

SUCCESSFUL MEETINGS

MEETING AGENDAS

Every successful meeting is based on a well planned agenda. In many organizations the responsibility for creating meeting agendas is left to members of the staff. In order to create effective agendas, without the input of the committee chairman, the staff members need to become very skilled at mind reading.

You may have been to a meeting where the leader arrives at the last minute and then asks the members or the staff member "What are we going to do today?" This type of behavior conveys the message to the volunteers that very little thought has been given to the purpose of the meeting and therefore their time is likely to be not efficiently used.

In order to develop an effective meeting agenda, the leader needs to first decide what needs to be accomplished at the meeting. Once that decision has been made, the leader then needs to schedule those activities and discussions which will help the group to accomplish the objectives for the meeting.

A sample meeting agenda has been included with these materials. Also included are worksheets which can be used to develop effective meeting agendas.

LEADERSHIP AGENDAS

Another useful tool in conducting successful meetings is the use of a Leader Agenda. This agenda contains additional items which will help the leader to conduct an effective meeting. The leader agenda might include notes about the following items to assist the leader in guiding the meeting:

- Time allocations
- Handouts needed
- Audio/Visual presentations
- Items to be accomplished in breakout groups
- Delegation of some meeting activities
- Hints and tips for the leader

A sample Leader Agenda and Leader Agenda Worksheets have been included with these materials.

MEETING GUIDELINES

There are a number of ideas and techniques which can be used to make meetings more effective and productive. A summary of the key points for some meeting guidelines and techniques have been included with these materials.



SAMPLE MEETING AGENDA

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Chair:

Vice Chair:

AGENDA

PPAR Vision Statement

PPAR Mission Statement

Committee Goal

- I Welcome, Introductions and Overview
- II Review of the Plan Updating Process
- III Review of the Committee Action Plan
- IV Review of the yearly meeting schedule and commitment
- V Discussion of recent changes/developments in the organization
- VI Development of Key Issues for next revision of the plan
- VII Development of plans for Focus Group Activities
 - A Locations and Dates
 - B List of Questions
 - C Focus Group Assignments
- VIII Discussion of Member Survey
- IX Plans for future meetings
- X Other considerations
- XI Adjourn

Meeting Guidelines - Group Dynamics

1. Build group cohesiveness
2. Recognize the value of others
3. Stress the importance of the discussion to the individual and the group
4. Stress prestige to your committee members
5. Emphasize a commonness of interest
6. Encourage reflective group search and discovery
7. Encourage permissive interaction
8. Tolerate periods of silence
9. Respond to communication with acceptance
10. Develop harmonious interpersonal relations
11. Cooperation, not competition

Meeting Guidelines - Town Hall

1. Generate issues of major concern
2. Getting active participation from the group
3. Gives them ownership in the meeting
4. Become more motivated to participate
5. Way of internalizing content
6. Participant is more active than passive
7. Leader becomes responsive to the group
8. Roles are reversed
9. Can participate in a variety of ways

Meeting Guidelines - Task Groups

1. Group size reduced for better focus
2. Minimum of three to maximum of twelve
3. Clear, specific tasks within a set time frame
4. Several groups can be operating simultaneously
5. Leader is no longer the sole resource
6. Low risk environment
7. Controlling their own progress
8. Numbering off techniques
9. Break up power groups increases individual sensitivity
10. Smaller groups need less time
11. Provide instructions before people break into groups

Meeting Guidelines - Brainstorming Rules

- * Don't criticize any suggestion
- * Strive for quantity, not necessarily quality
- * Encourage freewheeling, i.e., wild ideas, and the wilder the better
- * Urge the members of the group to hitchhike

"Imagination is more important than knowledge, for knowledge is limited, whereas imagination embraces the entire work, stimulating progress, giving birth to evolution." - Albert Einstein -

Meeting Guidelines - Discouraging Words

- * "Don't be ridiculous."
- * "We tried that before."
- * "It's too radical a change."
- * "That will make other equipment obsolete."
- * "We're too small/big for it."
- * "That's impractical for operating people."
- * "Let's get back to reality."
- * "You're two years ahead of your time."
- * "You can't teach an old dog new tricks."
- * "We'll be the laughing stock."

Meeting Guidelines - Some Things Not To Do

Conference Leaders fail if they:

- * Talk too long
- * Are show-offs or radiate egotism
- * Have a superior attitude
- * Drink intoxicants before the conference
- * Tell off-color stories
- * Are funny at the expense of conference members
- * Are not enthusiastic
- * Discourage and dishearten by criticism
- * Do not apply the principles and concepts they teach in the conference in their training, their selling, their personal management and their daily lives. They, in effect, are saying to the conference members, "Don't do as I do, but do as I say."
- * Don't radiate enough sparkle, joy or enthusiasm
- * Dress sloppily or not professionally
- * Have a "know-it-all" attitude
- * Lack warmth, sympathy, empathy, kindness and love in their leadership
- * Offend conference members by airing their personal, political or religious views