How to Conduct Efficient & Effective Meetings

Before the Meeting:

- Plan to arrive early.
- Develop an agenda that includes old business, committee reports, and any known new business.
- Standard Order of Business
    1. Call to Order
    2. Roll call or quorum count
    3. Minutes: reading, correction, approval
    4. Officer reports
    5. Standing committee reports
    6. Special committee reports
    7. Unfinished (old) business
    8. New business
    9. Announcement
    10. Adjournment
- Review agendas with other officers and advisor if applicable.
- Make handouts of information that need to be given to the group.
- Distribute a copy of the agenda to all members before the meeting. Note the date, time, and location of the meeting on the agenda.
- Appoint a secretary/note-taker if no one is assigned to that task already or if this person will be absent.

During the Meeting:

- Always start on time. Keep to the subject or topic being discussed; avoid the trap of going off on a tangent or topic-hopping.
- Keep the group time commitment to the length of the meeting. Avoid spending too much time on a particular item.
- Try to clarify by rewording or repeating what has taken place so that everyone understands. During a heated debate, it's easy to get confused.
- At the end of each agenda item:
    - ✓ Check that each person who wanted a particular agenda item has had an opportunity to speak or contribute to the discussion.
    - ✓ Check whether anyone is unclear about the status of the agenda item. Summarize or ask someone else to summarize. Be sure the secretary has recorded the summary.
- Be aware of the "process" of what is happening to and between members: learn to look for non-verbal cues.
- Use the last 5-10 minutes to check whether:
    - ✓ You have accomplished what you set out to do.
    - ✓ You used the resources you had available effectively.
    - ✓ Review what items will be carried over to the next meeting.
- Close the meeting promptly.