

Quick Tips on Meeting Management

There are three types of meetings: data gathering, information sharing, and problem solving. You may find it helpful to decide what kind of meeting you are going to have before it starts and plan accordingly.

PREPARATION:

- Take a few minutes to yourself to collect your thoughts just before the meeting begins.
- Set the tone by starting the meeting with a review of the agenda.
- Schedule meetings well in advance to ensure attendance.
- Have a printed agenda to keep the meeting on task - you wouldn't believe how much time is lost when you get off track.
- Don't try to get everything into one meeting. Be realistic and plan accordingly.

MOTIVATION:

- Learn names and use them. It's often useful to have brief introductions at the beginning of the first meeting.
- Get the members moving. Make a mental task physical - it may help members put more creative energy into the project.
- Have FUN!! If you aren't interested, no one else will be, either.
- Don't use your position to intimidate. It's easier to get things done through respect than through fear.
- Keep your goals in sight.

DELEGATION:

- You can't do everything. Don't be afraid to delegate and don't be afraid to say "No".
- Delegation takes the burden off of you and makes others feel important.
- When delegating, you may want to say WHAT needs to be done and let others come up with HOW.

CONDUCTING THE MEETING:

- Remember to get updates from committees and individual projects. (How is the project coming along? Do you need any help? Are there any new ideas?)
- Keep an open mind when new ideas come up. They may seem unrealistic, but remember that a "flying machine" once seemed impossible, too.
- Respect others' opinions.
- Nothing will work out EXACTLY the way you want it to, so be flexible.
- Use everyone's knowledge to work towards a common goal. It makes things easier when you don't have to do all the thinking.
- Always respect the people with whom you work. Don't interrupt unless they get off task, and then do so with tact.
- Don't alienate anyone by unintentionally offending them.
- When members get off track remind them of time constraints and the task at hand.
- Give everyone a chance to have input.
- Acknowledge questions or comments. You may find it helpful to have a speakers list if a lot of people want to talk, so that everyone knows s/he will have a chance to speak.
- Take time for questions toward the end of the meeting. If you don't know the answer, write the question down and have an answer by the next meeting.
- Try to end the meeting with some FUN whenever possible, even if it's just some time to socialize; it helps to keep people coming back.



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