



How to Run an Effective Meeting

Part III: After the Meeting

/by Mindy Long/

Now that the meeting is over, it is important to take time to address follow-up issues that complete the meeting cycle. Accurate and immediate documentation of meeting issues can provide a clear understanding of what occurred, as well as what should take place between meetings.

STEP 1: SUBMIT SCHEDULE REQUESTS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

Report schedule requests to your staff manager immediately following the meeting. This will ensure that each necessary task group and subcommittee meeting will appear on the next published schedule. If there are several meetings occurring simultaneously, meeting conflicts may be inevitable.

However, communicate troublesome conflicts to your staff manager so they can be avoided, if possible. Also, request times for only those task groups that have business to discuss at the next meeting. Recognize that once the meeting schedule is published, attendees make travel plans based on that schedule so accuracy is critical. Your time and meeting space is valuable and by streamlining your schedule, conflicts and cancellations of meetings can be avoided.

STEP 2: SUBMIT NEGATIVE VOTE RESOLUTION FORMS

A ballot item that has received negative votes will remain open until all negative votes have been addressed. With proper preparation, all negative votes

should be acted upon at the meeting. The negative resolution forms should be given to your staff manager at the meeting so the action may be recorded. The five possible resolutions of negative votes are:

- Withdrawn;
- Withdrawn with editorial changes;
- Persuasive;
- Non-persuasive; and
- Not related.

More information regarding the definition of these resolutions can be found in the *Regulations Governing ASTM Technical Committees*.

The resolution forms should be completed in their entirety, including the date and signature of the subcommittee chairman. If the negative vote has been withdrawn with editorial changes, the

In April's HowTo article, you were given some tips on how to best utilize your time during a meeting. In this last of three articles on Running an Effective Meeting, Staff Manager Mindy Long describes the steps to take after your meeting is over.

Toolbox

- Step 1:** Submit Schedule Requests for the Next Meeting
- Step 2:** Submit Negative Vote Resolution Forms
- Step 3:** Prepare Minutes
- Step 4:** Prepare Ballot Items

Regulations Governing ASTM Technical Committees:
www.astm.org (click on [Technical Committees/Membership](#), then on [ASTM Standards Development Tools](#)) or contact your staff manager.

Form & Style for ASTM Standards: **www.astm.org** (click on [Technical Committees/Membership](#), then on [Standards Development Tools](#)) or contact your staff manager.

editorial changes must accompany the resolution form. For non-persuasive and not-related negatives, it is important to include the motions and vote counts from both the subcommittee and Main Committee. Non-persuasive motions should thoroughly address each aspect of the negative. Not-related motions should indicate why the negative is not related and provide assurance that the issues surfaced in the negative will be addressed at a future meeting. Once the negative resolution forms are submitted, the item may proceed to the Committee on Standards (COS) ballot for approval, unless the item has been removed from ballot due to persuasive negative votes.

Subcommittee ballot documentation does not include negative resolution forms, however, you still need to communicate the consideration of all negative votes to your staff manager. Again, these items will remain open and cannot proceed to the Main Committee ballot until all negative votes have been resolved.

STEP 3: PREPARE MINUTES

Minutes are the only permanent historical record of a committee's meetings, so accuracy, content, and distribution of minutes are very important. Swift preparation and distribution of minutes enables members to adequately prepare for the next meeting and take advantage of time between meetings. Prepare the minutes as soon as possible after the meeting as actions and discussions that took place are fresh in your mind. Additionally, committee members may rely on the receipt of minutes before

they implement promised actions, which may include items to be submitted for ballot. Send the prepared minutes electronically to your staff manager. Minutes will then be posted on the ASTM Web site, enabling members convenient access. When preparing the minutes, follow the format of the meeting agenda. Minutes should be a concise summary of discussion, not a running dialogue. Items that should be included are:

- The committee number and title, date/location of meeting, time called to order, and number of members and visitors present;
- An accurate summary of the decisions and conclusions reached;
- Negative vote resolutions, rationales, and vote counts;
- The assignments that were made identifying clearly who is responsible for what by when;
- Items to appear on the next ballot;
- The follow-up action required; and
- Time of adjournment and notice of the next meeting date, time, and location.

With precise documentation, minutes will serve as a record of decisions made and actions planned, for members who were both able and unable to attend the meeting. This will facilitate the ability of the subcommittee chairman to follow up with task group chairmen regarding actions promised.

STEP 4: PREPARE BALLOT ITEMS

The subcommittee chairman should work with the task groups to ensure ballot items are submitted by

the deadline date. To assist you with preparing the ballot items, you may request the standard on disk. Contact your staff manager for a copy of the request form. For new standards, ASTM now offers templates on the Web site at www.astm.org to help speed the development process. (See *ToolBox* instructions for accessing Templates under Standards Development Tools on the Web). These preformatted MS Word™ templates insert all of the required form and style elements as specified in the *Form and Style of ASTM Standards* book.

Use the ballot item submittal form for each item to be included on the ballot. Completion of this form assists ASTM staff with the ballot preparation. Such information advises staff of the type of ballot requested (i.e., subcommittee ballot only) and the ballot action (i.e., revision or reapproval). Additionally, this form acts as a checklist to ensure appropriate documents have been attached and proper approval to ballot has been achieved.

Although only mandatory for concurrent items or items being balloted for withdrawal, it is suggested that a cover letter accompany all ballot items. If thorough and precise, cover letters further communicate rationales and can minimize the receipt of negative votes.

Cover letters should include the following information:

- Short concise explanation for balloting the item;
- Previous ballot history; and
- Changes made due to negative votes or comments.

The meeting follow-up discussed in this article is critical to accomplish as soon as possible after the meeting. As many members are unable to attend meetings, this documentation can provide imperative information that will enable all members to keep in tune with the forward direction of the committee and its standards development. The ASTM staff is always available to assist you with your efforts. //

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