

# The Ten Worst Meeting Offenses

1. Being Unprepared:
  - A. Includes Staff Officers or anyone designated to report.
  - B. Make sure that all technical aides being used are operational.
  - C. Always provide an agenda and support material in advance.
  
2. Starting on Time:
  - A. Insist on starting the meeting at the scheduled time.
  - B. Whether your meetings are attended by 12 members or 200 members showing up late or starting late will damage the image that you should be trying to project.
  - C. A Meeting Hog is a person that talks just to hear himself or herself talk. You should encourage your Officers and Staff to have a written Report to present to the membership...there is nothing worse than an Elected or Appointed Officer standing and saying "Nothing to report sir." What have you done for the Detachment during the time between the monthly meetings? If you have nothing to report, it's self-explanatory...
  
3. Take Part in the Meeting:
  - A. Don't just sit there if you have something to offer...Many times a member will not rise to address the body but wait until the meeting is over and then approach the Commandant or one of the Staff and offer something that is beneficial to the Detachment.
  
4. Sitting Silently during the Meeting:
  - A. The extreme opposite of not taking part is the member that has nothing to offer during the meeting except idle chatter. You should refrain from private meetings because it is not only rude, but you may also miss something important being said.
  
5. Expressing Rude Body Language:
  - A. Avoid making facial gestures and rude comments during presentation because you disagree with what is being said...You will get your chance to address the body if you so desire. Never get up and leave the room in disagreement. If you show the speaker the lack of respect to at least listen, then you have lost

the battle.

- B. It is the duty of the Commandant to manage those being disrespectful in a tactful way and do not ever put a member down by trying to humiliate him.

6. Sidebar conversations are a NO-NO:

- A. Sidebar conversations are possibly the rudest thing that can happen during the meeting...This should be stopped immediately and refocus on the subject at hand.

7. Arguing or putting others down:

- A. Disagreements are Healthy and Fine, but never get into personal attacks. Don't make others look bad for the sake of making you look good! Never be condescending or avoid the opinions of the membership. Always be professional in your choice to disagree.

8. Cells Phones:

- A. When the Commandant orders the Sgt-at-Arms to open the meeting, he (Sgt at Arms) will open the meeting according to the ritual and the following "The smoking lamp is out and please turn off all Cell Phones". Additionally, there should be **NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES IN THE MEETING ROOM.** This is a common sense ruling because we all know that alcohol changes your perspective.

9. Chewing Gum or Eating:

- A. While chairing a meeting, the membership does not want to hear you chewing gum...A bottle of water is permissible.
- B. The staff or Board of Trustees should not be indulging either.

10. Shutting Down the Meeting:

- A. We all know that if a meeting runs too long, you are probably going to have some disgruntled members...If you are in the process of conducting some important business and it needs to be settled then and there, you should ask for a motion to extend the meeting an additional fifteen minutes...This shows the membership that you care about them and are trying to be as expeditious as possible.