

AGENDAS & MINUTES

Agendas: Agendas are lists of items which are to be discussed at a meeting.

Minutes: Minutes are the written record of that meeting.

There are many different styles of MINUTES, but the basic function is to record decisions made and summarize who is to do what by when. Formal minutes may include:

- Names of attendees
- Apologies (from those absent)
- Review of minutes of previous meetings
- Summary of discussions
- Record of proposals, decisions made, and voting details
- Action points and responsibilities
- Details of next meeting

*Any organization will normally have *three types of minutes*, which can be completely different in terms of style and detail. These are:

- Minutes written to record internal meetings; these are attended by company personnel, and are only to be used internally. These can be quite informal, and may take the format of action notes (simply recording names of who is doing what by when).
- Minutes written to record meetings with outside agencies (customers or partners), but for internal use only. These will often include subjective comments.
- Minutes written to record meetings with outside agencies (customers or partners), but for shared use or publication. These are often the most formal, and may form the basis for negotiations or contracts.

**Agendas also come in many shapes and sizes*, but may include all or some of the following:

- Objectives
- Location
- Start and end times
- Breaks
- Details of participants, including names of chair and person responsible for minutes
- Items to be discussed (with presenters' names and time allocated)
- Details of any preparation required
- Additional information or appendices

Activity: One way to practice writing agendas/ minutes is for learners to do so during a role-play designed to practice meeting skills. Learners produce minutes independently of each other, and then compare their results.

Frendo, Evan. (2005) How to Teach Business English. Longman.

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