

Effective Committee Participation



Maureen Chenoweth

Bay Area 3 Representative, 4CS

Transfer Work Group Co-Chair

October 13, 2011



Questions about Committees

- Is the committee efficient?
- Is it effective?
- Does it accomplish its goals?
- Does everyone participate in discussions?
- Who really makes the decisions?
 - Chair? Management? Loudest?



Good Meetings Take Work

- Commitment by chair & members
- Pre-meeting preparation & planning
- Active meeting participation
- Post-meeting action & follow-up



Commitment

- Understand the committee
- Understand your role
- Commit your time, abilities, & energy



Understand the Committee

- Purpose
- Authority
- Reporting structure
- Composition
- Procedures & ground rules
- Duration



Understand Your Role

- Your purpose & constituency
- Your authority
- Your reporting structure
- Your natural allies
- Your strategies for participation
- Your term



Make the Commitment

- Your time
- Your abilities
- Your energy



Pre-Meeting Preparation

- Review previous meeting notes
- Read or anticipate agenda
- Research subject matter
- Talk to previous representatives
- Consult constituent group
- Contact other committee members
- Gather & prepare resources



Active Meeting Participation

- Attend every meeting
- Arrive on time or early
- Stay until the meeting has ended
- Listen carefully to all speakers
- Take good notes



Active Meeting Participation

- Ask & answer questions
- Challenge positions, not people
- Represent your constituency
- Honor confidentiality of constituents
- Be concise & on-topic
- Silence implies assent or agreement
- Everyone on committee has right to be heard



Post-Meeting Follow-Up

- Honor commitments: Take action
- Complete and file notes
- Report to constituency
- Perform additional research
- Communicate with committee members & constituents



Taking Good Notes

- Purpose
- What to record
- Records to keep



Purpose of Taking Notes

- For your personal use
- To make reports to constituents
- A reminder of tasks to complete
- A record of committee progress
- A record of committee decisions or recommendations
- A written record of bargaining subjects



What to Record

- Date, time, & place of the meeting
- Who attended, who didn't
- Action taken by the committee
- Recommendations made
- Task assignments & who's responsible
- Any discussion of bargaining subjects
(who said what, when, & who's present)



Records to Keep

- Meeting agendas & notices
- Reference materials, subcommittee reports & recommendations
- Financial information
- Your notes & the meeting minutes
- Projects under the committee's purview
- Calendars & timelines
- Committee member contact info
- Subcommittee members, tasks, & timelines



Collecting Constituent Input

- Your constituents' views, not yours
- Ask the group after delivering report
- Talk to group members in person
- Poll members by e-mail, mail, or phone



Reporting to Constituents

- Use format preferred by constituents
- Be timely
- Describe significant committee discussions
- Include committee decisions & recommendations
- Explain input expected from constituency
- List future agenda items & timelines



Questions?

- Maureen Chenoweth
650-949-7235
- chenowethmaureen@foothill.edu