

What Happened During Your Last Meeting? How to Document Decisions

What good is a meeting if no one remembers what you decided? Taking useful minutes during an important meeting is crucial to implementing your decisions. Here are some guidelines for documenting your discussions effectively:

- **Clarify the role.** Don't pick someone to take minutes without warning. Chances are the person won't be prepared and won't know what you want them to record. Ask someone who's not going to be directly involved in the discussion, and talk about what you need. Don't try to take the minutes yourself—you'll be distracted and unable to fulfill your responsibility to lead the discussion.



- **Provide the right tools.** Do you expect someone to take notes by hand? On a laptop? Or record the discussion for later transcription? Whatever you choose, make sure the person is comfortable and has whatever they need to do the job well. (If recording, inform everyone at the meeting to ensure they're comfortable with the process.)

- **Set the right format.** Meeting minutes should be organized so they're easy to understand. The basics: Date, time, location, people attending, issues discussed, decisions reached. The note-taker may want to sketch a seating chart at the beginning of the meeting to be sure they can quickly identify who's speaking.

- **Target key themes.** Your objective isn't a verbatim transcript of every word spoken at the meeting, but an outline of what happened. Just like the rest of your attendees, the note-taker should follow your agenda and keep the minutes organized by topic. Go over what you want documented ahead of time to prevent confusion.

Hello!

Hello! We are pleased to send you this monthly issue of *Membership Gold*. It is our way of saying that you are important to us and we truly value your membership. Enjoy!

Monthly Quotes



Famous Last Words

Stop chasing the money, and start chasing the passion.
-- Tony Hsieh

Arithmetic tells you how many you lose or win if you know how many you had before you lost or won.
-- Carl Sandburg

Keep your face always toward the sunshine- and shadows will fall behind you.
-- Walt Whitman

Words are how we think; stories are how we link.
-- Christina Baldwin

You've got to get up every morning with determination if you're going to go to bed with satisfaction.
-- George Lorimer

Become the kind of leader that people would follow voluntarily, even if you had no title or position.
-- Brian Tracy

The culture of a workplace- an organization's values, norms and practices- has a huge impact on our happiness and success.
-- Adam Grant 



How to Buy a New Computer

Purchasing a new computer can prove more complicated than expected, but apart from determining your own budgetary requirements, there are a few other things you can do to make the process a lot less confusing.

One of the most important decisions you need to make is what you are planning to use your new computer for. A computer that is only required to carry out light tasks such as reading emails and browsing the internet will need only very modest specifications and be priced considerably more modestly as well, with a device that has an Intel Core i3 or i5 likely to be more than adequate for your needs. However, those who want a computer for gaming, video editing or even virtual reality will need a processor that is much faster and has extra system memory (RAM) and greater graphics capabilities, such as an Intel Core i7, 16 or even 32GM of RAM and NVIDIA graphics.

In regard to operating systems, Chromebook, Mac and Windows are the big mainstream choices, with Windows 10 today's most popular choice, being simple to use, working with most hardware and software and offered by almost large computer brands.



Solve These Common Workplace Issues

No job or workplace is perfect, but some are more challenging than others. Here are some common problems you'll be faced with in your career—and some solutions:

- **The problem:** *You're overworked and overwhelmed.* You're expected to do a lot, but sometimes the workload grows to impossible proportions and you just can't get all of it done on deadline.
- **The solution:** Sit down with your manager and discuss your situation calmly and professionally. Get a view of priorities so you know which tasks are essential and which can be put off. Ask for tips on time management, and don't be reluctant to ask for help.
- **The problem:** *You get a new boss.* Your old boss was supportive, but your new boss isn't—or you're not sure yet. Whether your manager leaves or gets fired, the transition can be tricky.
- **The solution:** Reserve your judgment for at least a few weeks. Keep doing your job as you and your new manager get to know each other. Show that he or she can depend on you for high-quality work.
- **The problem:** *Your job changes.* In today's economy, employees are often expected to take on new and different roles they didn't sign up for. This can be disconcerting, especially if you feel you haven't been adequately trained.
- **The solution:** Look at this as an opportunity for learning and growth. If training is an issue, work with your manager to bring your skills up to par. Focus on solving the problem, not complaining about the situation.
- **The problem:** *You make a big mistake.* Nobody's perfect, and from time to time you're going to mess up. You feel awful, people are mad at you, and your morale is sinking.
- **The solution:** Don't make excuses or try to spread blame. Step up and take responsibility for your mistake, and pitch in to help rectify it. Apologize and show you've learned from the catastrophe and won't repeat it. 

Get More Done by Hiring the Right People to Help

No matter how good a leader you are, you can't do everything yourself. You can get more done with the right help from the right members of your workforce. Follow these three steps:

- **Identify your strengths and weaknesses.** Get feedback from those around you to find out where to put your energy productively.
- **Recruit and retain people who complement your weaknesses.** Find employees with the natural strengths to add value in areas where you're not as strong.
- **Let people do what they do best.** Put people to work doing what they can do better than you. Don't worry that they'll outshine you. Your strength needs to come from guiding people, not doing their work for them. 

Execute Your Plans with Precision

Planning is important to success in any organization. Follow this template for carrying out your plans effectively:

- **Establish accountability.** Before you implement any initiatives or changes, identify the elements that support your overall strategy. Make sure everyone knows how your ultimate objective fits into your long-term goals. This makes it possible for people to adapt and make changes as they work.
 - **Prioritize goals.** Let people know what's most important to accomplish. You don't want them spending too much time working on something that doesn't have much impact on the end result.
 - **Create lines of communication.** If you have more than one or two people on your team, set up procedures for staying up to date about problems and progress. You probably don't need to hear about every issue that comes up, but clearly let people know what questions and information they should bring to you and what they should share with each other. Establish a timetable to review progress on a regular basis.
 - **Document your efforts.** Keep records of what you decide, what actions people take, what results you need, and so forth. Who's responsible for different elements of your plan? How will you measure the success of your efforts? Put it all down in black and white to avoid misunderstandings.
 - **Follow up and evaluate.** After completion, take a good look at how your team achieved its goal. Could you have saved time? Did someone do exceptional work that deserves to be rewarded? **SW**
-

Tips for New Managers

Becoming a manager for the first time can be a challenge, but there are things that a new manager can do to ensure they avoid being overwhelmed by their new responsibilities.

It is a good idea for a newly appointed manager to ask for a development contract or hiring letter. Not only is it vital to make sure you are aware of the limits of your authority but also to perform an honest evaluation of your own competency level. When it comes to disciplining a member of staff, for instance, it is a good idea for a manager new to the position to consult with their superiors before taking any action. New managers also require more chances for coaching and check-ins and such time should be included in your contract.

It is also a smart move to request regular performance reviews, if they are not already included as part of the schedule. Annual performance reviews offer the chance to receive feedback on the development and competencies expected of managers in their company, and if any weaknesses are identified, further training can then be asked for. **SW**



Dreaming of a Work/Life Balance

Achieving a work/life balance should not just be some seemingly impossible task as it is actually vital, not just to your productivity but to your overall health as well. Meditation and exercise are great ways to cut down on stress, and it is important to make the time for both as part of your daily routine. Many people try to unwind with alcohol and junk food, both of which can be adverse to long-term health, but exercise is an excellent anti-depressant, and meditation has long been shown to be a major asset when it comes to the maintenance of good mental health.

It is also important to understand that it is all right to unplug for a few minutes here and there during working hours. Taking a break in order to listen to music, go for a walk or just have a chat with a colleague can re-energize and motivate you as well as cutting down on lethargy. Flexible work hours and occasionally working from home can also help to maintain the work/life balance.

SW

Beat Workplace Stress before it Beats You

Being challenged at work is one thing. Being stressed out all the time is something else. How can you tell whether you're really suffering from undue job-related stress and anxiety? Be on the lookout for these symptoms:

- Feeling anxious, irritable, or depressed
- Apathy or lack of interest in work
- Sleeping problems
- Constant fatigue
- Difficulty concentrating
- Muscle tension or headaches **SW**

Manage Your Stress

Want to reduce your stress to a more manageable level? Try these tactics:

- **Reach out.** Don't let yourself grow isolated. Talk to your family and friends. Sharing your problems can help lower the burden on you.
- **Exercise regularly.** Aerobic exercise that gets your blood pumping and makes you sweat a little can give you more energy and help you relax both your mind and your body.
- **Watch what you eat.** Cut down on sugars and carbohydrates. Limit your intake of caffeine and alcohol. Eat more fruits, vegetables, and foods high in omega-3 fatty acids.
- **Get enough sleep.** Get into a routine that provides you with a good eight hours of sleep every night. If you're well rested, you'll be able to absorb the slings and arrows that come at you all day. **SW**

Get Past Your Creative Block

Inspiration doesn't always flow when you want it. You can't force it, but when you're stuck, try these tactics for breaking through a creative block:

- **Revisit your goals.** What are you trying to accomplish? Taking a fresh look can help you find a new way to reach your goal. Review the problem, analyze what you've tried, and seek a fresh approach.
- **Change your location.** If you usually work in a cubicle, try going out to a park or coffee shop. A change of scenery may spark help you relax and find something new to focus on. And speaking of coffee...
- **Have a cup.** Research suggests that mild amounts of caffeine can enhance short-term memory, problem solving, and concentration. Don't go overboard, but a cup of coffee or tea might be just what you need.
- **Talk to someone.** Get a fresh mind working on the problem. A co-worker or friend may be able to offer a fresh perspective or an idea you hadn't thought of yet.
- **Start over.** Review your work, then set it aside and try a fresh start. Don't think of it as giving up. Instead, treat it as an opportunity to try something different and exciting. **SW**

Measure Achievements with an Inventory

We all sometimes fall into the habit of undervaluing ourselves and our achievements. When it happens to you, try conducting a "Success Inventory." Make four lists of your positive accomplishments (don't include any valiant tried-but-failed attempts):

- **Education:** Classes you completed, degrees earned, and professional certifications.
- **Professional positions:** Every major job you've ever held, along with the responsibilities and authority you had.
- **Projects:** Every project you've been involved in that met with success because of your contributions, large or small.
- **Accomplishments:** Note every career achievement, along with its importance to your organization, the community, your family, and yourself.

The inventory will help you get back on the track of thinking objectively about your strengths and potential.

SW



Avoiding Serious Marketing Errors

Mistakes happen, but the good news is that when it comes to membership marketing, the great majority of serious errors can be avoided with a bit of discipline and careful planning.

One of the most common errors made by professional marketers is attempting to be everything to everybody. The reality however is that regardless of how good the products or services offered by your company may be, it is impossible to service everybody. The simplest way to avoid this mistake is to gain a better awareness of your target audience. Knowing what you should not, or even cannot, do is vital to make your marketing a success, so build a detailed and specific buyer persona which will enable you to better develop clear messaging aimed specifically at your particular market.

Another mistake to avoid is to keep reusing old methods just because they worked in the past. Tried and true methods may seem safe and risk-free, but they also virtually guarantee that there will be no chance for bigger gains than has previously been the case. Membership marketing strategies need constant updating to account for new approaches, channels and technologies.



How to Increase Engagement with Affiliates

Building strong relationships with vendors or affiliates is crucial to a B2B company increasing its revenue, and a strategy is required in order to acquire, maintain and grow the membership for your company.

One method by which B2B firms can improve the performance of their affiliates and build relationships within their community is to create an email marketing campaign that allows for regular communication with affiliates. An email newsletter that is scheduled on a consistent basis can share news about upcoming conferences, new marketing materials, product launches and other important pieces of information. Make sure the newsletters include unique advantages and special product offers to encourage your distributors to stay in regular touch.

Another method is to develop case studies, which illustrate the way your company's services or products served to assist particular problems or have proved helpful in certain target markets. Case studies can benefit affiliates by making it clearer to them what your key messages actually are and can build your credibility with resellers and affiliates in addition to being a crucial tool for their own selling practices.



Creating an Overlap Strategy for Business to Business & Business to Consumer Memberships

Search marketing efforts for B2B and B2C can be very different beasts, with different strategies needing to be developed for everything from prequalifying searchers to keyword development for both audiences. However, some membership require marketing to both businesses and consumers, and in these instances, it is a good idea to develop an overlap strategy.

Segmenting keywords by the audience being targeted is one aspect of an overlap strategy. Some keywords can be used by either B2B or B2C, but there are others that will be applicable to both sectors, and while segmenting by audience can often be somewhat laborious, the result can be a significant increase in efficiency in the process of lead generation or online sales.

When it comes to double serving keywords, the brand will need to make use of separate domains for their B2C and B2B endeavors and have websites that are also different contextually. While double serving will certainly not work on all keywords, effective and strategic use of it can make a great deal of sense.



A Tireless Fighter for a Cause

Born Feb. 15, 1820, Susan B. Anthony devoted her life to the fight for social justice and reform. She began her activism as a member of the American Anti-Slavery Society in the years leading up to the Civil War. In 1866, she founded the American Equal Rights Association with Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and the pair embarked on a mission to secure civil liberties for all citizens regardless of their gender or race. This work would lead Anthony and Stanton to found the National Women's Suffrage Association, where they continued to advocate for women's voting rights.

Anthony died on March 13, 1906, 14 years before her work would be realized. In 1920, the 19th Amendment was added to the U. S. Constitution, giving women the right to vote. In 1979, the U.S. Treasury Department honored Anthony by placing her image on the dollar coin.



Beat Workplace Stress before it Beats You

Being challenged at work is one thing. Being stressed out all the time is something else. How can you tell whether you're really suffering from undue job-related stress and anxiety? Be on the lookout for these symptoms:

- Feeling anxious, irritable, or depressed
- Apathy or lack of interest in work
- Sleeping problems
- Constant fatigue
- Difficulty concentrating
- Muscle tension or headaches 

Getting More from Social Media

Social media plays a crucial role in marketing in the modern world, being free, fast and ubiquitous in nature. Small memberships should not concern themselves with asking if they need to engage with social media – because the answer is yes – so much as finding the best methods with which to use social media to engage with their prospective customers.

Social media has allowed marketing to become a two way street that enables prospects and members to contact you as much as the other way around, and it is vital to make sure there is someone in your firm whose job it is to ensure that customer compliments, complaints and comments are being received and taken into account.

Small memberships need to carefully choose just a few social media platforms to commit time and attention to, so it is crucial to pick the best ones for their purposes. Facebook is great for targeting large numbers of people, but LinkedIn, Instagram and even the likes of Pinterest may be appropriate choices depending on the nature of the particular membership. 

Examine Your Organization's IQ-Innovation Quotient

A growing organization thrives on creativity and innovation. Are you too comfortable with the status quo? Too reliant on what's worked in the past? Don't take any chances? Ask yourself these questions to test your organization's level of innovation:

- **How do you define innovation?** You don't want to be too open-ended, but at the same time, you should avoid unnecessarily limiting the scope of ideas. Just be sure that innovation at your organization has a clear, positive impact on how you develop products and do business.
- **What are your goals?** Let employees know what you're looking for. You want to launch a brand-new product every year, for example.
- **How do you measure innovation?** If you can't measure the effect of innovation on your organization, no one will take it seriously. Maybe you want 10 percent of your revenues to come from products that are less than five years old. Or maybe you want to cut your energy bill by 20 percent in the next six months.
- **How do you encourage innovation?** Analyze your process for generating, testing, and implementing new ideas. What obstacles do employees face? How could you streamline things?
- **Do you have a pipeline?** Ideally, innovation should happen all the time. Your organization should have new ideas coming in and being tested on a constant basis. If that's not happening, dig deep to determine what you can do to spur more creativity. 

Organize Your Desk for Workplace Success

Experts say that your co-workers wonder about your abilities if you're not capable of keeping your desk clean. With that in mind, try these tips for keeping your working area neat and efficient:

- **Create “zones.”** Don't just toss documents, books, supplies, etc., across your desk. Designate specific areas for particular items: progress reports in one corner, mail in another, staplers and paperclips in your top drawer, and so forth. This will make finding things quicker and easier.
- **Clean up regularly.** Before lunch, and right before you go home, spend a few minutes sorting your desk. File what you need, discard what you don't, and straighten everything up so it's waiting in the right location when you return.
- **Respond promptly.** Resist the urge to set stuff aside for an indeterminate “later.” Make a point of filing, discarding, or acting on items right away so they don't pile up and become too overwhelming to contemplate. 

Help Somebody

While he was serving in the Navy during World War II, an unfortunate accident resulted in the death of several of Thomas Cannon's shipmates. Because Cannon's life was spared, he felt a duty and purpose to be in the service of others.

Over 33 years, Cannon gave away over \$150,000. He made donations to people in his hometown of Richmond, Virginia; most of them had been profiled in the local newspaper. He'd often mail \$1,000 checks to the staff of the paper with instructions about who should receive the money. His charity helped support a local group that volunteered in the elementary school, a woman who started a youth center in her low-income neighborhood, and an orphaned teen who was active in his community.

Cannon never owned a fancy house or drove a flashy car. His \$20,000-a-year salary as a postal worker allowed him to provide the necessities for his wife and sons, while his generous spirit inspired him to help others who were not as fortunate.

Though his benevolence garnered him a certain amount of accolades, Cannon made it clear that he didn't want the bureaucracy of a foundation to carry on his work, nor to have his name commemorated in any way once he was no longer living. Cannon suggested the best way to honor his memory would be for others to just “Help somebody.”



Presidential Wisdom

A college student sought part-time employment to support himself during the school year. On a Friday, he was offered a stenographer position. He accepted and explained to his new employer he'd be able to start the following Wednesday. The employer agreed, and the young man arrived ready to work on the appointed day.

“I like your promptness and enthusiasm,” said the employer when the student arrived that morning. “But I do have one question. Why couldn't you start until today?”

“Well, you see, sir,” replied the young man, “I had to find a typewriter and figure out how to use it.”

That young man was Herbert Hoover, who later remarked: “No difficult or simple job ever gets done until someone decides right now to do what it takes to get the job done. Unfortunately, too many people stand by ready to carry the stool when there is a piano to be moved.” 

Monthly Humor

A Child's Interpretation

The children had just learned the story of Adam and Eve in their Sunday school class and were drawing pictures in the time that was left about the day's lesson. The teacher walked around the room smiling and nodding, but grew puzzled when she reached Kevin's desk.

“What's this?” she asked looking over his picture of three people in a car.

“That's Adam and that's Eve,” Kevin explained pointing to the stick figures in the back seat. He pointed to the figure behind the wheel and said, “And that's God driving them out of the garden.” 

Scott Whitaker

1643B Savannah Hwy #173

Charleston, SC 29407

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER TO INFORM AND ENTERTAIN OUR MEMBERS

Hey Membership Marketers,

Did you get your book?

Everyone should have received your copy of *Accelerate: How to Get Your Next 10, 100, 500, or Even 1,000 Members in 60 Days* (if not, it should arrive soon.)

Don't be surprised if some of you find a shout-out testimony inside.

Writing this book has reminded me of one thing, as membership and association leaders, we're only our members increase our influence. It's true for me and it's true for you.

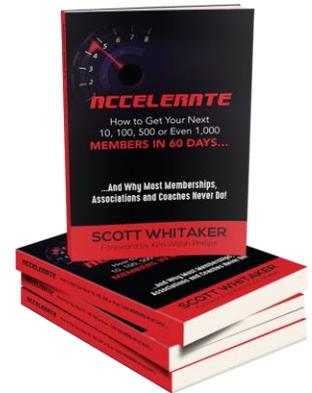
Your influence and the potential impact of your membership is only as strong as the impact you're having on your current membership. When your impact wanes on your current membership, your potential impact for new members decreases as well.

That's why most membership leaders try to "add more content or services" and that could be a mistake. More content could just leave your members experiencing more frustration. It's not always more content/services, but rather "more outcome." The outcome your membership provides is what your members need. That can be accomplished by just helping your members step-by-step through what you're already providing.

You're not responsible for your members using your membership but you are responsible for giving them the best possible opportunity to use their membership and best possible opportunity to achieve the outcome your membership provides.

So, thank you! Thank you for allowing me to help grow your membership or association. It's a privilege. I know that when I help you grow your membership, I'm ultimately helping your members achieve their goals and desires.

Let's continue to accelerate and multiply your membership!

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Scott Whitaker'.

Scott Whitaker,

Founder of Membership Multipliers