

Minutes and Project Meetings Handout

ChE-101 Approaches to Chemical Engineering Problem Solving

Introduction:

When working in teams (this will happen very often especially in corporations), it is very important to keep track of the discussions and assignments distributed during meetings. An efficient way to keep records is true Minutes.

Taking minutes is not usually a secretary's job (as they usually do not attend technical project meetings). All of us will find ourselves in the position of taking minutes sometime. This handout presents some tips that make this task easier.

Meetings:

The following are some tips for effective project meetings:¹

1. Define the purpose of the meeting
2. Develop an agenda in cooperation with the members of the team.
3. Schedule an appropriate time and room. Keep in mind the number of people attending the meeting.
4. Send agenda through e-mail to team members.
5. Keep meetings on time: Start on time and end on time.
6. Stick to the agenda.
7. Prepare minutes (usually the person taking minutes should not be the facilitator of the meeting).

Meeting Agendas:

The meeting agendas are the roadmap of the meeting. They let the participants know what is expected and the order of the discussions. All agendas should include:

1. Start time
2. End time
3. Location
4. Topics heading with expected discussion time.

Meeting Minutes:

These are some tips for taking minutes:²

1. Before the meeting
 - a. Choose the tool that will be used to take notes
 - b. You can use the meeting agenda to formulate an outline
2. During the meeting
 - a. Pass around an attendance sheet

- b. Do not write down every single comment. Just summarize the main idea
 - c. Make notes of the decisions made by the group, tasks, responsibilities and/or committees assigned during the meeting. Take note on when tasks and or responsibilities assigned to other team members are due.
 - d. Make notes on any motions to be voted in future meetings.
 - e. Write down the ending time of the meeting.
3. After the meeting type up the minutes as soon as possible while everything is still fresh in your mind. Include the following information in the minute:
- a. Name of Organization
 - b. Purpose of Meeting
 - c. Date/Time
 - d. Place
 - e. Attendees
 - f. Agenda
 - g. Discussion of topics:
 - i. Topic
 - ii. Discussion
 - iii. Action
 - iv. Person Responsible

Bibliography:

More information about meetings, minutes, and agendas is presented at:

1. <http://www.meetingwizard.org/meetings/meeting-agenda.cfm>
2. <http://careerplanning.about.com/cs/communication/a/minutes.htm>

Example of Minute with Agenda:

Name of Organization: ChE-101 Team 1

Purpose of Meeting: Set-up responsibilities, meeting times, and future actions for the project (see agenda description)

Date/Time: April 7, 2008. From 3:00 to 3:30 pm.

Location: Conference room on third floor of Alden Library

Attendees: Mark Johnson, Peter White, Andrea Anderson, and Monica Bird.

Minute Prepared by: Andrea

Approval: All attendees

Agenda:

1. Introductions (5 minutes)
2. Future Meetings (10 minutes)
3. Distribution of Tasks (15 minutes)
4. Adjourn

Topic	Discussion	Action	Person Responsible
Introductions	All members of the team exchange e-mails and phone numbers.	No Action Required.	
Future Meetings	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Difficulties to find meeting times for all members of the group to be present 2. Fridays from 4:00 to 5:00 pm since to be the best meeting time for the group. 3. All meetings will take place at the Alden Library 4. Next meeting will take place on April 18, 2008. 	Next Agenda draft will be sent to all team members by e-mail by April 16. Feedback from the members is expected by April 17.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monica Bird will draft agenda 2. All members of team should provide feedback.
Distribution of Tasks	<p>To be effective in the project the following distribution of tasks was assigned (every person and/or group will discuss results during next meeting):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Practice with Car and electrolyzers (Monica and Peter) 2. Prepare literature review on fuel cells (Mark and Andrea) 	Each subcommittee will prepare a short report and will present results in next meeting.	<p>Car operation: Monica and Peter</p> <p>Fuel Cell literature review: Mark and Andrea</p>