



ID 13934 LEVEL 3 – 4 CREDITS

**LEARNER GUIDE
MEETINGS AND MINUTE TAKING**

Contents

Learner Guide Introduction.....	4
1.1 - The Advantages of a Well Constructed Agenda	7
1.2 - Matters on Agenda Appear in A Logical and Systematical Order.....	8
1.3 - Sources of Agenda Matters Are Identified and Explained	10
1.4 - An Agenda Is Produced in The Required Format and Time Frame	11
2.1 - Types of Minutes Are Identified and Explained	14
2.2 - The Importance of Accurate Recording and Producing of Minutes	15
2.3 - The Distribution List Is Described.....	16
2.4 - Methods of Distributing Minutes	17
2.5 - The Reasons for Distributing Minutes Promptly	17
3.1 - Resources Required for Minute Taking Are Identified, Listed and Explained...	19
3.2 - Items to Be Included in Minutes of Meeting	21
3.3 - Attendees to Meeting Are Identified	22
3.4 - The Characteristics of Good Minutes Are Identified and Explained	23
3.5 - Minutes Are Concise and Accurate and Reflect Proceedings	25
3.6 - Minutes Are Produced and Distributed in Required Format and Time Frame..	26

Learner Information:

Details	Please Complete this Section
Name & Surname:	
Organisation:	
Unit/Dept:	
Facilitator Name:	
Date Started:	
Date of Completion:	

Copyright

All rights reserved. The copyright of this document, its previous editions and any annexures thereto, is protected and expressly reserved. No part of this document may be reproduced, stored in a retrievable system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without the prior permission.

Learner Guide Introduction

About the Learner Guide...	This Learner Guide provides a comprehensive overview of the Plan and prepare meeting communications, and forms part of a series of Learner Guides that have been developed for Plan and prepare meeting communications programmed at NQF Level 3, worth 4 credits. The series of Learner Guides are conceptualized in modular format and developed Plan and prepare meeting communications programmed at NQF Level 3, worth 4 credits. They are designed to improve the skills and knowledge of learners, and thus enabling them to effectively and efficiently complete specific tasks. Learners are required to attend training workshops as a group or as specified by their organisation. These workshops are presented in modules, and conducted by a qualified facilitator.
Purpose	The purpose of this Learner Guide is to provide learners with the necessary knowledge related to Plan and prepare meeting communications
Outcomes	The person credited with this Unit Standard is able to identify and manage the resolution of personal conflict between persons or parties. The main focus will be on the workplace although the same principles can be used elsewhere. The qualifying learner is capable of: • Demonstrating an understanding of the agenda of meetings • Explaining the purpose and objective of minutes of meetings • Taking minutes of meetings
Assessment Criteria	The only way to establish whether a learner is competent and has accomplished the specific outcomes is through an

	assessment process. Assessment involves collecting and interpreting evidence about the learner's ability to perform a task. This guide may include assessments in the form of activities, assignments, tasks or projects, as well as workplace practical tasks. Learners are required to perform tasks on the job to collect enough and appropriate evidence for their portfolio of evidence, proof signed by their supervisor that the tasks were performed successfully.
To qualify	To qualify and receive credits towards the learning program, a registered assessor will conduct an evaluation and assessment of the learner's portfolio of evidence and competency
Range of Learning	This describes the situation and circumstance in which competence must be demonstrated and the parameters in which learners operate
Responsibility	The responsibility of learning rest with the learner, so: • Be proactive and ask questions, • Seek assistance and help from your facilitators, if required.

MEETINGS AND MINUTE TAKING

UNIT STANDARD NUMBER	:	13934
LEVEL ON THE NQF	:	3
CREDITS	:	4
FIELD	:	Business, Commerce and Mgt Studies
SUB FIELD	:	Office Administration

PURPOSE:

The person credited with this Unit Standard is able to identify and manage the resolution of personal conflict between persons or parties. The main focus will be on the workplace although the same principles can be used elsewhere.

The qualifying learner is capable of:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the agenda of meetings
- Explain the purpose and objective of minutes of meetings
- Take minutes of meetings

LEARNING ASSUMED TO BE IN PLACE:

- Learners will have demonstrated competence in communication at NQF level 2 or equivalent.

Learner Signature & Today's Date: _____

SESSION 1 - DEMONSTRATE AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE AGENDA OF MEETINGS

Specific Outcomes

- The advantages of a well-constructed agenda are explained.
- Matters on agenda appear in a logical and systematical order.
- Sources of agenda matters are identified and explained.
- An agenda is produced in the required format and time frame.

1.1 - The Advantages of a Well Constructed Agenda

The agenda is document that is circulated in advance to all prospective meeting participants and which serves the following purposes:

- Notice of meeting- The agenda serves as a notice of meeting if it is sent out to meeting participants in advance.
- List of items/topics - The agenda is a list of topics that will be discussed. The agenda enables participants to prepare in advance for the topics so that they can make a more valuable contribution.
- Prioritise meeting discussions - Topics that are of greatest importance should be placed first on the agenda. In this way the agenda prioritizes meeting discussion time.
- Briefs meeting participants - If the agenda includes items with which are unfamiliar to the meeting's participants, the agenda item should be followed by some brief information as to what the item is about.



- Limits discussion – The agenda helps the meeting Chairperson to make best use of the time available. The agenda may have an amount of time stated for each item. Otherwise, some topics may receive too much time and others too little.

According to a study conducted by Verizon Business, meetings are the number 1 time waster in the workplace. They are often unorganized, have no purpose and go off-topic. It's also no mistake that one of the reasons of meeting being time wasters is that most of these meetings are missing a clear meeting agenda. Meeting objectives give adults a reason to meet. If there is no clear objective, there's no point in the meeting. This objective should outline exactly why you are holding a meeting and what you hope to accomplish as a result.

1.2 - Matters on Agenda Appear in A Logical and Systematical Order

An **agenda** is much more than a list of things to be dealt with at a meeting. An agenda is a meeting program designed to enable all important and relevant points to be dealt with in good order and good time. An agenda is also a form of courtesy. It informs the chairperson and participants of the purpose of the meeting. This gives them time to prepare for the tasks, and enables them to make a meaningful contribution.

Benefits of an accurate and complete agenda is that it will:

- Provide a logical guide for business and discussion
- Bring harmony and efficiency to a meeting
- Help restrain participants from speaking out of turn
- Inform participants of responsibility for agenda items

Sequencing the agenda - A formal agenda schedule is commonly used because it is practical and efficient. However, you may be required to alter the sequence to include specific items such as those which arise from the previous minutes or general business.

There is a variety of approaches to sequencing an agenda, but in any case, the order requires careful and logical planning. The approach you take also depends on the purpose of your meeting and how well you know the participants; for example, if part of your purpose is to build team spirit and unite your members, it may be better to begin with the items that will foster teamwork, then move onto the more difficult and potentially divisive items. It will depend on the mood of participants.



Sometimes you may put items that require minimal discussion at the start of the meeting. Groups often work better when they can move from simple to more complex items

in a meeting. However, if you are running out of time and have placed decisions which require a lot of discussion and effort at the end of the agenda, the pressure may cause tempers to flare and hasty, ineffective decisions may be made. Participants may be fresher at the start of a meeting or after a coffee break. Once you become familiar with your participants' working style, the task of sequencing the items for discussion or action will be easier.

The agenda needs to be checked to ensure that all participants have been included, sufficient time has been allocated per topic or participant and the correct venue has been stipulated. The agenda needs to be checked for accuracy and completeness, otherwise we may have the wrong attendees being invited or wrong times sent out, thereby creating confusion.

1.3 - Sources of Agenda Matters Are Identified and Explained

Agenda matter can include a variety of items depending on what the meeting is about. These are the most common that you will find and you would then add specific matters such as “punctuality of employees,” “project delays,” etc.:

- **Who is required to attend this particular meeting?** The participants needed to be in attendance the actual meeting or in the meeting via Zoom, Google hang-outs, Outlook, etc. Keep track of this in a calendar app.
- **The items that will be discussed.** This is the information, components or the action items that will be directed to your team. What details need consideration to complete a successful goal or purpose the team is working toward?
- **How long will you allow each piece of information to be discussed** before a decision or vote? Estimate and determine the amount of time you will take for the group to discuss each item. Stick to this timeframe no matter what.
- **A date and time for the meeting** -- sharing your calendar. Have an absolute date and time and never deviate. Use a scheduling tool like Outlook Calendar can eliminate lengthy email threads. Keep suggestions and details to a minimum. All that's required is when, where, and type of meeting to schedule.
- **A convenient stable location for participants / attendees.** Ensure all the participants and the rest of the team on virtual all fit the agenda aspects comfortably in relation to the location. If you need to show a PowerPoint presentation then you'll need the right equipment or venue to display the presentation for both your local and your virtual team at the same time. If your meeting is outside of your office -- consider a neutral location that can be accessed easily for each participant whether local or virtual.
- **Pre-work for the meeting.** This includes any documents, data, or reading that will be discussed during the meeting. Attach these to the meeting agenda so that attendees can look them over in advance.

1.4 - An Agenda Is Produced in The Required Format and Time Frame

Here are some guidelines of how to create an agenda:

- 1) **Create your meeting agenda 3 days in advance.** Follow a process, whether it's sent through email or printed and distributed, make sure everyone on your team knows what to expect. Sending it in advanced ensures that attendees have ample time to prepare or read through any notes they will need before the meeting and raises flags if the objective doesn't match their expectations.
- 2) **Start with the simple details.** What time it should start? (end time is determined after agenda topics are set). Who should be attending? The place or dial-in information for accessing the meeting.
- 3) **The Meeting Objective.** Before you start writing an agenda what is the goal of this meeting? If asked why you are meeting, the objective should answer this in no more than 2 sentences. Once that goal is established, priorities the list of topics from most important to least (to ensure the most important pieces get accomplished).
- 4) **Time per Topic.** Let the content dictate how long each topic should take. Don't fall into the trap of overscheduling time per topic. Example: Introductions, 2 minutes). People tend to schedule time-based on the automatic 30-minute time block in their default calendar even if it could be done in 15 minutes or requires 45 minutes. Let the content dictate time.
- 5) **Keep the agenda to less than 5 topics.** No one wants to spend 2 hours in a meeting. Long agendas seem daunting and often don't get read.



- 6) **Include any other pertinent information for the meeting.** Example: @Stephen will be taking meeting minutes.

Role of participants in meetings other than the Chairperson, attend the meeting not just to complete the quorum. They have also some responsibilities and can make some positive contribution there. The participants can play important roles in making the meeting and its proceedings worthwhile. Whoever is the participant of the meeting must take necessary preparation before attending the meeting. In taking preparation the following points should be considered:

- Reading the agenda of the meeting and taking preparation on the points where he can make valuable contribution.
- Every participant should read carefully the notice of the meeting and other related documents in order to find the background information of the meeting.
- Arranging the necessary visual aids if needed
- If the participant is a newer one in delivering speech in the meeting, he should practice it at home.
- Observing the other members: In this stage, characteristics, taste, liking, disliking, attitude, feelings, the way of speaking and reaction etc. of other participants should be observed keenly. An understanding of strengths and weaknesses of other participants of the meeting enables a person to device the most effective way of dealing with them.
- Speaking at the most appropriate time: It is the norms of the meeting to speak at the most appropriate time. A number of good speeches go to waste simply because they are not well timed. Generally, it is recommended to speak at the beginning of the point if the speaker has sufficient preparation on that point.
- Control of anger: In presenting the own speech and hearing the speeches of others, the members should control their tempers, annoyances, angers, emotions, excitements etc.
- Flexible and accommodating attitude: The members in the meeting must have an attitude to honor the opinions and outlooks of others. They should be flexible and

accommodating in offering floor to others and also in hearing the speeches of others. The members should remember that flat opposition only triggers off angry reactions.

- Not to show lecturing patronizing and condemning attitude: In delivering the meeting none should show lecturing, advising and patronizing attitude in speech or deliver speech to pinch others or condemn others. Such attitude creates bad impression about the speaker.
- Not to make lengthy speech: No member should make his speech lengthy. Lengthy speech of one may deprive others from delivering their speech.
- Abiding by the instructions of the chairperson: Every meeting is presided over by



a chairperson. The participants of the meeting should abide by the instructions of the chairperson. They should take their seats put their signatures on the attendance sheet, cast votes and deliver speech as per the instructions of the chairperson.

SESSION 2 - EXPLAIN THE PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE OF MINUTES OF MEETINGS

Specific Outcomes

- Types of Minutes Are Identified and Explained
- The Importance of Accurate Recording and Producing of Minutes
- The Distribution List Is Described
- Methods of Distributing Minutes
- The Reasons for Distributing Minutes Promptly

2.1 - Types of Minutes Are Identified and Explained

There are three standard types of minutes of meetings. They are: action, discussion, and verbatim.

- 1) **Action minutes** - the most popular type of minutes of meetings is action minutes.

This type of minute which is otherwise known as decision only minutes includes only the decisions reached and the actions to be taken, not including the discussion involved in making the decisions. The action minutes provide an executive overview of decisions within a meeting. Action minutes are often required in meetings such as board, councils or hearing meetings. It has an informal style and can be written as bullet points as they are only circulated internally. Often the minute taker also takes part in the meeting in discussions. These minutes are simple, can be written down faster and are accurate.



- 2) **Verbatim minutes** - this is a word for word record of all discussions and decisions. Verbatim minutes are record of every single word said at a meeting. They are often long and can be difficult to skim for a particular

piece of information. With the exception of courtroom proceedings and congress, a verbatim record of a meeting is rarely necessary. Verbatim minutes are often very

Meeting Minutes

lengthy. Capturing verbatim minutes is difficult for the note taker and recording the conversation with a microphone could be very helpful for proof-reading minutes. As opposed to action and discussion minutes, verbatim minutes focus on individuals' comments and not the general agreement.

- 3) **Discussion minutes** - discussion minutes or anecdotal minutes are records of agreement of the discussions that lead to the decisions and actions required. Discussion minutes are recommended in most cases. The minutes taker should include significant points made by the group and avoid recording personal comments. Discussion minutes are similar to the action minutes except that these include the discussions involved in making the decisions. If you are running committee meetings, staff meetings or the likes, discussion minute is the best option. So, the minutes will be in the form of paragraphs, neatly in sections and by order of discussions. In this type of minute, it is very rare to see people addressed by their names as actions and discussions will be taken by a board and hence will be mentioned as board or committee in the minutes. The minutes will be taken by the secretary who will most likely not take part in the discussion and hence will be free to record the minutes accurately.

Irrespective of the type of minute, all minutes should be concise and accurate, and in order to accomplish this, the notes have to be written accurately in the right order and style. Make note writing as simple as possible by doing some advanced preparations as before the meeting as earlier stated.

2.2 - The Importance of Accurate Recording and Producing of Minutes

The main goal of minute-taking (or 'scribing') a meeting is to accurately record and clearly present the proceedings and outcomes of the meeting. Here are some reasons why it is important that minutes are accurate:

- Accurate minutes are necessary for meeting attendees, who will later need to ratify the minutes, and implement the decisions or actions decided on at the meeting.

- It is essential that minutes are recorded accurately to reflect what transpired during the meeting. This not only serves as a reminder of issues that need to be followed up but also prevents arguments about previous decisions.
- Minutes are also a guide for the secretary and chairperson when drawing up the agenda for the next meeting.
- Minutes help the organisation to learn from its past failures and successes. This is done when the secretary reflects on the minutes of the past year when drawing up an annual report.
- To ensure that quorum is met.
Quorum is the minimum required number of people who need to be present in a meeting to make decisions binding as per constitution or agreement.
- For people who were invited to the meeting but couldn't attend, minutes help to fill them in on what they missed.
- Who were at the meeting? If someone later claims they weren't at a meeting, the Minutes can reflect that the person was actually there.



2.3 - The Distribution List Is Described

A distribution list is a collection of email addresses of attendees and/or non-attendees in a meeting. Send minutes out quickly to this distribution list. Ideally, you should send out minutes within the week. Sooner is better. And they should definitely be circulated before the next meeting. Send them to people who weren't able to attend as well, so they can see what they missed. You may also have stakeholders or colleagues who want to be copied in on minutes but who weren't on the attendee list, for example your line manager. Aim to get your minutes out within 3-5 days of the meeting taking place.

2.4 - Methods of Distributing Minutes

The method by which meeting minutes are shared depends on your company's procedures. Typically, one or more of the following document-sharing methods is used:

- Use email if that is the main business tool of your company. If the meeting is related to a project, use your project management software to distribute the minutes so all project-related content is kept together.
- Sending a physical copy of the meeting minutes in the mail
- Using a cloud-based sharing tool such as Google Docs
- Posting the minutes to your company website
- Send the minutes to all attendees and non-attendees of the meeting. You may also need to share the minutes with business leaders whether they were part of the meeting or not. Some companies use minutes to update company leaders on business activities.
- When sending out the minutes, be sure to specify whom the readers can contact if they have any questions about the notes or the meeting. This person may be whoever took the notes or the leader of the meeting.

You may ask a senior meeting member whether you should include a note that the minutes you are sending out have received provisional approval. This technique allows meeting participants to keep track of the most up-to-date version of the minutes if any changes are made before they are finalized at the next meeting.

2.5 - The Reasons for Distributing Minutes Promptly

The following are some of the reasons why minutes should be distributed as promptly as humanly possible:

- In the case of attendees or personnel who have actionable items, having the minutes despatched as soon as practicable ensures that they have enough time to review the action and get to working on it immediately.
- It's an effective reminder for the next meeting. The team can go over the previous meeting minutes to remind every participant of what happened, what topics they discussed, and the decisions they made.
- The memory of the meeting is still fresh for everybody, the note taker and the participants. People quickly scan it through, send modification requests to the minute taker, copy their actionable items to whatever productivity systems they use. If the minutes arrive late, then the productivity boost is already lost.

[Date]

+

Meeting Notes

Attending

[Name 1]
[Name 2]

Announcements

[List all announcements made at the meeting. For example, new members, change of event, and so forth.]

- [Need a heading? On the Home tab, in the Styles gallery, just tap the heading style you want.]
- [Notice other styles in that gallery as well, such as for a numbered list, or a bulleted list like this one.]

Discussion

[Summarize the discussion for each issue, state the outcome, and assign any action items.]

Roundtable

[Summarize the status of each area/department.]

SESSION 3 - TAKE MINUTES OF MEETINGS

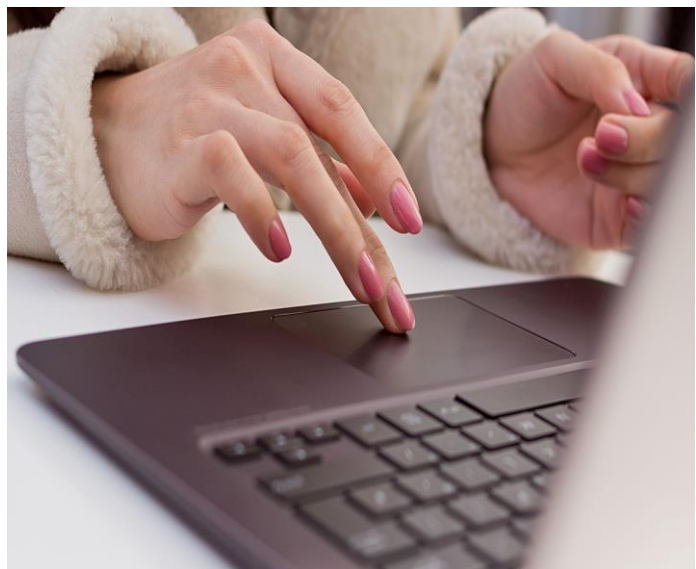
Specific Outcomes

- Resources required for minute taking are identified, listed and explained.
- Items to be included in minutes of meeting are listed and explained.
- Attendees to meeting are identified.
- The characteristics of good minutes are identified and explained.
- Minutes are concise and accurate and reflect proceedings.
- Minutes are produced and distributed in required format and time frame.

3.1 - Resources Required for Minute Taking Are Identified, Listed and Explained

Before you take minutes, you need some of the resources below to ensure they are concise and accurate:

Audio Recorder (Digital / Tape) - Although a recorder can verify accuracy, do not rely on it completely. Even if you tape the meeting, take notes as well. A recorder can malfunction, or it may not pick up every conversation clearly. Having an audio recorder can also be a distraction if attention is brought to it. Make sure you have an audio recorder that can be used discretely while still picking up clear and concise audio.



Laptop Computer / Tablet / Mobile -

If you can type rapidly, you may find it easier to use a laptop than to use a pen and paper. Do not be concerned about spelling and punctuation as you type; you can correct all those details after the meeting. Using a tablet with a pen is another great alternative to paper as it allows for great written notes and can often translate right into text. Using your mobile device can also be a great way for recording or note taking although it can be limiting based on the speed of the meeting or the notes required to be taken.

Paper, Pens, Pencils and Clipboard - Even when you plan to use a laptop to take minutes, it is a good idea to be prepared for any contingency. The battery in your laptop could run down, and you may not be near an electrical outlet, so it is best to have an alternate plan for taking notes. Bring plenty of paper and at least two pens and pencils. A clipboard can hold the paper if you do not have a table available or if the table is at an uncomfortable height for writing. When you can read your writing, it does not have to be neat. Your notes serve only as a reminder from which to type the minutes that will be a permanent record of the meeting.

Clock or Watch - Use a timepiece to document the time the meeting begins and the time of adjournment. In addition, record the times that any latecomers arrive as well as when anyone leaves early along with the times that votes or decisions occur. Those records will indicate who may have missed important information even though they attended the meeting.

Agenda - If possible, obtain information about the meeting several days in advance of the event. Ask for a copy of the agenda and a list of those expected to attend the meeting. If there will be discussions about topics with which you are unfamiliar, learn what you can about those matters before the meeting takes place. It is easier to take notes when you understand the subjects about which you are writing. If the agenda does not include items tabled at the previous meeting, notify the leader about the oversight before the meeting begins.

Create a Template - Make a template before the time of the meeting at which you will take minutes. The template should include the organisation's name, meeting date, location, time, purpose, leader's name and title, attendees' names and titles and any other pertinent information known in advance of the meeting. You can then concentrate on recording details as the meeting progresses. When you have more than one page of notes, number each page as you write. That will help you to avoid confusion when making your final copy.

Attendance - As attendees arrive, check their names off your list, and after the meeting, cross off the names of those who did not appear. Add additional names to your

list if unexpected people attend the meeting. When time allows, sketch a rough map of where attendees are sitting to help you record their names accurately when necessary. If it makes your job easier, you may opt to ask attendees to sign an attendance sheet as they arrive at the meeting.

3.2 - Items to Be Included in Minutes of Meeting

Minutes of meeting contain similar information but sometimes there can be discrepancies depending on the rules and policies guiding the Organization. Therefore, **before you start taking minutes**, it's important to understand the type of information and content you need to record at the meeting, but generally, meeting minutes usually include the following:

- Name of the organization
- Date and time of the meeting
- Names of the meeting participants
- Names of those who were unable to attend.
- Acceptance or corrections/amendments to previous meeting minutes
- Agenda items
- Last minute additions to the agenda
- Decisions made about each agenda item, for example:
 - Actions taken or agreed to be taken

minutes

Meeting Title			
Date		Meeting Time	Meeting Location
Meeting called by	Name		
Type of meeting	Type of meeting		
Facilitator	Facilitator name		
Note taker	Note taker name		
Timekeeper	Timekeeper name		
Attendees	Attendees		
Agenda Topic 1			
Time allotted	Presenter		
Discussion	Enter discussion		
Conclusions	Enter conclusions		
Action Items		Person Responsible	Deadline
Action item 1		Presenter Name	Date time
Action item 2		Presenter Name	Date time

- Voting outcomes, if necessary, details regarding who made motions; who seconded and approved
- Motions taken or rejected
- Date, time and location of next meeting.
- Name of the person taking the minutes

3.3 - Attendees to Meeting Are Identified

Meetings take many different forms and serve many different purposes and the attendance will vary accordingly. Some formal meetings, such as an AGM, may have specific attendance requirements. These will be set out in the organisation's constitution or articles of association and must comply with relevant legislation. For some meetings the participants will be easy to identify; for example, a workgroup meeting would involve all the members of that workgroup; a department meeting would involve all the staff of that department.

In other cases, it might not be so easy to identify the participants. A good way of choosing who should be involved in the meeting is to analyse the agenda and see who needs to be there. Participants should be those who:

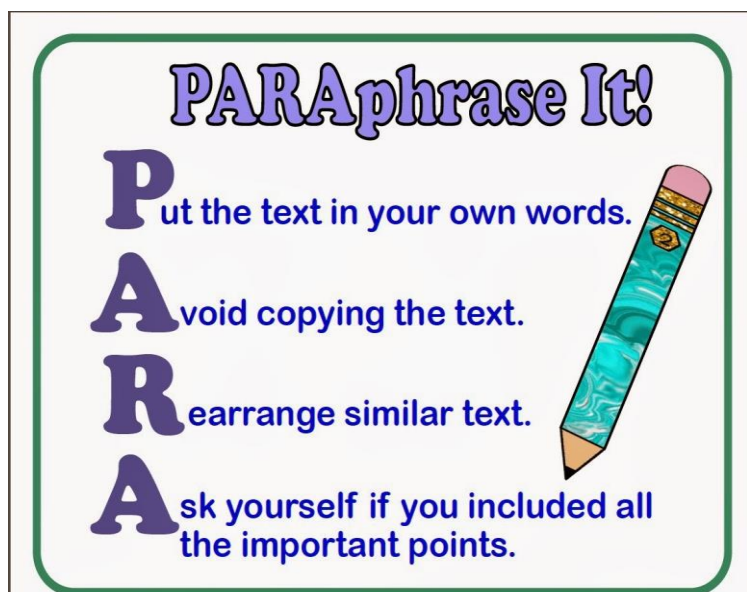
- Have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the issues to be dealt with
- Have the power to make a decision
- Are able to implement a decision or take the task / project to the next stage
- Are representatives of a group that will be affected by decisions made at the meeting
- Are committed to solving the problem
- Have time to participate
- Are willing to listen to other views

3.4 - The Characteristics of Good Minutes Are Identified and Explained

There are a number of techniques to use to ensure good minutes and that there is progress in a meeting, especially if the discussions seem to be going around in circles and require the Chairperson to intervene so that the meeting can progress and reduce wastage of time. Here are some techniques to use for a meeting to progress:

1) Paraphrasing – Paraphrasing is repeating in your words what you interpreted someone else to be saying. Paraphrasing is powerful means to further the understanding of the other person and yourself, and can greatly increase the impact of another's comments. It can translate comments so that even more people can understand them. When paraphrasing:

- Put the focus of the paraphrase on what the other person implied, not on what you wanted him/her to imply, e.g., don't say, "I believe what you meant to say was ...". Instead, say "If I'm hearing you right, you conveyed that ...?"
- Phrase the paraphrase as a question, "So you're saying that ...?", so that the other person has the responsibility and opportunity to refine his/her original comments in response to your question.
- Put the focus of the paraphrase on the other person, e.g., if the person said, "I don't get enough resources to do what I want," then don't paraphrase, "We probably all don't get what we want, right?"
- Put the ownership of the paraphrase on yourself, e.g., "If I'm hearing you right ...?" or "If I understand you correctly ...?"



- Put the ownership of the other person's words on him/her, e.g., say "If I understand you right, you're saying that ...?" or "... you believe that ...?" or "... you feel that ...?"
- In the paraphrase, use some of the words that the other person used. For example, if the other person said, "I think we should do more planning around here." You might paraphrase, "If I'm hearing you right in this strategic planning workshop, you believe that more strategic planning should be done in our community?"
- Don't judge or evaluate the other person's comments, e.g., don't say, "I wonder if you really believe that?" or "Don't you feel out-on-a-limb making that comment?"
- You can use a paraphrase to validate your impression of the other's comments, e.g., you could say, "So you were frustrated when ...?"
- The paraphrase should be shorter than the original comments made by the other person.
- If the other person responds to your paraphrase that you still don't understand him/her, then give the other person 1-2 chances to restate his position.

2) Summarise - A summary is a concise overview of the most important points from a communication, whether it's from a conversation, presentation or document. Summarising is a very important skill for an effective communicator. A good summary can verify that people are understanding each other, can make communications more efficient, and can ensure that the highlights of communications are captured and utilised. When summarising, consider the following guidelines:

- When listening, look for the main ideas being conveyed.
- Look for any one major point that comes from the communication. What is the person trying to accomplish in the communication?
- Organise the main ideas, either just in your mind or written down.
- Write a summary that lists and organises the main ideas, along with the major point of the communicator.
- The summary should always be shorter than the original communication.

- Does not introduce any new main points into the summary – if you do, make it clear that you're adding them.

3.5 - Minutes Are Concise and Accurate and Reflect Proceedings

Meeting minutes need to be accurate at all times because these are used to implement decisions made, guide the organisation going forward, used as reference for future meetings, etc. These minutes, are usually first circulated in draft form so that all participants have the opportunity to check for accuracy and to make corrections if necessary. This ensures that all participants agree that the record is accurate before distributing to other parties. Here are some guidelines below to increase accuracy of these minutes:

Advance Preparation - Gather the tools needed for efficient minute taking, but verify that rules do not prohibit the use of recording devices or laptops before bringing those instruments to the meeting. Having multiple minutes taking devices will give you the ability to have a backup in the event that your primary device fails on you.



Be Punctual - Arrive well ahead of time to ensure that you are ready to take minutes when the meeting begins. Locate an electrical outlet if you will need electricity for your laptop or recorder, and get your supplies organised. When you do not feel rushed, you will be more efficient at your job.

Sit strategically - During the meeting, sit near the front of the room where you can hear the speakers plainly. Ask participants to repeat anything that you do not hear clearly and to explain anything that you do not understand. If you do not know some of the

speakers' names, ask them to identify themselves either before they begin speaking or immediately afterward.

Remain Neutral and Concise - Report the facts in a concise, clear manner, and avoid using adverbs and adjectives or recording your own observations and opinions about the issues discussed at the meeting. It is not necessary to record every detail or the name of every person who speaks. However, include the names of those who make motions, second motions or who will be responsible for acting on the decisions made. Always remain neutral, and never record the emotions displayed by presenters and attendees. If you have a personal interest in the issues discussed, do not let the minutes reveal your concern.

After the Meeting - If you have any uncertainties or questions, speak to the leader immediately after the meeting to clarify anything of which you are unsure.

3.6 - Minutes Are Produced and Distributed in Required Format and Time Frame

Below are simple tips that can help you write minutes:

- **Plan the agenda:** An agenda helps in preparing for a meeting by providing a list of items and a clear set of topics, objectives, and time frames that are needed to be discussed in the meeting of the day.
- **Create an Outline:** The first tip to help you in writing minutes of meeting is to create an outline. Having an outline makes it easy for you to simply jot down notes, decisions and other subject matters under each item. If you are taking notes by hand, consider including space below each item on your outline for your hand-written notes.
- **Check-off Attendees as They Enter the Room:** If you know the meeting attendees, you can check them off as they arrive, if not have attendees introduce themselves at the start of the meeting or circulate an attendance list they can check-off themselves. Record decisions or notes on action items in your outline as soon as they occur to be sure they are recorded accurately.

- **Ask for clarification:** Also, endeavor to ask for clarification where necessary. For instance there are cases where there a subject matter will not be decided on and another subject is brought up. In a situation where the group moves on to another subject matter without making a decision or a conclusion on a previous subject, ask for clarification of the decision or next steps involved.
- **Don't stress yourself trying to capture everything:** Normally, the minute of a meeting is not meant to capture everything that was done in a meeting. You can't keep up if you try to write down the discussion word for word. Thus, write only the necessary things such as the decisions, action steps, etc.
- **Record:** If you are concerned about being able to keep up with note taking which may lead to your missing vital points, consider recording the meeting on your smart phone or any recording device. In order not to have your actions being misunderstood by group members, ensure to let them know you are placing them on record and also let them know why. Remember the recording is not the minute of meeting but only a guide. On that note, try as much as possible to write the minutes soon after the meeting while everything is fresh in your mind.
- **Be objective:** Include only the facts of what happened rather than any impressions or opinions. The content of your meeting minutes should be impartial in nature and contain very few adjectives and adverbs.
- Write in the **same tense** throughout the meeting minutes to avoid confusion. Normally past tense is used with few exceptions.
- Follow any formatting guidelines for meeting minutes set by your employer.

	A	B	C	D	E
1					
2					
3		Examples of different sizes:			
4					
5		Arial, 8			
6		Arial 10			
7		Arial 12			
8		Arial 14			
9		Arial 16			
10		Arial 18			
11		Arial 20			
12					

- Use a traditional font such as Arial or Times New Roman in a readable size (at least 12 point).
- Leave spaces between sections and use bold headings, bullet points and numbered lists to create a document that is easy to scan for key details.
- Once you are finished typing up your notes into a proper meeting minutes format, attach any relevant documents or indicate where they can be found. Then, proofread your work carefully for clarity and to check for spelling mistakes, incorrect grammar and meeting inaccuracies.

Approving meeting minutes. In some organizations, the minute of meeting must be reviewed and approved by the Chairperson by asking the participants if the minutes reflect a true account of the meeting that was held. So, depending on your organization, minutes may also be formally approved at the beginning of the next meeting after a thorough review.

MEETING MINUTES EXAMPLE

Keagan G (Pty) Ltd

Board of Directors Meeting

Date: Wednesday, March 10, 2022

Time: 3:00 p.m.

Location: Keagan G Headquarters, Johannesburg

Type: Monthly meeting

Present:

- Jane Bhuthelezi, CEO
- Joseph Hines, General Manager
- Thabo Brown, Chief Financial Officer
- Hannah Walker
- Piet Labuschagne
- William Lee
- Bridget Newman
- Palesa Lekota

Absent:

- Joanna Smith
- Nkosana Dlamini

Quorum: Satisfied

Welcome

February 2022 meeting minutes approved

Proceedings

Financial report provided by Brown

- Keagan G (Pty) Ltd's tax return has been completed and filed. An annual review of the organization's accounting procedures will be completed by June 2022.
- Trends from the past year's finances include an increased cash flow due to vendor changes enacted in 2021.
- Motion to accept financial statements – seconded and passed.
- Development committee report provided by Lee
- Keagan G (Pty) Ltd's search for a second business location has not turned up any promising prospects yet. The board is using the services of a Capetown-based commercial real estate agent to help locate a property that meets the organization's needs, but the development committee recommends extending the search to include properties in Hermanus.
- Motion to expand property search – seconded and passed.

New Business and Announcements

- Fundraising efforts have been falling short of expected targets so far this year. Members are asked to tap their networks for potential fundraising resources and report back at the next meeting.
- The annual organization retreat will take place on May 2, 2022.
- The next monthly Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for May 4, 2019.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.