

MINUTE TAKING

FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Minute taking has changed. The requirements and expectations of the 21st century are very different from the expectations 10 years ago.



For more information on minutes, meetings, chairing meetings, governance, or meeting procedure contact **David Price**, Australia's expert on everything to do with meetings and governance.

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- Modern Minutes are written for people who were at the meeting, not for people who were not!
- Around 60% - 70% of the minute taker's work is done before the meeting begins. Most, but not all of this work is in the preparation of the agenda. If the minute taker is to do their job well, then he or she must be involved in physically preparing the agenda.
- Modern minute takers take the minutes directly onto a laptop computer, edit if necessary as they go, and then email them to the participants (often from the meeting room)
- Modern minute takers spend very little time "transcribing" their notes – the minutes are virtually finished as the meeting finishes.
- With a small number of exceptions, recording the names of who said what in the discussion which takes place is not required in modern minutes. Modern minutes are action oriented, and record issues and decisions and action only, not discussion.
- Many modern minute takers use a table format. Table format minutes are fast becoming the accepted "standard."
- Modern minute takers don't use shorthand. People who take minutes using shorthand usually take down far too much and sometimes get themselves and others into trouble because of it!
- Smart minute takers never tape their meetings (and a wise chairperson will never allow it.) Using a tape recorder creates far more work than it saves.
- In every type of meeting, the minute taker has a crucial role to play and therefore needs to be an active, although perhaps relatively silent, participant. There will be times when you must speak. To do this you must sit next to the person in the chair. (A chairperson who understands their own role and yours, will not let you sit anywhere else!)