



## SIX After the Meeting

The person who plays the most important role after the meeting is the secretary. The secretary should transcribe the minutes immediately after the meeting, when everything is still fresh in memory. To test whether the minutes make sense, even for someone who was not present in the meeting, the secretary could ask someone who did not attend the meeting to read the minutes to ensure that the right meanings are conveyed. Sentences should be short and clear and simple language should be used. Once the minutes have been written up, the secretary should forward these to the chairperson for her/his approval. The minutes should then be sent forward to the members within two weeks of the meeting to enable members to carry out delegated actions or assignments promptly.

Circulating minutes early helps members to prepare for the next meeting, as they will have enough time to study the resolutions of the previous meeting in detail.

### | Evaluation

Where possible, members should be given the opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of the meeting and to make suggestions for continual improvement. This could be done through the development of a questionnaire aimed at assessing the following:

- logistical arrangements;
- clarity of purpose;

- contribution and participation;
- secretary's planning for the meeting;
- chairperson's role in facilitating the meeting;
- achievement of objectives;
- value for time committed; and
- management of time.

Although evaluation is itself a time-consuming exercise, it is an important part of good governance, as emphasised by the King 2 Report. It forces members of council to assess their own performance, individually and collectively, and to become more sharply aware of factors that detract from the effectiveness of meetings. In the USA, the Association of Governing Boards actually runs programmes to assist university and college boards in evaluating their performance. Where serious shortcomings are identified in the performance of a council, it should consider using the strategy of team-building exercises to enable members to work together more effectively.