a. Will this meeting be available via social or other media?

4) Social
   a. Is there time before and after the meeting for folks to socialize
      i. If not, say why and publish where everyone is meeting before/after
      ii. If yes, make sure there’s at least a beverage and snack

5) Confirm with all presenters
   a. Make sure all presenters are attending and know how to reach you on meeting day. Publish presenter’s contact info in the agenda (save time).
   b. Make sure you have a flexible agenda, in case a presenter is late or early

6) Send the agenda 24-36 hours in advance
   a. If sent too early the meeting may be forgotten or de-prioritized
   b. Make sure to publish the agenda on Instagram, Facebook the day of the meeting and use Twitter for a reminder (link to Instagram or Facebook agenda)
Meeting
It’s Meeting day – now what do I do?

1) Timed agenda
   a. Call to order and review the meeting purpose
      i. This gets people engaged right away and reminds everyone why we’re here
   b. Start on time but always be hospitable to those who are late
   c. Cover ground rules
      i. EX: “Lots to cover so we will have
         1. ___ minutes for questions
         2. Briefly review the agenda
         3. Thank you for taking time to be here today!”

2) Helpful tips
   i. Give everyone equal but lean amounts of time for questions
      1. EX: If someone is rambling, ask them to repeat the question
   ii. Allocate proper time for all parts of what needs to be discussed
      1. Don’t forget time for introduction, speaker, and questions.
   iii. Focus on the agenda, not the people (don’t let things get personal)
      1. Let people know before they are out of time
      2. If someone is rambling or disruptive, note the time and move forward.
         a. EX: “Thank you _____ for that question, it’s 10:35 and we need to
            move to our next topic”
      3. Use a smartphone app or the like to keep time and signal when it’s to
         move on.
   iv. Meeting management (constituents, elected officials, candidates)
      1. Elected officials have quickly changing schedules, be ready for someone
         to show early, late, or not at all.
      2. People seeking election will show up early and stay after the meeting
      3. Make meetings 120-minutes maximum but 90-minutes is preferred
      4. A recommended speaker presentation/Q&A duration is 20-minutes total
         a. Make sure you’re welcoming and inclusive but don’t let any
            elected official or candidate take over the meeting.
      5. If you have a consistently disruptive team member, ask them why
         a. They may want to help or they may just need to be heard - help
            them understand how they can be of better service
         b. EX: I notice you have multiple questions for our presenters, would
            you be interested in emailing them to us in advance and maybe
            the presenter can incorporate them into the presentation?
         c. Reiterate that we all want everyone to have time to speak
Meeting In a Box

Sample Agenda
How do I pull this all together?

Meeting Title
Meeting Location
Ways to attend (leave out if in-person only meeting)
Meeting Date

Meeting Purpose
Meeting Goal (if it's a sub-committee or special session of a larger meeting)

Agenda
1) Call to order & review meeting purpose 9:00
2) Introductions and/or attendance 9:03
3) Review ground rules and agenda (briefly) 9:05
4) Topic A 9:07
5) Topic B 9:17
6) Speaker A 9:32
7) Speaker B 9:47
8) Overall questions about the meeting
9) Announcements (encourage sharing helpful ideas)
10) Action Item Review
11) Final note
   a. Always end the meeting on a positive note, even if it's just to say 'thank you for your valuable time and contributions this evening” it helps people feel better about the meeting, especially if it was contentious or ran long.
12) Adjourn
Meeting Follow-up

1) Meeting Chair or delegate:
   a. If meeting leaders are available after the meeting, great, or put these items in email:
      i. Suggest topics/speakers for the next meeting or ask for ideas
      ii. Reiterate commitments made during the meeting
      iii. Share anything that didn’t seem right or successful, ask for feedback
      iv. Ask for feedback on the meeting – what did/didn’t work
      v. Ask for help with anything outstanding
     vi. Advise if the meeting was a success
        1. What to continue
        2. What needs work
     vii. Make note of attendees and behavior, put out feelers if attendance is low and/or
      if the attendees seemed disconnected
   b. Confirm the venue for the next meeting
   c. Send thank you emails to presenters and any coordination staff who helped
   d. If known, email presenters you’d like to see at the next meeting or follow-up with
      presenters who have already been requested.

Additional Tips

Anything else I should keep in mind?

   a. Smile when you start and end the meeting
   b. Have good quality snacks and beverages
   c. Be fair, be confident, be respectful
   d. Have a sense of humor and have fun
   e. Don’t forget that we are all volunteers
   f. Be more concerned with being respectful than with being too serious
   g. Delegate often to folks who do things better than you
   h. Ask for help
   i. Offer to help
   j. Share praise openly
   k. Share concerns or criticisms privately - after you’ve slept on it
   l. Don’t be afraid to try something new
   m. Reach out to other people in the organization if you’re stuck/have a question
   n. Attend other meetings to find out what others are doing that does/does not work
   o. Substitute at least one meeting/year for a party that is inclusive of everyone