

# Table Setter

Good meetings are often the result of good preparation.



Church Board Chair  
Discussion Sheet

Evangelical Missionary  
Church of Canada  
Following Jesus Together  
emcc.ca

## Preparedness is a Biblical theme.

*For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do (Eph. 2:10).  
Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have (1 Peter 3:15).*

Why do we tend to not take meeting preparation seriously?  
What are some of the consequences you have experienced from poor preparation?  
How would you rate yourself and your board on preparedness?

### 1. Preparing Yourself:

How do you prepare yourself - physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually for a meeting?  
What habits could you adopt to be more personally prepared for your meetings?

### 2. Preparing the Agenda:

Designing a purposeful, thoughtful agenda contributes significantly to a board's effectiveness.  
When it comes to preparing the agenda:

\_\_\_\_\_ Are you a passenger?      \_\_\_\_\_ Are you the driver?      \_\_\_\_\_ Is it a shared journey?

In theory, the agenda should be set by the board chair because the meeting belongs to the board.  
In best practice, the agenda is the joint creation of the Chair and the pastor. What is your practice?

- a. Agenda Filter.      The Chair is responsible to filter the items that make it on the agenda. Filter questions screen out unnecessary agenda items.
- b. Agenda Flow.      Energy and focus change throughout meeting. Beginning = easy work; Middle = hard work; End = action steps.
- c. Chair Agenda.      Chair's should have a more detailed version of the one issued to the board members - containing: background, time needed, action required.
- d. Consent Agenda.      At the front of the board agenda, a consent agenda contains items the board will receive, without discussion. All items are adopted in one motion.
- e. Rolling Agenda.      Think of your monthly agendas as part of a continual year-long agenda. Certain items are cyclical – budget, pastoral review, policy review, orientation.
- f. Spiritual Agenda.      Church board agendas should build in opportunities for prayer and devotion. The Chair must be mindful that God has an agenda for the meeting.
- g. Green Bananas.      Adding to the agenda at the meeting is dangerous. Often boards are not prepared to deal with last-minute items. Pressing ahead with items that are not ripe for decision are called "green bananas."  
It is best to let new items ripen until a future meeting.

### 3. Preparing the Board:

It is the Chair's responsibility to see that all materials are distributed prior to the meeting.  
What can the Chair do to encourage and enhance board member preparation?