How to Take Effectives Minutes

Steps to Effective Note taking:

1. Create an outline - have an outline (or template) based on the agenda to help draft notes during the course of the meeting.
2. Check-off attendees as they enter the room - if unsure of attendees, ask people to introduce themselves at the start of the meeting or circulate an attendance list.
3. Note discussions, decisions, references to action items - do this right away to ensure accuracy.
4. Ask for clarification if necessary - for example, if the group moves on without making a decision or an obvious conclusion, ask for clarification of the decision and/or next steps involved.
5. Don’t try to capture it all - writing down the conversation verbatim will be difficult, so be sure to simply (and clearly) write (or type) just the decisions, assignments, action steps, etc.
6. Record it - to be able to keep up with note taking, consider recording the meeting (on your smart phone, iPad, recording device, etc.) but be sure to let participants know they are being recorded. The recording is not intended to provide a word-for-word transcript of the meeting, but rather to help in clarification.

Steps to writing effective meeting minutes:

1. Write the minutes as soon after the meeting as possible while everything is fresh in your mind.
2. Review your outline and add additional notes or clarify points raised. Also check to ensure all decisions, actions and motions are clearly noted.
3. Check for enough detail in the discussions, actions proposed, actions taken, etc. For example, a) include a short statement of each action taken and a brief explanation of the rationale for the decision, or b) when there is extensive deliberation, summarize the major arguments.
4. Edit to ensure brevity and clarity - minutes should be easy to read.

1 Obtained from the Wild Apricot website describing how to write effective meeting minutes (http://www.wildapricot.com/articles/how-to-write-effective-meeting-minutes).
2 Obtained from the Wild Apricot website describing how to write effective meeting minutes (http://www.wildapricot.com/articles/how-to-write-effective-meeting-minutes).
Additional suggestions include\(^3\):

- Be objective
- Write in the same tense throughout
- Avoid using people’s names, except for motions
- Avoid inflammatory or personal observations, adjectives or adverbs
- If you need to refer to other documents, attach them in an appendix or indicate where they may be found. Don’t rewrite their intent or try to summarize them.

\(^3\) Referenced from [EffectiveMeetings.com](http://EffectiveMeetings.com) which offers the tips from the International Association of Administrative Professionals (IAAP)