



Effective Meetings

This month we will focus on ways to improve the quality and productivity of meetings. We all attend meetings with mixed feelings. Many people are feeling overwhelmed with their workload and see no need for another meeting. But meetings can be helpful and lessen your workload if they are conducted efficiently and the participants contribute.

Responsibility of the Leader

1. Hold meetings only when necessary

Just because a meeting has been held for three years on a certain day at a certain time does not mean it has to continue. Perhaps there are other options.

2. Prepare, plan and lead

The meeting leader should prepare an agenda and send it out before the meeting. Meeting members can then come to the meeting prepared to discuss the topics listed. The job of the leader is to keep the meeting on track. It is also the responsibility of the leader to start the meeting on time and stop on time.

3. Limit number of participants

Look at the list of participants in the meeting. Are all of them necessary? It is easier to get to the objective of the meeting with fewer people having to voice an opinion.

4. Prepare handouts/supplemental materials before meeting

This information can help the discussion, planning and outcome of the issues discussed in the meeting.

5. Ending the Meeting

At the end of the meeting assign responsibilities of meeting members. Set up the date, time, place and topic for the next meeting. End the meeting on time.

Responsibility of the Attendees

1. Come to the meeting prepared.

If you have received the agenda before hand and you have a contribution be prepared to present your information. You have a responsibility to help make the meeting run smoothly.

2. Be attentive

Side conversations, mumbling, napping are disruptive to the process and delay the agenda. If this is a meeting you belong at your input is important.

3. Be on time.

It is disruptive to arrive late for a meeting. Also plan on staying until the end of the meeting. If you cannot attend or cannot stay for the entire meeting let the leader know in advance of your conflict in scheduling.

4. Be cooperative

Be open to new ideas. Asking questions and participating in a dialogue are important to the process. Overt and blatant negativism and uncooperativeness are not going to work in your favor.

5. Listen to others point of view.

People coming together to discuss a particular topic are there because they have an interest in the topic. Other people may have a good idea and one that you can implement after the session. Contribute and make sure your comments are relevant.

In summary

1. Meetings need to be planned well and an agenda sent to participants before hand.
2. The leader needs to be prepared for the topics to be discussed.
3. Make sure the right people are there.
4. Start meetings on time and end on time.
5. Stick to the agenda.
6. Participation by all attendees is important to the process.

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