Tips on Running a Meeting

As found in “Guide to Meetings (Guide to Business Communication Series) 1st Edition”

By Mary M. Munter and Michael Netzley

Get More Done

• Set a clear agenda
• Redirect people back to agenda when they ramble or digress
• Draw out quiet people by asking in advance for a specific contribution
• Ask each participant’s opinion, when appropriate, to allow everyone to contribute
• Ask early for objections to avoid derailing discussions later
• Interrupt people who talk too long or talk to each other
• Set an ending time for the meeting and stick to it

Competing Needs of Meeting Management

maximize speed ⇔ maximize information
end on time ⇔ take time for creativity
prioritize task ⇔ prioritize process
emphasize individual ⇔ emphasize group

Avoid Dominating or Disruptive Behavior

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<tr>
<th>Disruptive/Dominating Behavior</th>
<th>Facilitator’s Response</th>
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<td>Hostile: “That will never work” or “Is that the best we can do?”</td>
<td>“How do others feel about this idea?” “You may be right; let’s review the facts.”</td>
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<td>Loudmouth: constantly blurs out ideas</td>
<td>“Can you summarize your main point?” or “I appreciate your comments. Let’s hear from others.”</td>
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<td>Interrupter: starts talking before others are finished</td>
<td>“Please wait a minute. Let’s stick to the ground rules and let people finish.”</td>
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<td>Silent disrupter: reads, rolls eyes, fidgets, etc.</td>
<td>Try to draw the person into the discussion, or talk to the person individually during a break.</td>
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