Making Meetings Work

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Workshop Goals

• Learn to
  – Prepare and plan for meetings
  – Conduct meetings more effectively
  – Increase participation
  – Follow up on meeting goals
What Kind of Meeting?

- Ceremonial
- Regulatory/Bureaucratic
- Political
- Working
  - Huddle
  - Informal & Short
  - **Outcome/goal-oriented**
    - need to accomplish some particular task with a group of people
Successful Meeting Qualities

- What are the qualities of a good or successful meeting?
  - Make good decisions
  - Are as efficient as possible
  - Utilize brainpower
  - Allow work to be done as a group
How Much Does this Meeting Cost?

• Number of participants X Hourly wage X Amount of time
Successful Meetings Require

• Purpose, planning, preparation >> Agenda
• Facilitation
• Follow-through: specific follow-up actions; who’s going to do what when
Why Participation Matters

• Cost
• Brainpower
• Retention & attraction
• Building community (impacts productivity, participation, espirit de corps, reputation)
Agendas
(It’s not just busy work!)

• Help focus group on shared purpose and how you’ll get there
• First step in getting participation
• Gets everyone on board and keeps them on track
Elements of a Successful Agenda

• Agenda item
• Time limit
• Leader
• Required preparation (and timing)
• Desired outcome (discussion, decision, vote)
• Ownership
Exercise: Rewrite Your Agenda

• Take the agenda you brought with you and improve on it
• Trade it with your neighbor
• Identify other ways in which it could be improved
• Discuss
Conducting the Meeting Well

- Make sure everyone participates
- Keep meeting on topic
- Put additional topics in the “parking lot”
- Use advocacy and inquiry to flesh out ideas
Surface Disagreement: Advocacy and Inquiry

• Advocacy: Talking and then listening
  – Advocate your ideas
  – Make sure your reasoning is clear
  – Inquire: How do you see it differently?

• Inquiry: Listening and then talking
  – State what you heard
  – State inferences
  – ASK: Am I off?
  State how you see it differently
Exercise: Advocacy & Inquiry

- Advocacy
  - Find a partner
  - Advocate an idea (work-related)
  - Explain your reasoning
  - ASK: How do you see it differently?
  - LISTEN
- PARTNER – Inquiry
  - State what you heard
  - State any inferences you’re making
  - ASK: Am I off about that?
  - State your opinion
Making Meetings Stick

• Record and distribute
  – Key decisions or points
  – What future action needs to be taken
  – Who will take ownership of item
Leader Challenges

• Meeting is off-track
• Lack of participation
• Domination by a few
• Affective or unproductive conflict (substantive conflict is ok)
• Getting buy-in
• Tardiness
• Virtual meetings
Transforming Your Meetings

– Identify purpose
– Identify who needs to be there
– Speak with participants about what you are trying to do and get their buy-in and help
– Redesign the meeting format
– Redesign the agenda
– Get feedback after 3 meetings
Make Meetings Work!

- Think of meetings as events that need to be orchestrated
- Identify what you want to accomplish and why
- Make sure you have the right “players”
- Create a path forward with next steps and accountabilities
- Save money, time and create community