

Your First Minute-Taking Meeting

What to have ready before you walk in, and what to do when things move faster than you can write.

Before the meeting

- ☐ Get the agenda in advance, even a rough one
- ☐ Know the full names and roles of who's attending
- ☐ Check who's chairing, and confirm you can ask them for clarification during the meeting
- ☐ Have a template ready (see over the page)
- ☐ Test your recording device if you're using one, and always have a backup: pen and paper works
- ☐ Know where minutes get filed and who they're circulated to afterwards

What actually needs recording

- ☐ Who was there, and who sent apologies
- ☐ Decisions made, in plain terms
- ☐ Actions agreed: what, who owns it, by when
- ☐ Anything formally proposed and voted on
- ☐ Any objection someone specifically asks to have noted

What doesn't need recording

- ☐ Word-for-word speech, unless a formal statement is being made
- ☐ Every comment in a discussion, only the outcome
- ☐ Side conversations and small talk
- ☐ Your own opinion on what was said

What to say when you miss something

“Sorry, could you repeat that last point before we move on?”

Use this the moment it happens. Don't wait and hope you'll remember.

“Just to confirm for the minutes, what was agreed there?”

Use after a decision that felt unclear or came out of a messy discussion.

“Can I check who's taking that action forward?”

Use when an action is implied but nobody's actually been named.

Your safety net: say this every time

“I'll circulate a draft, please flag anything I've got wrong.”

Said at the end of every meeting, no exceptions.

A simple template to start from

Section	What goes here
Attendees / Apologies	Full names, roles
Decisions	What was agreed, in one line each
Actions	Action · Owner · Deadline
Next meeting	Date, if set

Good luck in there. – Erin

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