

Telephone Meeting Secretary Duties

The secretary/leader facilitates the telephone meeting, using the suggested format posted on the Grey Sheet Website. In general, the secretary/leader makes certain that the telephone meeting runs smoothly, by staying on top of and trying to eliminate background noise, making sure that announcements get made, seeing to it that the speaker follows the time line guidelines, and ensuring orderly sharing by those who attend the meeting.

Format Used by the Secretary/Leader

The meeting format is on the GreySheeters Anonymous website at: <http://www.greysheet.org/formats.shtml> or can be mailed by the former secretary to the new secretary.

The secretary's duties include:

1. Dial into the phone bridge meeting using the organizer's code. This means the secretary will not be muted entering the conference, and s/he will need to manually mute during the qualification in order to not be heard.
2. Ask everyone to join in saying the Serenity Prayer.
3. Welcome those on the telephone.
4. Have volunteers read (or, if no one volunteers, reading) the GSA Preamble, the Cambridge Grey Sheet Preamble (this is sometimes called "the Statement of Purpose" or, more usually, "the original Grey Sheet Preamble"), the Twelve Steps, the Tradition of the month and the 12th Tradition. These can be downloaded from the GreySheeters Anonymous website at: <http://www.greysheet.org/readings.shtml>.
5. Go around the "virtual room" and have people introduce themselves by first names only, saying where they are calling from, if they wish. If several people speak at once, the secretary encourages each one to say his/her name again.
6. Read the telephone etiquette, reminding those attending to keep the noise level down and to put on the mute buttons. The new telephone bridge number recognizes a mute button: the "6" key. To unmute, callers press "6" again. In some rare cases, if technologies aren't compatible, one can put a towel over the mouthpiece.
7. Ask the speaker to qualify for 15 or 20 minutes by telling his or her story, which follows the suggested AA guideline in Chapter 5 of The Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous: What it was like eating; what happened that brought the speaker to GreySheet, and what it's like now that the speaker has 90 or more days of abstinence.
8. The Secretary puts the conference call into "Presentation" mode, so that only the qualifier may be heard.
9. After the speaker qualifies, the secretary puts the conference call back into Q&A mode so callers may share.
10. The treasurer gives her/his report and announces his/her name and address (or the secretary does so in the treasurer's absence).
11. Ask those counting days to introduce themselves.
12. Ask for those who are qualified and available to sponsor to provide their names and phone numbers.
13. Ask for GreySheet-related announcements (usually of upcoming meetings, Round Ups, Retreats or new meetings).
14. Open the meeting for sharing.
15. Most telephone meetings ask that those sharing do not mention specific food by name, do not speak longer than 3 minutes, and do not interrupt one another or cross talk.
16. At 5 minutes before the end of the meeting, ask for those who want numbers of people to call out the names, then ask those whose names were called out to stay on the line.
17. Lead the meeting in the closing prayer (usually the Serenity Prayer), and in the few remaining minutes, the numbers sought are given.
18. Stay on the line to answer any basic questions from newcomers or others.
19. Questions not pertaining to the phone meeting itself should be referred to one's sponsor or to GSA World Services, Frequently Asked Questions: <http://www.greysheet.org/faq.shtml> or Getting Started: <http://www.greysheet.org/start.shtml> .

Dealing with Noise and Disruption

Usually after noise has gone on for more than a moment, the secretary interrupts by saying something like, "Excuse me, (name of speaker), I need to address the noise. Whoever is running water, talking to their child, has a barking dog, is watching TV or multitasking, etc., please press the "6" key to mute or move away from the noisy area and call back from a quieter location." The noise stops and the secretary invites the speaker or sharer to continue speaking. If the noise continues, the Secretary may press the special key to cycle through to Q&A mode to re-mute all callers.

Who can serve as a Secretary?

- Anyone who has 90 days of consecutive GreySheet abstinence and feels called to do service may serve as the secretary of a telephone meeting.
- Service supports our abstinence and fulfills our primary purpose!