

# Minute Taking

## Overview

**Duration: One Day**

Minute taking is a skill that everyone should learn. Taking minutes means effectively recording the key elements of a meeting, either verbatim or through summarising decisions and actions or creating a narrative. The technique of minute taking is sometimes taken for granted, but it is a skill like any other and takes careful preparation to perform correctly.

This course is aimed at anyone that might have to take minutes as part of their job role, and it's reasonable to suggest that the task could be performed by anyone within an organisation at some time or another.

## Description

Taking minutes is a skilled job because the minute taker must follow discussions and debates that are often confusing and inarticulate, and then summarise them accurately.

Why is taking this course a good idea?

Meetings are more effective and efficient if they have well documented minutes because:

- Decisions are recorded
- Action items and who is responsible for them are tracked
- Key points are captured, enabling those who missed the meeting to know what happened without taking up time in subsequent meetings

Topics covered:

- **The basic principles of minute taking** – Participants review the different type of minutes that can be taken, the reasoning behind each, and the function of minutes.
- **Getting prepared for the meeting** – A review of the elements that should be considered before a meeting where you are due to take minutes. Focusing on any discussions you might need to have with relevant people and the information that should be covered. There is also a focus on the different roles of people in the meeting and how this relates to the minute taker.
- **Agenda preparation** – Understanding what makes for a well-planned, effective agenda.
- **Good listening skills** – This is crucial to minute taking and so this session reviews the listening skills of the participants, looks at what barriers there might be to actively listening during meetings and how to overcome these. There is also a

review of how to work back from a decision to identify the important elements to record.

- **Note-taking** – A review of all the different methods of note-taking, the benefits and pitfalls to each, and identifying the best type to use.
- **Writing the minutes** – A practical examination of the structure and layout of minutes.
- **The ABC of good writing** – Providing a structured approach to ensuring the minutes are written clearly and are: Accurate, Brief and Clear.
- **Narrative minutes** – A series of exercises to test and improve narrative writing skills. Finally focusing on how to create an Introduction, Summary, Decision and Action.
- **Preparing for minute taking practical** – A chance to prepare for the practical simulation of a meeting where they will take minutes.
- **Minute taking practical** – Applying the skills they have learnt throughout the day in a practical activity.
- **Reviewing and checking the minutes** – A review of the participant's progress with suggested improvements and what worked well.

### **Who Should Attend?**

Anyone. It's not unreasonable for anyone to have to take minutes at some point in their career.