



Effective Area Meetings

Introduction

The purpose of this session is for you to identify problems with meetings and use sound strategies for being a good contributor and facilitator of meetings.

Overview

First, you reflect on past meetings and share what didn't go well. Next, you review the seven shortcomings of meetings. Finally, you address each shortcoming by discussing best practices you can implement for future meetings.

In this session, facilitators discuss the following topics:

- What's Wrong with Meetings?
- Meeting Best Practices

Objectives

After completing this session, you will be able to do the following:

- Identify barriers and best practices to having effective meetings
- Develop strategies to conduct effective meetings

By meeting these objectives, you will be able to understand and perform your role as a meeting member and a meeting facilitator to support your peers.

Time

- 60 minutes

What's Wrong with Meetings?

(10 minutes)

Reflect on past meetings you attended as an Area Director. As a team brainstorm and list ways in which meetings are ineffective. Consider what makes meetings ineffective both as a contributor and facilitator as well as the impact this has on the overall meeting. Be prepared to share at least one idea with the whole group.

	List some ways meetings are ineffective	How much impact does this have overall (low, medium, or high)
1	The point of the meeting is unclear to the participants.	High
2	Technology not working as expected, knowledge or use of technology.	High
3	Facilitator control of meetings. Side conversations, not able to bring meeting into control	High
4	Length of meetings, lose people's attention	Med
5	Participants staying within time limits	High/Med

Meeting Best Practices

(15 minutes)

Thinking about your assigned shortcoming, first brainstorm with your team best practices to address your shortcoming both from the viewpoint of a contributor and a facilitator. Consider the priority level of each best practice. Be prepared to share at least one idea with the whole group. Then discuss and answer Questions to Consider on page 4.

What is your assigned shortcoming?

1) Meetings are too long, 2) Nothing happens when the meeting ends

	List best practices for addressing your assigned shortcoming:	Rank level of impact (low, medium, or high)
1	1) Post time limit prior to meeting. 2) Action items, assign responsibility, deadlines, follow up	1-2) High
2	1) Set an agenda to meet time scheduled 2) Send meeting summary and notes after the meeting, track decisions, clearly communicate meeting summary	1-2) High
3	1) Designate a timer 2) Review, discuss decisions at the end of the meeting	1) Med 2) High
4	1) Overloaded agenda, break up into multiple meetings 2) Starting the meeting with the action items from previous meeting.	1-2) High
5	Prepare for the meeting, send material prior to the meeting.	High

Questions to Consider

(12 minutes)

As you think about meeting best practices, discuss and answer the questions below.

What are some things you can think about to help you decide if you need to hold a meeting or if it will be more effective to communicate another way, such as writing an email?

What do you see as the biggest challenge to making your meetings more effective? What might you do to overcome that?

Is there anyone who would benefit from the opportunity to develop their skills either as a contributor or facilitator? What steps can you take to help them become a more effective meeting contributor or facilitator?

Tools and Resources

[Four Causes of Zoom Fatigue and Their Simple Fixes](#)

[How to Combat Zoom Fatigue](#)

Pathways Projects

Manage Online Meetings

Manage Projects Successfully

Moderate a Panel Discussion

Manage Successful Events

Pathways Paths

Innovative Planning

Motivational Strategies

Team Collaboration

Conclusion

What is one key insight from this session that you will apply during your next meeting? In the space below write what you are committing to do, when you will do it by, and pick a person to hold you accountable. You can also consider sharing this with the other members on your team so that they can help you implement it at the next business meeting.