

West Contra Costa Unified School District
Board Governance Subcommittee
Selecting the Right Size of Committee Membership
September 21, 2015

Excerpt taken from: *Importance of Effective Committees, Chapter 6*
www.ashe.org/about/chapters/pdfs/handbook/06_committees.pdf

Selecting the Right Size of Committee Membership

The purpose and the nature of its work determine a committee's size. In order to select the most appropriate size for your committees, here are some things to consider:

- If you need a prompt outcome, keep the size of the committee small. Smaller committees tend to take less time to organize, can communicate more effectively, and can act more quickly.
- Create a larger committee if it is important to have a wide variety of member participation. Larger committees usually enable the chapter to hear more viewpoints and opinions, and to get more thoughtful recommendations. An added bonus is that because of their size, larger committees have more members to promote the value of a program or activity. In addition, the larger the group, the less likely all the work will fall to one or two people.
- Determine the number of members on a committee based on the number needed to represent all segments of your membership.
- Use a small committee when seeking administrative direction.

For example, think in terms of large groups for a conference committee, and a smaller group for nominating work. There is no magic number to the size of committees, however it has been determined that 10-15. This will allow the committee to work in smaller groups (if necessary) in order to accomplish the objectives of the committee. It will also allow the committee to meet, make recommendations and reach decisions as a quorum.