

Effective Meeting Practices

- Train all meeting leaders in the organization on a standard method for conducting effective meetings
- Train everyone in the organization on the various roles and expectations as meeting participants
- Ensure that the right people and data are at the meeting to make decisions
- Develop and distribute agendas at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting
- The agenda should list the topic, the presenter and the time commitment for each topic. Lead off with the most important topic.
- Meetings should start and end on time - impose a penalty for anyone arriving late
- Meetings should not exceed 60 minutes to maintain people's attention. If it is planned for longer make sure there is an activity to keep participants' attention.
- Establish and communicate ground rules at the beginning of the meeting
- Use a facilitator to stay on topic and keep the meeting on schedule
- Use a 'Parking Lot' to record topics not on the agenda which will allow the focus to remain on the topics at hand
- Capture comments, ideas and actions on a laptop that is projected for the group to see. This will reduce the chance of misunderstanding and is easier to read than multiple handwritten flip chart sheets.
- Assign people and dates to action items while in the meeting.
- Send meeting minutes within 24 hours after the meeting
- Follow up - Follow up - FOLLOW UP on action items!