

5 Keys for Leading Effective Meetings

Planning

1. Define the task
2. Define the desired outcome
3. Complete the agenda
4. Establish sequence of meeting activities
5. Determine who should attend, roles, and ground rules
6. Decide meeting time
7. Determine meeting logistics
8. Notify participants
9. Set up the meeting room

Starting

Begin the meeting with an energetic tone reviewing the agenda, assigning roles (timekeeper, etc.) and establish ground rules. Conduct icebreaker activity if applicable.

Focusing

- Capture decisions and information on an easel chart.
- Use the parking lot method for off topic items.
- Summarize accomplishments/decisions after each agenda item.

Facilitating

Facilitate the participants' involvement, deal with conflict, manage differences, and keep communication open.

How to Encourage Participation

- Seek input from lower level participants first
- Ask open-ended questions
- Use active listening skills
- Be attentive to input
- Ask for concrete examples
- Be supportive of new ideas
- Distinguish assumption from facts

How to Manage Differences

- Focus attention on conflicting ideas
- Define common ground
- Isolate points of disagreement
- Brainstorm alternatives
- Schedule separate meeting if needed
- Stay calm and refer to ground rules

Concluding

- Summarize the meeting's accomplishments.
- Compare accomplishments with your desired outcomes and identify any unfinished business.
- Finalize action plan.