

How to Have Good Meetings

When you decide on actions in your meetings ... do they ever get acted on?

Meeting Analysis Checklist

- ✓ Does one person do all the talking?
- ✓ Are participants taking notes?
- ✓ Do people know the goal of the meeting?
- ✓ Are the items discussed ever addressed outside of the meeting?

Meeting Tools

- **Flip chart or wipe board.** Let everybody see the discussion.
- **Agenda.** Ensure people come prepared to discuss.
- **Parking lot.** “That issue isn’t on our agenda. Write it on the parking lot to handle later.”
- **Leader.** Designate someone to ensure the team sticks to the agenda and schedule.
- **Recorder.** Designate someone to record what has been discussed and what the team has committed to (i.e., the action plan).
- **Action Plan.** What will you do? How will you know it’s done? Who will do it? When?

A Sample Agenda

1. Leader welcomes and introduces new members
2. “Old Business” to check on progress of commitments from previous meeting
3. Each attendee briefly updates others on their responsibilities:
 - **Bright Spots**—what’s working well
 - **Challenges**—what they want to improve
 - **Requests**—help needed from their teammates
4. Guest presentations
5. Leader summarizes commitments made (including how to handle parking lot items)
6. Leader announces next meeting

Tips

- Give members a chance to pick best day and time (then stick to it, regularly!).
- Let the team decide on “norms” by which they will operate: one conversation at a time; no decision until we reach consensus; even what happens when team members violate the norms. (This can be fun--see your coach for ideas.)
- If the leader is absent, meet anyway. The next in line can facilitate, using the agenda.
- Expect resistance to regular attendance. The fight is worth it if your meetings are useful to solving team members’ problems.
- Solicit feedback from members about how effective the meetings are. Workbooks like “Facilitation at a Glance!” have sample exit surveys. During meetings, ask, “Are we making progress? Do we need a break? Etc.”
- Encourage quiet members to speak; remind vocal members to give others turns.