



IMIA COMMITTEE ESSENTIALS

Know your organization's strategic plan

It is important that as an active member you are aware of the organization's strategic plan. Our Strategic Plan can be found on our website under the About Us section at <http://www.mmia.org/about/strategicgoals.asp> Many of the actions on this plan have been accomplished but the idea is for each member to be aware and align him/herself with the plan so we can all be working towards the same goals.

What does the IMIA Bylaws say about Committees?

ARTICLE VI. COMMITTEES

Section 1. Election of Committee Chairs

All Committee Chairs will be elected every two years in the fall by the majority vote of the active voting members. The term of office begins on January first, allowing a transition period. These Chairs will be elected for a term of Two (2) years and may be reelected for additional terms.

Section 2. Standing Committees

Bylaws, Certification, Education, Fundraising, Membership, Communications, Nominations, Provider Outreach, and Scholarship

New committees will be voted in by the majority of the Executive Board at the request of a member. An active committee is one with more than one member and with regular monthly meetings. A committee which does not have a meeting in four months will lose its standing committee status and become an inactive committee. A committee member that does not attend for two months in a row will become an inactive committee member. Committee chairs can reinstate such a member.

Section 3. Reports

Every committee chair shall submit a report of its activities to the membership at the annual meeting and to the Executive Board of the Association at the Executive Board meetings. Standing committees must submit monthly meeting minutes to the Executive Board for review.

Note: To view the full IMIA Bylaws, please go to <http://www.mmia.org/about/bylaws.asp>



Committee Members

The function of the committee member is to function as a team member that takes a portion of the work of the committee, based on the decisions and tasks that the committee decides to undertake. The committee members are expected to:

- Sign a confidentiality agreement and a conflict of interest disclosure
- Alert chair if not able to attend a meeting
- Attend all monthly meetings, to the extent possible
- Contribute in a positive way to the discussions
- Allow all members to take turns and not overpower the conversations
- Have a positive attitude even when your colleagues don't agree with a great idea
- Communicate disagreements in a positive and constructive way, not getting personal or contributing blame or less than noble motives to other members of the committee
- Alerting the board of any situation that makes you uncomfortable
- Always emailing the whole committee
- Avoiding discussion of issues in between meetings, saving them for meeting time so all can participate
- Maintain confidentiality of discussions or actions or decisions until and if they are announced in the eNews

Committee Chairs

The function of the committee chair is to guide and facilitate the committee in its work, consistent with IMIA Bylaws and strategic plan and as outlined by the president, executive committee and board of directors. Responsibilities of the chair include:

- With the committee, develop a work plan that will allow the committee to effectively and efficiently discharge its responsibilities for the year. This work plan should be posted and updated on the website.
- With the committee, develop agendas and conduct committee meetings.
- Attend all committee and general board meetings.
- Designate an alternate facilitator for a meeting rather than cancel a monthly meeting.
- Exercise leadership by following the Roberts Rule of Order.
- Write or designate a committee member to write monthly meeting minutes.
- Approve minutes at each meeting before their submission to the board for approval and posting.
- Maintain records and relevant information on committee work.
- Archive important committee documents on the back end of the website.
- Move members toward participation and decision-making.
- Report to the committee on the decisions of the executive board that affect the committee's work/activities.
- Where appropriate, draft committee recommendations to the executive board.
- Submit a public report (previously approved by the Board) of the committee's activities at the annual meeting.



Committee Meetings

Meetings should start no later than 5 minutes after the meeting time. The meetings can be useful even with few members, and as long as minutes of the meeting are submitted, the idea is that some of the work can be accomplished.

The IMIA Committee meetings will follow the Robert Rules of Order. This format is the most democratic, preventing endless discussions that attempt to achieve complete consensus. This format allows members to agree to disagree and move on. The majority vote is what drives the decisions, and the major decisions are made by the group, not by the chair. For more information on the Robert Rules of Order, please go to <http://www.robertsrules.com> as it is important that you understand these rules. The Frequently Asked Questions is a must-read as it clears up common misconceptions and misunderstandings <http://www.robertsrules.com/faq.html#1>. A summary version is available at <http://www.robertsrules.org/indexprint.html>

Working Plans

One way to organize, focus and activate Committees is by associating a work plan with each. A work plan usually includes specific goals, objectives and deadlines for achievement. Committees perform four main functions:

1. *Preparatory work leading up to board decisions - such as developing policy options and recommendations for the consideration of the board.*
 2. *Carry out tasks on behalf of the board in specific areas.*
 3. *Work with the board to implement strategic goals, operations and activities.*
 4. *Serve as groundwork for future board and committee members.*
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Committee Authority

Committees receive their authority from the Executive Board. Staff members or other individuals may also be given authority to do a job on the board's behalf. The Committees make decisions and then take the actions required. Operational actions and decisions are made internally, while strategic decisions require the board's approval. The board delegates power in four degrees:

1. *Limited advisor: The committee investigates and reports. The board makes the decision.*
 2. *Active advisor: The committee investigates and suggests action. The board will consider the committee's suggestions.*
 3. *Limited agent: The committee can take action after the board has agreed to the action.*
 4. *Active agent: The committee takes action and reports on the action taken. The board later approves of the action.*
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Tips for Committees

- Limit committee discussions to topics that fit the organization's mission, vision, values and priorities.
- Send out agendas and preparatory materials ahead of meetings so that people can come prepared to work.



- Give committee members and executive board sufficient notice of meetings and try to avoid making last minute changes to the schedule. Regular monthly meetings are considered the most reliable. (Example: first Thursday of the month at 6pm, or second Tuesday of each month at 3pm, etc.)
 - Begin and end your meetings on time.
 - Times of meetings have to accommodate all time zones.
 - Assign tasks as evenly as possible.
 - Finish the meeting with a task list to be accomplished before the next meeting.
 - Solicit, and then listen to, everyone's input. Allow and encourage all members to give their opinion during discussions prior to vote.
 - Assume that even the most off-the-wall ideas make sense to the people who express them. Instead of rejecting such ideas out of hand, ask for clarification.
 - Don't fight over ownership of an idea. The important thing is that the idea is out there to potentially benefit the organization.
 - Speak only for yourself. Let others provide their own explanations or rationales.
 - Your committee will not always have consensus. The Roberts Rules of Order works on a majority vote, so decisions will be passed even if you vote against them. While difficult, it is important that all committee members respect their committee's decisions, even when personally not in favor.
 - **Keep action-oriented minutes**
 - a) *record only resolutions and votes, not "he said/she said";*
 - b) *include sections such as supplies to order, ideas to implement, people to call;*
 - c) *summarize with who will do what, by when.*
 - **Follow-up after the meeting.**
 - a) *those who missed the meeting will receive the minutes of the previous meeting;*
 - b) *do what you promised to do at the meeting.*
 - **When preparing a report to the board. Include:**
 - a) *the committee's recommendations;*
 - b) *the pros and cons of each recommendation;*
 - c) *the rationale for the recommendations made.*
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Sample Discussion for First Committee Meetings

- Designate a committee member to take minutes of this meeting
- Introduction to committee members, including their talents and possible contributions to the group, and how they relate to each other (put an email and phone list together)
- List the tasks of the committee which can be written as goals, with measurable outcomes (see strategic plan)
- Set monthly meeting dates and times for the 12 months ahead.
- Review regular obligations to Board
- Record the committee's goals and tasks in written form and decide on who will do what
- To view a sample agenda for an IMIA board meeting, email vonessa.costa@gmail.com