

DOCUMENT 3: FORMAT OPTIONS FOR FA MEETINGS

This document is intended to help your meeting choose the best format options.

In 2011, the FA World Service Conference voted that one of the requirements for registering as an FA meeting is that a meeting use the FA Sample Meeting Format found in the Meeting Guidelines on the FA website and entitled “Document 4: FA Sample Meeting Format.”

Small meetings typically rotate the format options throughout the month. Traditionally, larger meetings have been qualification or sharing meetings, but even larger meetings have benefited from using the FA literature format in their meetings.

Ultimately, newcomers are considered first and foremost when we choose a format option.

Meeting Format Options

Qualification Meeting: Leader tells their story (“qualifies”), describing what their life was like before becoming abstinent, what happened to bring them into FA, and what their life is like now. After the break, the leader invites qualified members to share, as written in the sample format.

FA Speaker Recording Meeting: Small meetings and young fellowships may use an FA speaker recording in lieu of a live speaker. These recordings, which are available on CD and MP3, allow meetings to benefit from hearing members with long-term abstinence. If your meeting is using an MP3, check that the phone is sufficiently charged and on airplane mode. Also, please download the MP3 prior to the start of the meeting. We do not recommend using the phone’s speaker; a small portable speaker allows everyone in the room to hear and is a good use of Seventh Tradition funds.

Sharing Meeting: The leader invites sharing of experience, strength and hope from qualified members. The leader may also share briefly. This format option is only recommended for meetings with many members who have 90 days of continuous abstinence in FA.

Literature Meeting: Careful choice of literature will ensure that discussion remains focused concretely and specifically on food addiction and FA recovery. Newcomers come to FA expecting to hear about food, weight, or food/weight obsession and might be bewildered by a discussion of character defects or amends. Discussion of the Steps and how we work them can easily confuse or overwhelm them. Therefore, *Twenty-Four Hours a Day*, *The Little Red Book*, and *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* (“Twelve and Twelve”) are not recommended for literature meetings.

Recommended Selections:

- ***Alcoholics Anonymous* (“Big Book”) Meeting:** Leader chooses an excerpt or a chapter to read. We do not recommend using any of the passages on Steps Four through Twelve, starting from the first full paragraph on page 64 through the end of page 103. Instead of reading the books for sale on the literature table, the meeting should set aside and mark books as “meeting copies.”

- **Food Addicts in Recovery Anonymous Meeting:** Leader chooses a chapter to read. Some meetings prefer to read through the book beginning to end and use adhesive page markers in each book to mark the place, adding the optional wording to the format: “Please move your page marker to the next chapter.” We do not recommend using any of the passages on Steps Four through Twelve, pages 386 through 416. Instead of reading the books for sale on the literature table, the meeting should set aside and mark books as “meeting copies.”
- **connection Meeting:** The leader selects a *connection* magazine article.
- **Pamphlets Meeting:** The leader selects one of the following FA pamphlets.
 - “20 Questions”
 - “Before You Take That Bite”
 - “Food Addiction: There is a Solution”
 - “Some Thoughts on Sponsoring”
- **Tools Meeting:** Leader chooses a tool from the “Living Abstinently” booklet, but we recommend reading from beginning to end. Some meetings use adhesive page markers in each book to mark the place, adding the optional wording to the format: “Please move your page marker to the next tool.” The meeting can share on one tool for the whole meeting, or read one before and one after the break.

For the literature format, some meetings choose to allow members to share at any point during the reading. If the meeting votes in this option, the following wording can be added to the format: “Any member with 90 days or more of continuous abstinence in FA, currently working with an FA sponsor, may raise their hand to share during any part of the reading.”

Other practices to consider

- A meeting should not end early. Instead read from *connection* or from a pamphlet if there is no one who is able/willing to share.
- Many meetings will change their weekly format choice if there is an out-of-town visitor who can qualify.