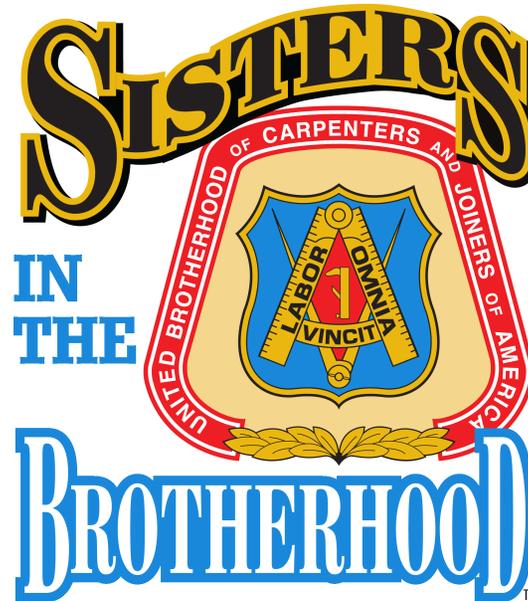


Sisters in the Brotherhood

Virtual Meetings Handbook

“Information to Help SIB Chairs Succeed”



Introduction

Due to various circumstances, Sisters may not always be able to attend face-to-face meetings. In other instances, your SIB Committee may have problems finding a location that works for everyone. Virtual meetings provide an opportunity to solve these problems as well as engage more Sisters.

This handbook contains descriptions of different types of Virtual Meetings as well as information about their usefulness and cost. At the end of this handbook you will also find a list of Tips For Conducting Successful Virtual Meetings.

Before planning and implementing any approaches in this Handbook, do the following:

- 1. Contact your Council for direction and assistance.** Your Council may have already used these approaches and can offer guidance on their effectiveness, so you will not have to recreate the wheel. You must also contact your Council if you want to use their Toll Free number to make conference calls.
- 2. Test the approach before the conference call.** With technology, many things can go wrong. So you want to make sure there will not be any problems at the time of your call. This is especially important if you will be viewing documents online or using video conferencing.
- 3. Consider the Pros and Cons of Virtual Meetings.** Remember that Virtual Meetings are not designed to replace Face-To-Face Meetings. Virtual Meetings are intended to allow Sisters that cannot participate to join the meeting. With Virtual Meetings, consider things like:
 - a. Protocol – the rules you will need to follow during your meeting. There may be certain union required practices for opening meetings, closing meetings, etc. It is important to know these rules and have a plan for following them.

- b. Purpose – the reason you cannot meet Face-To-Face. A purpose of “involving Sisters that do not attend meetings” is worthwhile as long as those Sisters participate in the Virtual Meetings. However, if the same Sisters that do not attend Face-To-Face meetings do not attend Virtual Meetings, you might want to rethink your purpose.
- c. Inclusion – the approaches you will take to include everyone during the discussion. In a Face-To-Face meeting, you can see when others do not participate. There is also a greater opportunity for spontaneous input and a greater ability to gauge the reactions of Sisters. With Virtual Meetings, you will need a plan to involve Sisters during the discussion and a way to ensure that everyone is involved. This Handbook contains a list of **Tips for Conducting Successful Meetings**. There is also a list of Meeting Resources located at the SIB Website (www.carpenters.org/Sisters).

We wish you much success as SIB Committee Chair and we hope you find this information useful. If you have any questions, please contact your District Representative.

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In solidarity,

The International Sisters in the Brotherhood Committee

Types of Virtual Meetings

Features	Web Conferencing	Video Conferencing	Conference Call	Telephone Town Hall
Description	Allows meeting attendees to talk and view documents.	Allows meeting attendees to talk, see each other, and view documents.	Allows meeting attendees to talk.	Allows meeting attendees to ask questions –may or may not be able to see attendees.
Use	Useful if you want attendees to see documents on a presenter’s computer. Examples include PowerPoint, contract, or training materials.	Useful if you want attendees to see each other. Examples include presentations where several attendees go to one location such as a Union hall or Council office.	Useful if you want attendees to hear the discussion and participate verbally. Examples include discussions to follow-up on a topic, to give feedback on an event, or provide a general update.	Useful if you want attendees to ask questions during a live presentation. Examples include presentations by an EST or a special speaker.
Cost	While web conferencing services like GoToMeeting offer a Free Trial, the service does cost.	While services such as Skype can be Free, other services can be costly.	The cost can be Free if the call is made using a cell phone or Skype. It can also be Free if using a service that offers Free conference calls.	Must hire a company to host the meeting.
Technology	Attendees will need access to a computer/smart device if documents will be viewed. Attendees may need access to a main “conference call” number to join the meeting.	Attendees will need equipment such as webcams, digital recorders, television screens, monitors, or projectors.	Attendees may need access to a main “conference call” number to join the meeting.	Attendees will need a telephone.

Resources for Virtual Meetings

Companies	Web Conferencing	Video Conferencing	Conference Call	Telephone Town Hall
<p>GoToMeeting</p> <p>Allows Attendees to call into a main “conference call” number to talk.</p> <p>The GoToMeeting (www.gotomeeting.com) website contains the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructions on how to start your 30-Day free trial • A Video that shows you how GoToMeeting works • The different Plans you can purchase • The Cost of different Plans • The number of attendees for Plans 	X	X	X	
<p>Skype</p> <p>Allows Free calls to other Skype users. Calls to landlines and mobile numbers cost a fee.</p> <p>The Skype (www.skype.com) website contains the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructions on how to use Skype • The Plan cost for calls to non-Skype users • The number of attendees for different types of calls – group call, group video call, and group screen sharing call 	X	X	X	

Resources for Virtual Meetings

Companies	Web Conferencing	Video Conferencing	Conference Call	Telephone Town Hall
<p>WebEx</p> <p>The WebEx (www.webex.com) website contains the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructions on how to use WebEx for Free • Several Videos that show you how to use WebEx • The different Plans you can purchase • The Cost of different Plans • The number of attendees for Plans 	X	X	X	
<p>Free Conference Call Company</p> <p>Some companies offer Free Conference Call services. One is www.freeconferencecall.com. Their features include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendees can share computer screens – there is a maximum number • Attendees can talk via audio – there is a maximum number 	X		X	

Resources for Virtual Meetings

Regional Council & Personal	Web Conferencing	Video Conferencing	Conference Call	Telephone Town Hall
<p>Regional Council Conference Call Number</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendees call in using a main dial-in number and a participant code. • Councils typically have main “conference call” numbers. • Considerations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Contact Council to see if permission would be granted for SIB Committee meetings. ○ If permission is granted, contact Council for scheduling to prevent double booking for your time period. ○ Before conducting the call, recheck with Council to ensure there is no conflict with your scheduled meeting time. 			X	
<p>Cell Phone Conference Call</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The presenter initiates the call using a cell phone, then adds attendees by dialing their numbers. • Considerations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Contact Carrier to verify process and limits on number of callers that can be added during the conference call. 			X	

Tips For Conducting Successful Virtual Meetings

Before the Call

1. Discuss trivial issues by email the week before the call. This can help keep the meeting focused on the most important issues.
2. Prepare an agenda – consider the following approaches:
 - a. Include an overall time for the call. It can also be useful to include time limits for each item on the agenda.
 - b. Set a reasonable agenda that includes two or three main goals/topics. If you only have 30 minutes for the call, it is unrealistic to plan to cover 10 topics.

Also, you do not want to always go beyond the scheduled time period. Participants will have devoted a certain time for the call and they will be frustrated if you always schedule 30 minutes but the call always lasts 60 minutes.
 - c. If topics will be covered by certain participants, contact them before the meeting to verify time needed and to ensure they are prepared.
 - d. Email the agenda at least two days before the call. This will give participants time to review the topics and prepare.
3. Get a volunteer who is willing to take notes during the call. This should be someone who will not be required to make major contributions during the call.

During the Call

1. Open by welcoming everyone to the call. Then, do a “go around” to verify who is on the call. You can do this by calling on each person by name.
2. Follow the agenda – consider the following approaches:
 - a. Appoint a timekeeper. That person can let you know when time limits have been reached for each topic. She can also let you know when you have 5 minutes remaining for the call.
 - b. If someone diverges onto a long tangent, respectfully bring the conversation back on track. For example:

“Shirley, although your point about the lack of female training instructors is a good one, our goal for this meeting is to plan for the Labor Day rally. Perhaps we can make time for the female training instructors discussion after we complete our agenda items.”
 - c. If you run out of time, ask the participants if it is OK to add 5 or 10 minutes. If there is some objection or if the call will need to be extended for quite a bit of time, put those items on the agenda for the next call.
3. If certain people are silent, call on people specifically who haven't spoken throughout the call by saying things like:

“___, what are your thoughts”? “___, do you have anything to add”? “___, how does that idea sound to you”?

At the End of the Call

1. Take 5 minutes to recap by summarizing agreed upon actions.
2. Schedule the next call, or remind everyone of the date if it is already scheduled.

After the Call

1. Send meeting notes to everyone no later than one week after the meeting.

SIB Website Resources (www.carpenters.org/Sisters)

Below are a few items at the SIB website, **Resources for SIB Committees** section, that can assist you in conducting Virtual Meetings:

Website Group – Getting Started & Managing Meetings

1. Chair a Committee
2. Meeting Checklist
3. Sample Meeting Agenda
4. Tips for Taking Minutes at Meetings
5. Implementing an Agenda
6. 11 Sample Agendas for Committee Meetings
7. Robert's Rules of Order
8. Using Web Site Resources

Website Group – Involving Sisters & Supporting Development

1. Ways to Involve All Sisters in SIB Committees
 - a. Committee Tasks
 - b. General Task Sign Up Form
 - c. Specific Task Sign Up Form
2. Using Members for Committee Operation