**Meeting Convener How-to**

A successful group relies on the ability of its members to successfully convene meetings, a task which seems simple but can often be very challenging. In theory all members want to meet, but the challenge comes when some forget to check their email, or some check their email and forget to respond, or some check their email and respond but forget to put it in their calendar, etc etc. The role of a meeting convener, among other things, is to make sure that no one forgets such details; one can be forgiven for feeling like they are pestering others, but don’t give up!

1. Agree to convene the next meeting, usually done during the current meeting
2. Set a date for the next meeting, you can just pick a date and hope for the best – if no one speaks up to say that day doesn’t work, you can reach out to core members you expect want to come to make sure that the date will work. Another option is to create a doodle poll, which can be done here: <https://doodle.com/create>
3. If the date was set in the meeting, it may be sent out by the person taking meeting minutes, just make sure it actually happens either way. If the date wasn’t set in the last meeting, send out an email with the date you suggest, or with a doodle poll, and;
4. In the same email, include the agenda items that were tabled or need to be revisited, and call for additional agenda items.
5. Send out personal emails to all of the people who took on action items from the last meeting – depending on the agreement made with the minute taker from the last meeting, you may not need to do this. It’s likely best for you to do this as you will follow up on this later.
6. Figure out whether there needs to be food, and if so, coordinate this yourself or delegate it to another willing member. You may need to do outreach regarding food preferences and restrictions.
7. Depending on how soon the next meeting is, send out a reminder after a little while, even if the meeting is pretty far away. In so doing you will help those one or two people who saw the email but forgot to respond. It is important to do so early on as people’s schedules are less likely to be filled up. This includes checking in with the person coordinating food that they are still able to.
8. Type up the agenda and send it out a little while after doing #7. This allows time for people to prepare. Send a follow up email, or ask the minute taker from last meeting to send a follow up email, to all those who took on action items last time. This allows people to be prepared; it can be a bummer when a month goes by, you’re in the meeting, and the meeting facilitator asks you about an action item that you totally forgot about.
9. Send personal texts to all those who attended the last meeting and those others that you would also like to attend the next meeting reminding them about the meeting and the email you just sent with the tentative agenda. Check in with the food person if necessary.
10. The night before or day of, send out a final reminder by email and personal text. This may feel like overkill but it gets results. Feel free to refrain from personal texts to those that you already have solid commitments from
11. If possible, print out enough agendas for each person, and bring pens and pencils. Make sure the food is taken care of!
12. See if you can find a new person to convene the next meeting at the start of the meeting; this could be aided by picking the next meeting date then and there. Doing so at the start of the meeting ensures it actually gets done.