

## The Integrated Agenda

Bob Harris, CAE

If there is a reason to meet --- there should be a meeting agenda.

Most agendas are built on precedent, “We’ve always done it that way.” Seldom do incoming officers consider the *format* of an agenda to craft improvements. (Agenda development is often delegated to staff.)

**Agenda** - a list or outline of things to be considered or done.

### Updates and Reports

The cause of lengthy meetings is frequently a list of “updates and reports.” The information-only reports could have been provided in advance (i.e. on a board portal or emailed as PDFs to read) and then quickly managed by a motion to approve the consent items.

Reports can be handled by the concept of a consent calendar. It includes the noncontroversial, information-only reports by committees, officers and staff. Without having to read or listen to information-only reports the board can save valuable time. Redirect the saved time to more substantive issues.

**Consent Calendar** – A practice used to streamline a meeting by collecting routine, non-controversial items into a group whereby all are passed with a single motion.

### Redesign the Agenda

Craft an agenda designed to yield results. Analyze what worked or didn’t on prior agendas and suggest improvements; as a team of officers and staff.

**Timing** - Consider using a timed agenda. Add time allotments to cue directors about schedule and how much time a topic is expected to consume.

**Announcements** - After opening the meeting with introductions, consider some rules of order: 1) Remind directors (and guests) that discussions are confidential; 2) conflicts of interest should be disclosed; 3) decisions of the board will be supported by all directors after the meeting; and 4) no violations of antitrust laws.

**Approvals** – Move on to the *approval* of the prior meeting minutes, and *acceptance* of the treasurer’s financial report.

**Consent** – Next comes the consent agenda – reports provided in advance that require no action. If an item needs to be removed from consent, it is done by a motion, “I move we accept the consent calendar as provided with the exception of removing XYZ report for further discussion.”

**Integrated Goals** – Most strategic plans include 3 to 7 priorities. Keep the goals in front of the board by listing them on the agenda. Any requests for action should be aligned with the goals. The bulk of the meeting should be focused on goals and strategies to advance the mission and serve the community.

The meeting should near completion with unfinished and any new business. Be sure to include the organization’s mission statement at the bottom of every agenda.

A well crafted agenda will improve outcomes. The integration of the goals and mission in the agenda keeps directors focused on the significance of the meeting.

<b>Agenda</b>	
Date – Lunch Time	
Meeting Start-Ends	
Location	
I. Call to Order, Welcome, Introductions	
II. Antitrust, Conflicts, Confidentiality	
III. Minutes – Approval	
IV. Financials – Acceptance	
V. Consent Agenda – Staff, Committee Reports & Updates	
VI. Strategic Goals and Committee Recommendations	
<b>Value</b> – Providing ROI to Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Benefits Review/Development T/F</li> <li>✓ Education Review T/F</li> </ul>
<b>Advocacy</b> – Representing Member Interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Gov’t Affairs Comm.</li> <li>✓ Political Action Comm.</li> </ul>
<b>Promotion</b> – Increasing Market Share & Customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Buyers Guide Task Force</li> <li>✓ Tech and Social Media T/F</li> </ul>
<b>Leadership</b> – Guiding Association Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Exec. Committee</li> </ul>
VII. Other Business	
VIII. Adjournment	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px auto; width: fit-content;">                     The mission of the organization is to advance the community, maintain the highest standards of professionalism and to protect the public. <i>(example)</i> </div>	

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Note: Bob Harris, CAE, provides free governance tools and templates at [www.nonprofitcenter.com](http://www.nonprofitcenter.com)

