Lesson Number: **RNH.10.1**

Running Effective Meetings

Purpose:

The purpose of this lesson is to help students understand how to organize and manage effective meetings.

Quick Reference:

Time Required:
Two 60-minute periods

Objectives:
After completing this lesson, students should be able to:

1. Describe the importance of well-run meetings.
2. Identify the elements of a well-run meeting.
3. Describe the importance of executive committee meetings and what should be accomplished during executive committee meetings.
4. Develop effective meeting agendas.
5. Define the four main objectives of parliamentary law.
6. Describe how to properly set up a meeting room.

Materials:

- ✔ Writing surface
- ✔ Writing utensil
- ✔ Scissors
- ✔ Paper clips
- ✔ FFA paraphernalia
- ✔ Official FFA Manual
- ✔ RNH.10.1.AS.A – one per student
- ✔ RNH.10.1.AS.B – one per student

Directions:

Describe the value of effective meetings.

1. Share with students the following information about meetings:
   a. During meetings members have the opportunity to get involved in the operation of the organization and develop a sense of ownership.
   b. All meetings must have a purpose because people are busy and maintain full schedules.
   c. Poorly planned or useless meetings build dissension and resentment among the members of a group.
2. Ask students if they have ever sat through a poorly organized meeting or event.
3. Follow up with students by asking them how they felt about it and if it made them want to attend another activity sponsored by that group.
4. Indicate that planning good meetings takes time and effort, but failure to do so may result in turning people away from an organization.
5. Brainstorm with students the types of things they like to include in meetings and encourage them to work these types of activities into their agendas throughout the year (examples: guest speakers, recreational activities, refreshments).

Explain that all meetings should have a specific purpose and help them understand that the executive committee should meet in advance to plan a well-run meeting.

6. Explain to students that meetings should have a specific purpose in order to keep members engaged. Some of these purposes might be:
    a. Conducting the business of an association or organization
    b. Providing educational opportunities for members
    c. Helping members develop leadership and personal skills
    d. Providing social activities or entertainment for members
    e. Recognizing the outstanding work of members
    f. Getting reports on events or activities that are being planned
7. Discuss the importance of planning effective meetings in advance so that people can work them into their schedules and so that the time spent in the meeting is of value to the members.
    a. Lead students to the connection that for these reasons, FFA chapters develop an annual program of activities.
8. Explain that prior to each scheduled meeting the executive committee should meet to develop the agenda and prepare any necessary officer and committee reports.
    a. All assignments should be made (refreshments, special guests, recreation, etc.).
    b. All of the officers and the advisor should attend executive committee meetings.
    c. Committee chairs may also be included, especially those whose committees are reporting at the upcoming meeting.

Provide students with the tools to create a sample agenda.

9. Advise students that the meeting agenda should be posted in the meeting room several days prior to the meeting so that members can see what will be addressed. The agenda could also be distributed to members electronically.
10. Help students understand that an agenda should follow an established order of business. Provide each student with a sort packet, created from RNH.10.1.AS.A, and a copy of RNH.10.1.AS.B, to create a framework for an order of business. See RNH.10.1.AS.A for directions to create sort packets.
11. Tell students that they will work in groups of two to organize the items of business in the sort packet into an order of business on RNH.10.1.AS.B. They will have two minutes to sort the items.

12. After two minutes, have the students share where they believe each item is placed in the order of business. As students share, record the items on the writing surface. Provide guidance so that students know the correct order of business as indicated on RNH.10.1.AS.A.
13. Have students record the order of business on paper once the order of business is finalized on the writing surface. Describe that the order of business can be modified to meet individual chapter needs.

Introduce the following guidelines for conducting effective meetings. A Motion e-Moment® may be used to help students grasp the information. Motion suggestions are provided in parentheses.

14. Explain to students that there are certain guidelines to follow for meetings in order to keep members engaged and updated on the program of activities of the organization.
    a. Always use a prepared agenda (mimic writing with one hand in the palm of the other hand).
    b. Use correct parliamentary procedure and official FFA ceremonies where appropriate (mimic tapping a gavel two or three times).
    c. If time allows, adjourn for brief committee meetings, then reconvene (point to your wrist, as if a wrist watch were there).
    d. Review the monthly calendar of events (mimic flipping through pages as if the imaginary pages were a calendar).
    e. Try to meet at the same time and day of the week on a consistent basis (with one index finger, point to the palm of the other hand repetitively).
    f. Include a student-planned program. Members might find interesting presenters from the following groups: school staff or students; university faculty or staff; FFA alumni members; state FFA officers; employers; parents and other community members (point both thumbs to the chest to represent a member-planned meeting).
    g. After the meeting, offer a recreational event planned by students, such as bowling, skating, basketball, volleyball, softball, swimming, movies, bonfire, refreshments, etc. (make the motion of swinging a bat).

Introduce the concept of parliamentary procedure by defining the four main objectives of parliamentary law.

15. Explain that effective meetings take into consideration the rights of the minority and yet follow the rule of the majority.
    a. This means that everyone has a chance to participate and present their ideas, but that the majority will make the decisions.
16. Ask students if they know what this set of rules, or law, is called. Lead them to the phrase, parliamentary procedure or parliamentary law.
17. Record the following main objectives of parliamentary law on the writing surface:
    a. Focus on one item at a time.
    b. Extend courtesy to everyone.
    c. Observe the rule of the majority.
    d. Ensure the rights of the minority.
18. Have students record these objectives of parliamentary law on notepaper. Read through them as a class and ask students what they think each means. Provide guidance and explanation for any misconceptions.

Show students how to set up a meeting room. Use the chapter paraphernalia as a visual to help students conceptualize where each officer should be stationed.

19. Explain that the meeting room arrangement affects how effectively the meeting will operate.
    a. A properly furnished meeting room will add dignity to the function and instill pride in the members.
20. Ask students to think about what we use in FFA chapter meetings as a tool to setting up the meeting room. Lead them to paraphernalia (officer station markers).
21. Ask the students which officer is responsible for the proper arrangement of all meetings. Lead them to the sentinel.
22. Provide students a copy of RNH.10.1.AS.C and have them fill in the correct officer as the instructor places the correct paraphernalia items around the room.
23. Start by identifying the front of the room and ask students which officer should be stationed at the front of the room. Place the President's station marker at the front of the room and have students record "President" in the correct space on the activity sheet.

24. Continue with the remaining offices. Refer to the current Official FFA Manual for the correct placement of officers. The instructor may wish to create a mnemonic to help students remember where each officer station is located in reference to the front of the room.

Extend thinking about effective meetings.

25. If time allows, use the "Meet, Critique, but Be Discreet" activity, RNH.10.1.AS.D; and RNH.10.1.AS.E to extend thinking about effective meetings.

Connection Questions:

1. Where have I seen effective meetings take place?
2. What made these meetings effective?
3. Where have I seen ineffective meetings take place?
4. What made these meetings ineffective?
5. How will our organization benefit from effective meetings?
6. What are some steps to ensure effective meetings take place?

LifeKnowledge Connections

Precept(s) Addressed:

Action

A3. Plan effectively.

Relationships

B1. Practice human relations skills including compassion, empathy, unselfishness, trustworthiness, reliability, and listening.

Awareness

E2. Perform leadership tasks associated with citizenship.

Mental Growth

J1. Think critically.

Communications

M5. Operates effectively in the workplace.

LK Lesson Suggestion:

MS.30 – Identifying Important Skills for all Careers
MS.46 – Identifying Planning Skills
HS.5 – Leadership Styles
HS.7 – Using Your Community as a Laboratory for Learning
HS.41 – Understanding the Use of Time
HS.68 – Defining Roles on Teams
HS.81 – Decision Making in Groups
AHS.26 – Mobilizing Others to Action
AHS.33 – Aligning Activities to Mission and Vision in Groups
AHS.34 – Strategic Thinking and Planning
AHS.42 – Responsible Citizenship
AHS.44 – Organizational Planning
AHS.47 – Creating Engaging Chapter Meetings

Order of Business Sort Packet

Directions to instructor: Cut out each bulleted item, mix up, and secure with a paper clip. Create a sort packet for each student.

- Opening Ceremony
- Minutes of the Previous Meeting
- Officer Reports
    - President – executive committee meeting, appearances, etc.
    - Vice President – update on Program of Activities progress
    - Treasurer – financial report, budget update
    - Reporter – public relations update
    - Sentinel – equipment repairs, clean-up crew schedules, meeting set-up crews, etc.
    - Others
- Program (for example: guest speaker)
- Unfinished Business (a great opportunity for committees to meet)
- Committee Reports
- New Business
- Special Ceremonies (if any)
- Closing Ceremony
- Adjournment
- Entertainment, Recreation, Refreshments

Name: _____

Date: _____

Order of Business

Place each item in the order it should occur to create a meeting agenda.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

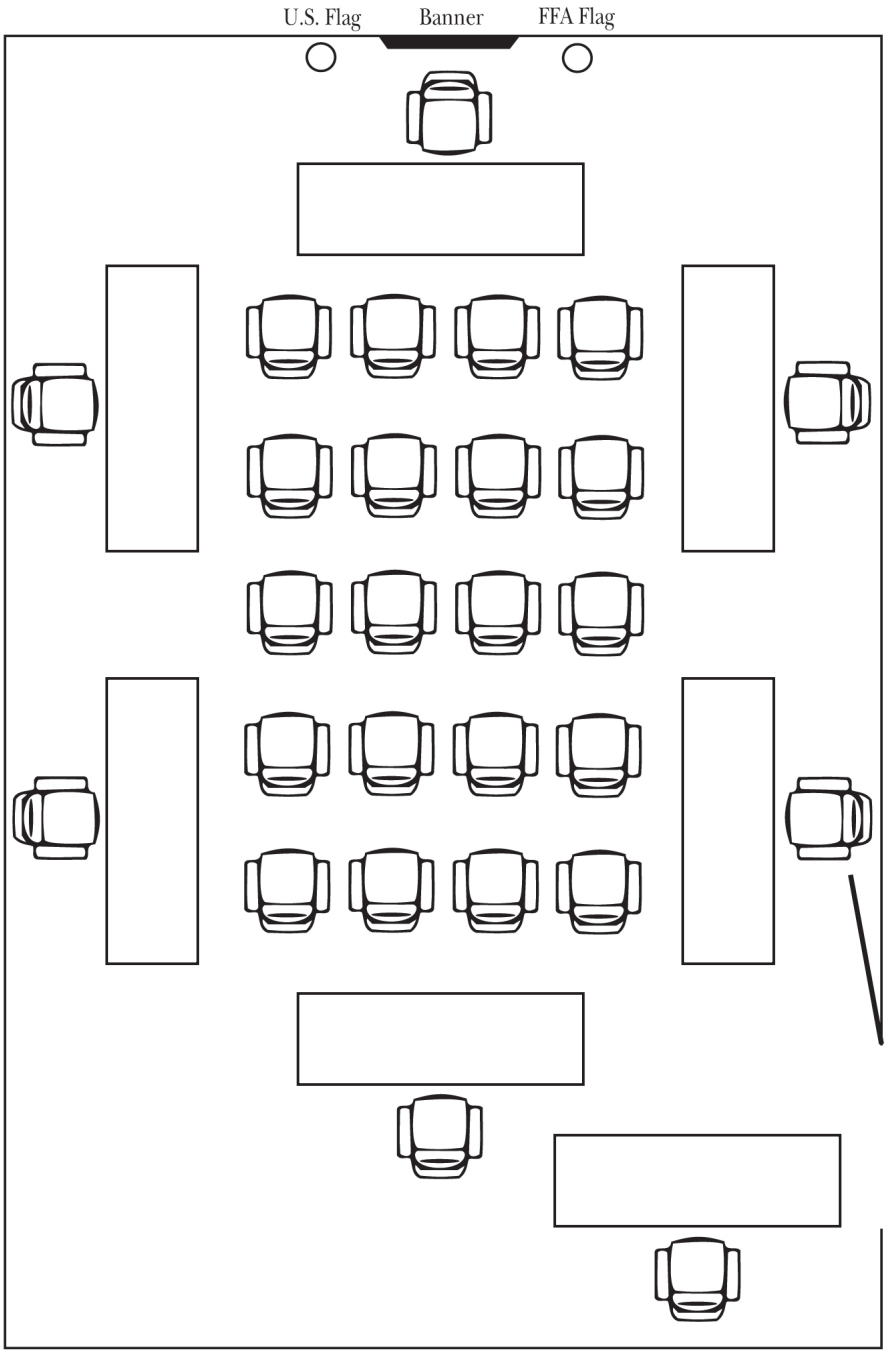
8.

9.

10.

11.

Meeting Room Arrangement



Meet, Critique, but Be Discreet

Quick Reference:

Time Required:
15 minutes to introduce students to the activity; a two-hour commitment by students outside of class time; 30 minutes to discuss students' evaluation findings

Materials:
- ✔ Copies of RNH.10.1.AS.E – one per student

Teacher Preparation:
Consider local community organizations where students can carry out this activity. The instructor may wish to contact community groups to begin the process for students, or to provide students with a list of meeting times.

Purpose:

The purpose of this activity is to enhance meeting planning skills by observing and evaluating a community meeting.

Directions:

1. Announce to the class that as a way of enhancing their meeting skills, they have the opportunity to attend and evaluate a community meeting. Establish criteria for an appropriate meeting. Sample criteria may include:
    a. The meeting must be of an organization with consistent meeting policies.
    b. The meeting must provide an agenda or program.
    c. Students need to contact the group's leaders prior to attending the meeting.
    d. Students must provide their own transportation; encourage students to attend in small groups (in official dress or chapter t-shirt).
    e. Students must have the meeting approved with the teacher before attending.
2. Brainstorm community meetings that would be appropriate (school board, city council, county commission/supervisors, agricultural organizations such as Farm Bureau, etc.).
    a. Newspapers usually list upcoming meetings. Have students check for possibilities.
3. Distribute and review RNH.10.1.AS.E, "Community Meeting Observation."
4. Discuss appropriate observation behavior.

Meet, Critique, but Be Discreet

5. Have students role-play unexpected situations, such as being asked to introduce themselves at the meeting or being asked their opinion on an issue.
6. Set a due date near the end of the grading period.
7. At or near the due date, discuss the students' observations.
8. Discuss what types of modifications students can make to improve the FFA chapter's meetings.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Community Meeting Observation

Name of group or organization observed:_____

Date of meeting: _____ Location: _____

Starting time:_____ Ending time:_____

Attach a copy of the agenda or program.

1. Explain the items on the agenda/program and how the meeting was conducted.

2. Describe the role the members or leaders played during the meeting.

Community Meeting Observation

3. Describe the role you played in the meeting.

4. What leadership styles/activities did you observe? Describe the names and titles of people in leadership roles you observed, the leadership styles they demonstrated, and activities they led.

Community Meeting Observation

5. What did you learn from attending this meeting?

6. Describe how the meeting was run.

7. What suggestions do you have for improving this meeting?