

Leading a meeting. An introduction



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An introduction

We know being a chair can sound like a very formal role, but don't let that put you off! It's just the name for anyone who leads and runs a meeting.

When you lead a meeting, you might:

- ✓ Help set the agenda of what to discuss
- ✓ Help everyone understand why you're all there and what's on the agenda
- ✓ Let everyone know how to join in – for example, whether you need to raise your hand to speak
- ✓ Make sure you're following the agenda and keeping to time
- ✓ Help everyone feel involved and comfortable
- ✓ Make sure people know if they need to take actions after a meeting.

The benefits of leading a meeting

What people told us

“Being able to ensure that everyone in a meeting gets an opportunity to speak and all contributions are valued”

“Feeling like we have achieved something if it goes well”

“I found it empowering; I feel like people trust me to lead on a subject matter”

“Helping everyone to have a voice”

“Meeting new people, learning, sharing ideas and building confidence and experience”

Who's who?

An **A-Z** of tasks people could do which might help with your meetings.
(You might not need all of them.)



Agenda setting team

People who work with the chairperson beforehand to decide what needs to be discussed.



Note taker/ minute taker

A person who writes down important points – like actions and who's responsible for them. Read our guide for note takers (page 23)



Chat owl

A person who keeps an eye on the chat in online meetings to make sure nothing is missed.



Presenter/speaker

A person who usually joins you for one session to talk about a particular topic.



Co-chair

If 2 people work together to lead a meeting, they are both co-chairs. They usually share out roles, like leading different agenda items. It can be a good way to start out with leading meetings.



Tech

A person who helps with things like letting people into Zoom/Teams calls and organising breakout rooms for online meetings.



Deputy/vice-chair

A person who steps in if the chairperson is unwell or can't make a meeting.



Timekeeper

A person who keeps an eye on the clock and helps everything run to time.



Wellbeing check-in

A person who makes sure people are OK, especially if they need to step out of the room or go offline. Often a vice-chair or staff member.

What kind of meeting is this?

There are many types of meetings you might be asked to chair. They can be called different things in different organisations.

But common ones include:

Board meetings

A meeting of a charity's trustee board. Trustees help charities achieve their objectives and work legally.

Executive meetings

A meeting of senior leaders from across an organisation.

Workshops

Meetings where people work together to come up with ideas.



Handy questions to ask before a meeting

- Is it formal or informal?
- What should I wear?
- Is it online or in person?
- How often do these meetings take place?
- Who usually joins the meeting?
- What is the point of the meeting?
- What will my role be?

