

PLANNING THE 10-MINUTE BUILDING MEETING

MINUTES	TOPIC	RATIONALE
2 MINUTES	Brief overview of major topics discussed at last month's Rep Council Meeting	We're keeping members informed. Keeping members informed is not a matter of how much they are told. Rather, it's a matter of their feeling that leaders are working hard and regularly to inform them.
4 MINUTES	Here is a current issue. We need your consensus before we go to the next Rep Council Meeting where we shall submit your collective views.	The mere process of getting member consensus reinforces in the member's mind that his/her opinion is sought and subsequently presented to the voting body. The Building Rep who neglects this step is asking for mistrust and hostility from members.
3 MINUTES	A 3-minute review of a current issue that is close to the heart, soul and gut of members in this building.	This may not be the burning issue to come up at Rep Council, but members need to feel that the Association is conscious of their needs. We could fill up these minutes with "important" matters, but the individual member needs to feel some relief on a topic that touches him/her. Often just talking about a problem gives considerable relief.
1 MINUTE	We're having some success in this area or, we're optimistic in this area-thanks to your efforts. Keep up the good work!	Praise. Encourage. Nourish the members toward developing a spirit of cautious optimism. An "all is lost" attitude, culminating in "I give up" too often kills support for Association goals, especially during negotiations.

"Time's up! We told you we could do it in 10 minutes! Don't forget to leave your questions and suggestions at the door."

TRY 10-MINUTE BUILDING MEETINGS

Building reps who hold regular building meetings have the best shot toward strengthening membership rapport, especially in difficult times.

"But they won't stay for a building meeting," you complain. "They're too busy." Try promising them a ten-minute building meeting--timed by the clock. You'll receive talking points after each Rep Council Meeting to help you plan your 10-minute REA Building Meeting.

Why is the building meeting so important?

Often it seems expedient for the building rep to skip it and vote in rep council without having gained consensus from members, or by merely "sensing" the opinions of members. But regardless of how well the building rep reads members' minds, to neglect to ask for member consensus robs them of knowledge that they have a voice and the feeling that their opinions count in the decision-making process.

When members begin to feel their opinions are sought and carried back to the decision-making body, the building rep is out of danger. It is detrimental to a Rep's role to make decisions alone, to be paid off later with members' anger and distrust.

Most of us consider snappy, business-like Association meetings a rarity. Why not try the ten-minute building meeting?! Submitting comments/ an exit slip allows the member the opportunity to let off steam through this process. The building may thus speak later, on an individual basis, to those who write down their concerns on the exit slips collected at the door.