

# Tips for Running a Successful Meeting

## Before the meeting begins:

*Define the Goal of the meeting.* Help focus or define the purpose so that the group stays on track. What is the group supposed to accomplish?

Examples: "What is our goal today?", "What do you hope to accomplish?", "At today's meeting we hope to accomplish XYZ?"

*Establish the givens or ground rules.* Everyone should have input on the givens and once they are set and the group is in agreement, they must be followed.

Examples: One person speaks at a time. Raise your hand to speak. Meetings begin and end on time. Show respect for one another. Work towards agreement.

*Determine the decision-makers.* Does the group make the final decision or does it make a recommendation to another group for their final decision?

## Roles and Responsibilities:

*Committee Chair:* This person is the taskmaster and is responsible for keeping people on track, and to ensure that the group follows the givens that have been established.

Examples: "Out of respect for the group, could we continue with...", "I'd like to return to what we agreed to do...", "We've spent a lot of time on ...Is that what everyone wants to focus on now?"

*Group Members:* Members of the group are responsible for contributing content that will solve the problem, provide information, stay on the task, ensure ideas are recorded accurately, follow the givens, give input and energy towards the problem, keep the recorder and facilitator neutral.

*Recorder:* This person's sole function is to take minutes. The recorder remains neutral, does not participate in discussions, but can help to steer the group back on task:

Examples: "For the minutes, are we still on ...or have we moved to ..."

## Techniques to get the group involved:

- Encourage crediting and building on another's idea. This builds teamwork and mutual support.

"Sue's comment got me thinking...perhaps we could take her idea a step further."

- Give voice to each member by asking questions which everyone answers in turn.
- Rephrase the statement so that people feel they have been heard.

"I think I heard you say we're going in circles. Do you want us to get closure on this point or move on right now?"

- Be aware of the various strengths members bring to the whole. Honor the difference and when appropriate draw out an individual whose point of view might not be heard frequently. Keep a balance.

"I've noticed that this groups has spent an hour looking at the big picture, but you need concrete steps to implement the plan. Is that something Joe can help us with?"