

Leading effective meetings



CEESA
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Summary outcomes

Participants will understand,
analyze and begin to apply:
Selected elements of meeting design
Basic tools of the facilitator

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Protocols

Be fully present
Take care of yourself
Comfort, food, breaks, etc.
Take care of each other
Side conversations, simulations, phones, etc.
Take this personally

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Why this topic?

It takes a really great meeting to beat no meeting at all!

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Elements of meeting design

What we look for

1. Purpose (long-term) of this group
2. Outcomes of this meeting
3. Convener & facilitator roles are clear
4. Attendees' authority, competence and commitment
5. Protocols that are agreed to
6. Decision making methods are appropriate
7. Logistics support attaining the outcomes
8. Actions are promised

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1 Group purpose

The overarching reason the group meets on a recurring basis

Examples

- To insure that day-to-day operations are consistent with our department objectives
- To insure that each student's IEP is current, understood by all, and that progress is assessed at least quarterly
- To significantly enhance our skills at teaching students to apply mathematical concepts

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2 Outcomes

The specific results that will be produced during the course of this particular meeting

Discernible ends, products, new skills or new states that will be generated before the meeting is over

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Outcomes, examples

"...We will have identified a set of task teams, team leaders, time lines and project accountabilities..."

"...You will know the most commonly-asked questions... and will have practiced answering them in simulated settings..."

"...You will have met all the newer group members, deepened your acquaintance with veterans, and enjoyed spending time with the group..."

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Outcomes, agenda and activities

Outcomes describe results

We will have selected the 9th grade math textbook

The agenda traditionally lists topics

Textbook selection

Activities describe group process

We will discuss the relative strengths and weaknesses of the three textbooks under consideration

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Outcomes

Identify which of the following are stated as outcomes:

- Attendance policy
- Review process for supervising substitute teachers
- Each administrator will have demonstrated understanding of his/her specific responsibilities in supervising substitute teachers
- New teacher contract discussion
- Analyze budget projections and rate of expenditures
- We will have decided the theme for this year's opening-day session with all staff

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5 Meeting protocols: what are they?

- A set of rules
- A set of agreements about how we will operate together
- A set of promises

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Protocols – this session

- Be fully present
- Take care of yourself
Comfort, food, breaks, etc.
- Take care of each other
Side conversations, simulations, phones, etc.
- Take this personally

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Meeting protocols, examples

Treat each other as peers
Communicate honestly and openly
Reveal your interest and work toward the common good
Contribute without dominating

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Presenting protocols

How to introduce them

I request that you/we work within certain protocols...

Here they are...

(Explain only where necessary)

Is there anyone who is unwilling...?

(Check to make sure)

I take this as a promise from you...

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6 Decision-making

Some common methods

Authoritarian

Consultative

Consensus (shared, participatory)

Democratic

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The internal thinking process

I assess that a decision is needed.

I have the authority to make one.

I choose this method:

Authoritarian

Here is my decision

Consultative

Before making it I will consult with...

Consensus

We will make one together that all can support

Democratic

We will make one by majority vote

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Decision-making methods & consequences

1 Who is making the decision?

2 Who is accountable for it?

3 What are typical positive and negative consequences of that method of decision making?

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Commencing a meeting

Declare group purpose

Declare meeting outcomes and decision making method for each, if appropriate

Describe group's authority relative to the decisions that will be made

Review protocols, agenda

Request attendee commitment

Begin with item 1 on the agenda

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Basic facilitation tools

Giving directions

Concise, clear, broken down into stages of action

Asking questions

Sufficient to stimulate the conversation or action that you think is needed to produce the outcome

Making observations

Observable phenomena, not your interpretations

Call attention to dynamics the group may be blind to

Responding to participants' questions

In some cases convener should respond, not you

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Some consensus tools

Looking for exceptions

Fist-to-five

Do you think you can bring the group to consensus?

Are you willing to let that go?

How much more time do you want to devote to this?

Assigning a small group to draft an alternative version

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