Running an Effective Meeting

Common Meeting Mistakes

1. Drifting Off Subject
2. Poor Preparation
3. Questionable Effectiveness
4. Lack of Listening
5. Verbosity of Participants
6. Length
7. Lack of Participation

Solutions

1. State your Objective
2. Prepare an Agenda
3. Manage Meeting Time
4. Take Charge
5. Close with a Summary & expectations for next meeting

Meetings can be classified into two major categories:

- *Informational meetings* provide strictly information to participants often in the form of updates and advice. The emphasis is on the content shared.
- *Decision-making meetings* often involved problem solving and/or goal setting. The emphasis is typically on interactions and solving the issue.

Deciding to Meet:

- Be consistent with date, time, place and length
- Provide 24 hour notice if cancelling a regularly scheduled meeting
- For bigger projects or events, a half or full day planning meeting may be more effective

Before a Meeting:

- Define the purpose/ objective of the meeting
- Develop an agenda
- Distribute the agenda and any necessary materials that will need to be discussed at the meeting
- Determine a time limit and stick to it
- Send reminders about the meeting

During the Meeting:

- Greet members and make them feel welcome
- Start and end on time
- Stick to the agenda, avoid tangents if at all possible
- Encourage group discussion
- Keep minutes for future reference
- Summarize agreements or decision reached
- End the meeting on a positive note
- End the meeting with the objectives and expectations for the next meeting

After the Meeting:

- Transcribe any minutes and distribute out
- Follow up with delegated decisions
- Put unfinished business on the agenda for next time

What to Include in the Agenda:

- When the meeting will begin
- Guest speakers
- Any reports from officers or committees
- Follow up from any old business or evaluation of a recent event/program
- any Old Business or unanswered questions from the last meeting
- New Business that needs to be discussed or delegated
- Summary of meeting and what is to be dine before the next meeting
- General announcements to the organization

Haynes, M. E. (1997). *Effective Meeting Skills.* Crisp Publications, United States.