



Guide to Meetings

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Meeting Planning Checklist

- Why meet?
- Who to include?
- What to discuss?
- How to record ideas?
- Where to meet?



Meeting Goals and Purpose

Identifying problems	Solving problems
Brainstorming ideas	Gathering information
Organizing	Decision making
Completing	Planning for implementation



Balancing Competing Needs

- Maximize speed
- End on time
- Prioritize task by emphasizing a fast decision
- Be individually accountable; resist “groupthink”
- Work with limited perspective and resources
- Maximize input
- Take time needed to be thoughtful & creative
- Prioritize process by promoting discussion and inclusion
- Be mutually accountable: move with the group
- Work with diverse perspectives and resources



Who to Invite?

- How many participants?
- What type of group do you want?
- Who needs to be there?
- How much background or new information do they need?



Orchestrate the Roles

- Who will serve as facilitator?
- Who will serve as scribe?
- Who will serve as timer?
- Who will serve as minutes writer?



Set the Agenda

- Specify the purpose and the participants
- Schedule agenda items
- Explain each agenda item
- Decide on the discussion format
- Decide on a decision-making technique
- Distribute the agenda in advance



Opening the Meeting

- Set the tone
- Remind participants of their roles
- Reach agreement on ground rules
- Involve people early
- Use icebreakers with new groups



Mental Listening Skills

- Remove internal and external barriers
- Show an active interest in understanding others
- Hear the differences between issues and motives
- Distinguish between logical and emotional content



Nonverbal Listening Skills

- Posture – “an open center”
- Eye contact – “listening/speaking connection”
- Facial expressions and nodding
- Hand and arm gestures
- Awareness of others’ body language



Space around You

- Space for yourself – sit or stand?
- Space between people
- Space at the table
- Space based on culture



Decision-making Models

- Executive or expert decisions
- Majority vote
- Consensus



Ending the Meeting

- Know when to end
- Summarize the meeting
- Confirm the summary
- End on a positive note
- Follow-up to ensure implementation