

# Guidelines for Conducting Effective Meetings

## **Planning the Meeting**

The preplanning and thought that proceeds a meeting will determine the who, what, when, where, why, and how many. It is extremely important to determine the desired outcomes you, as the leader, need from the meeting. If you are unclear of the “why” for the meeting, how can the participants understand the purpose of the meeting? Use the checklists below to help ensure your meeting is successful.

***Checklist for Setting Up and Planning Your Meeting:*** (Adapted from Mastering Meetings for Results, Interaction Associates, Inc.)

- Determine the purpose and type of meeting
- Determine if any additional people need to attend (staff resources, guests) and determine roles
- Reserve appropriate room and equipment
- Identify potential problems that could arise and strategies to handle them
- Develop agenda
- Send agenda and meeting reminder to committee members
- Make copies of agenda if needed
- Arrive at the meeting room early to double-check room arrangements

## **Conducting the Meeting**

During the meeting, the leader (chair) and committee members act as a team with a focus on desired outcomes. Use facilitative techniques to keep the meeting moving.

### ***Checklist for Conducting Meetings***

- Start on time
- Get agreement on desired outcomes, agenda, roles and ground rules
- Clarify decision-making process
- Clarify/explain any constraints that might limit solutions
- Review/revise and get agreement on agenda
- Keep meeting on track
- Summarize what has happened periodically during the meeting
- Listen as an ally
- Ask open-ended questions
- Encourage participation
- Protect others from personal attack

- Include a meeting wrap-up on your agenda so you can review actions and agreements at the end of the meeting
- Identify agenda items for the next meeting and confirm date/time

### **Following Through**

The meeting wrap-up will provide an opportunity to review and confirm actions and agreements. It is also helpful to conduct an evaluation of the meeting: what worked; what needs improvement. Based on this information, future meetings can be improved.

#### ***Checklist for Following Through:***

- Prepare and distribute meeting summaries (includes agenda & minutes)
- Make sure unresolved issues get addressed.
- Follow through on action items
- Acknowledge accomplishment
- Report back to constituencies