

EFFECTIVE TEAM MEETINGS

PLANNING FOR A SUCCESSFUL MEETING

Following these steps will help you better prepare and facilitate an effective meeting:

PRIOR TO THE MEETING

1

CONSIDER NOT HAVING A MEETING



Are you meeting for the sake of meeting? Could something be better communicated via email? Test the importance of a meeting by asking, "What happens without it?" If your answer is "Nothing," then don't call the meeting.

2

CONSIDER WHO SHOULD BE THERE



Invite only those people who are absolutely necessary to achieve the objective of the meeting.

3

IS THIS THE RIGHT TIME TO MEET



Are all the people available who you need at the meeting? Do you have the needed information?

4

THE PURPOSE OF THE MEETING



The person leading the meeting should be able to clearly state the purpose of the meeting (e.g. decision making, problem-solving, planning, evaluation) and its desired outcomes.

5

AN AGENDA



This should be prepared and distributed before each meeting, including the time allocated to each section of the agenda. Considerations around time constraints should be addressed beforehand. Do all the items relate to the purpose of the meeting? Arrange items on the agenda in order of importance.

6

IDENTIFY PRE-WORK EXPECTATIONS



The first part of a meeting should not be spent reading a document together. Let people know what "homework" should be done prior to the meeting time.

7

CONSIDER ROOM ARRANGEMENT



This will often be determined by the size of the group and the physical space you have.

DURING THE MEETING

- ❑ Start the meeting on time.
- ❑ Review the agenda items and planned times for each item.
- ❑ Establish ground rules: Establish expectations about how the meeting will proceed. When will you elicit feedback, how much time for Q & A, etc.
- ❑ What is the desired cell phone and laptop etiquette?
- ❑ Take minutes: Minutes should be simple and clearly highlight decision points.
- ❑ Get everyone talking: Don't let people be silent participants. Make a conscious effort to include everyone. Usually it is just a matter of saying, "John, what do you think?"
- ❑ The facilitator should control interruptions and digressions.
- ❑ If this is a planning or brainstorming meeting, utilize a flip chart or white board.
- ❑ Ensure that action comes out of discussions: Don't finish any discussion in the meeting without deciding how to act on it. Action items should include 1) What will be accomplished, 2) who will accomplish it, 3) when and how it will be accomplished (time frames and deliverables).
- ❑ Have a "parking lot" This is for topics not on the agenda that come up.
- ❑ If there is time left: If the initial agenda items are finished, move on to looking at issues in the parking lot.
- ❑ End on time: Do not run over allocated time unless everyone agrees.
- ❑ Evaluate your meeting process: Assign the last few minutes of every meeting as time to review the following questions: What worked well in this meeting? What can we do to improve our next meeting?

AFTER THE MEETING

Get minutes to those in attendance shortly after the meeting.