

Sample General Meeting Agenda

Amnesty International – Central High School – October 25, 2003

1 hour, 15 minutes*

AGENDA

WELCOME

BEFORE MEETING BEGINS

1. INTRODUCTION/ ICEBREAKER 10 min

(pass around a sign up sheet at this time)

2. Review the agenda for the current meeting 5 min

3. Announce the group's successes and those of AI in general 5 min

4. Old Business 5-10 min

5. New Business 15 min

6. Human Rights Action 15 min

7. Wrap up 5 min

Meet and greet

Have "old-timers" and/or group leaders assist in greeting everyone as they enter. Engage new members in pre-meeting discussion to make them feel welcome and to learn about them.

Why use a sign-in sheet?

Any non-core members attending? The sign-in sheet is your record of who attended which meetings. It allows you to get contact information so you can follow up with new people about participating in future meetings and activities.

A small but important step!

Reviewing the agenda and asking members if they have questions or comments creates group support for the agenda and clarifies expectations about what will be discussed. This step also shows if there is enough support for each item or if there is something else that is more important that the group wants to discuss. Depending on what needs to be accomplished at the meeting, Items can be added or subtracted.

How are the group's projects progressing?

This is the time to check in on current or future projects. Use the time not only to inform group members, but also to recruit volunteers for the group's work, (e.g. sign people up for tabling, demonstrations, or to help with other events). You could include a report from various committees. If time allows, you could start this section of the agenda with quick (10-15 minute) subcommittee or working group check in meetings. Have each committee or group report out on their progress.

Why? We all know each other, right?

Giving each person a chance to be seen and heard can create a sense of belonging and participation. When conducted routinely (whether or not there are new people), introductions and icebreakers give younger and quieter members practice speaking out in the group. This can help build confidence and comfort in participating in meetings.

But introductions are so boring!

Sure they are if people only say their names -- that is where icebreakers come in. Introductions and Icebreakers provide techniques for getting to know each other better, determining people's expectations, introducing an idea to be examined during the meeting, or simply waking people up and recharging their batteries.

Take time to celebrate!

Human rights activism is challenging work. Think of ways to build your group's morale by recognizing hard work and the goals you accomplish. If 500 postcards were written for the Holiday Card Action, announce it. If five non-core members participated in an activity, celebrate that! If AI reports a prisoner has been released or an important law passed, share the good news. (To receive current information on a bi-weekly basis, subscribe to Amnesty Online at:

Next meetings

Announce the next meeting's date, time and place.

Summarize the meeting results and follow up

Wrap up with a summary of all decisions reached, individual/subcommittee assignments and deadlines.

Thank people

Acknowledge those who played a hand in preparing for the meeting. Thank everyone for coming and participating.

Review the items discussed and decisions made at the previous meeting.

This ensures that everyone has the same basic information, builds accountability, and allows people who were absent a chance to catch up.

Take Action!

Every group meeting should have an action component such as writing letters in response to an Urgent Action appeal.

*adjust the times as necessary