



Ideas for Being an Effective Committee or Regional Council Member

- Know the rules of the Committee/Regional Council, for example, how meetings are run, when to vote, how to get items on the agenda, how decisions are made, etc. If you don't know the rules, work with your support person to learn about them.
- Listen carefully to what is happening during the meetings.
- If you don't understand something, ask questions. If you still don't understand, ask again, or ask your support person at a later time to explain it to you.
- If you are unsure when to speak, work on signals with your support person to help you know when to become part of the discussion. Be sure to speak out before a vote or a final decision is made.
- Stay on the topic that is being discussed and don't talk for too long. Make your point and then give others their turn to talk.
- Listen to everyone with respect, with no put-downs.
- If you feel like people are not listening to you with respect and don't treat you equally, talk to them about it. If that doesn't help, be sure to talk to the Chairperson.
- Remember you are a team player. Sometimes decisions will be made that you don't agree with, while other times decisions are made that you will agree with.
- Remember that the Committee/Regional Council may talk about things, which should be kept confidential. This means that you should not discuss certain topics with people from outside the Committee/Regional Council (even family and friends). If you are unsure which topics are confidential, ask someone from the Committee/Regional Council.
- Keep all your materials and notes together - this will help you to find things when you need them.

- Appearance - A good Committee/Regional Council member has a clean appearance. When going to a meeting wear clean and neat clothes. If unsure, ask your support person to let you know if your appearance is okay.
- Remember that as a person and an effective Committee/Regional Council member you have rights. But also remember you need to accept your responsibilities.
- Remember to turn off any mobile devices you have so that they don't cause distractions during the meeting.
- Have fun being a member of the decision-making group!

Keys to Working with a Support Person

- Have respect! Treat your support person, as you would like to be treated.
- Don't expect your support person to always understand what you mean when you tell him/her what you would like them to assist with. Make sure he/she knows what you need.
- Be patient! Your support person, probably, will not do everything right the first or second time.
- If you feel your support person has done something you don't like, tell them in private.
- If you need to and feel comfortable doing it, talk about your disability. This might help your support person understand your situation.
- Talk about each meeting afterwards. Discuss what worked for you, what did not work, and how the meeting went for you.
- Talk with your support person on a regular basis about how things are going. Make changes if needed.
- Have fun working together!