

What Great Meetings Do

- Build stronger relationships
- Use valuable time effectively
- Help groups confront and resolve problems more creatively
- Increase participation and teamwork
- Result in people feeling more inspired
- Bring out the best in people
- Result in breakthrough thinking
- Generate commitment and shared ownership
- Increase overall productivity and performance

The Reasons Meetings Fail

- No advance planning and preparation
- Undefined purpose and outcomes
- Agenda does not include desired results or time frames
- Wrong people are at the meeting
- No agreed upon ground rules for how the group will work together
- Participants wander off track
- Only certain people talk during the meetings
- Decisions do not get made
- Meeting leader lacks effective facilitation skills
- Dysfunctional behavior isn't managed
- Starting late and ending late, without confirming who will do what by when

Before the Meeting – Plan the Meeting Carefully

1. Define the purpose of the meeting, the desired results, agenda topics and time needed for each topic, as well as who needs to be there, the length of the meeting and the location.
2. Arrange meeting logistics such as equipment, supplies, room set up, refreshments, etc.
3. Send out the agenda and any pre-meeting work in advance.

During the Meeting – Manage the Opening, the Middle, and the Closing

4. Review the meeting purpose, the desired outcomes, agenda, and time frames. Ask for revisions, then finalize the agenda. Identify meeting roles. Post a “Parking Lot” and use it to capture issues to be addressed later.
5. Keep the group focused on the topic being discussed. Encourage participation and sharing of different perspectives. Ask questions to invite participation by all attendees. Clarify the decision-making process (e.g., consensus, majority vote, etc.)
6. Summarize the decisions, agreements and action plan (who will do what by when). Identify agenda items for the next meeting and schedule the meeting date, time and place. Debrief with participants and solicit feedback on what made the meeting effective or ineffective.

After the Meeting – Follow Through for Results

7. Distribute the meeting summary in a timely manner. Follow-up on action items to ensure progress on agreed-upon next steps.