



Tips for Leading Effective Meetings

Parents as Collaborative Leaders Module 5

A collaborative research project hosted by the University of
Vermont and the PACER Center

Objectives



- Learn about strategies for structuring teams so that meetings can be effective
- Learn about processes that teams can use to ensure effective meetings
- Learn about strategies that team leaders and others can use to facilitate effective meetings

Essential Questions



- What are some characteristics of effective meetings?
- What structures and processes can be used by teams to ensure that their meetings are effective?
- What facilitation skills can leaders and other team members use to encourage members to participate in effective meetings?

Agenda



- *Generating ideas for conducting effective meetings: A “Think, Pair, Share” Activity (15 minutes)*
- *Presentation and discussion of strategies for promoting effective meetings (25 minutes)*
- *Group problem-solving (20 minutes)*

Opening Discussion



- Think about a meeting that you've been to lately that you consider to have been effective.
- How do effective team meetings contribute to collaboration?



Think, Pair, Share Activity

- Individually, list as many ideas as you can about factors that contribute to effective team meetings.
- In pairs or triads, talk about your ideas and identify five ideas that and your partner consider most important to effective team meetings.
- Share your ideas with the whole group to begin thinking about tips for conducting effective meetings.

Tips for Leading Effective Meetings



Effective Meetings Need to Have:

- Good structures
- Good processes
- Good leadership/facilitation

Creating Strong Structures



- Teams need to decide how they will be structured to conduct their business
 - Decide on regular meeting times
 - Identify group norms and purpose
 - Decide how meetings will be conducted (e.g., use of agendas and roles, etc.)
 - Talk about how decisions will be made (e.g., consensus, democratic, etc.)
 - Talk about how members will communicate between meetings

Creating Productive Processes



- Use agendas with timelines
 - Have the group agree on the agenda ahead of time, or
 - Come with a partial agenda and ask for input
 - If there's too much to do, prioritize and stick to your timelines
- Use roles and share them when possible
 - Typical roles include: facilitator, recorder, timekeeper
 - The facilitator's role can be shared, even if there's one "official" leader
 - Shared roles help to create a sense that all members are equally valued
- Find ways to develop trust and a sense of shared responsibility
- Pay attention to the use of good communication skills
 - Build in processing time to discuss what the group is doing well and what needs to be improved

Paying Attention to Leadership and Facilitation



- Remember to balance the task and relationship aspects of collaboration
 - Focus both on getting tasks done *and* developing good relationships
 - Try to read the energy of a group and adapt as necessary
 - Use humor-- wisely

Paying Attention to Facilitation (cont'd)



- Use your role to help develop a sense of equity among team members
 - Encourage equal participation among all members
 - Remind members that participating means listening as well as talking
- Use your role as a way to identify when decisions are being made
 - Note the difference between “discussion time” and “deciding time”
- When necessary, step in to help resolve conflict and/or to help in doing so

Problem-Solving Activity



- Think about some times when team meetings have not been effective.
- Describe to the group: What happened and why you saw this as a challenge.
- Group members: Drawing on your own experiences as well as today's discussion, generate alternatives to the situations described.
- **Final thoughts:** What are two or three things you learned as a result of today's activity?