

Tips for Meeting Leaders

Being in a meeting can be fun and a positive experience for both you and your participants. The key to holding a successful session lies in preparation. Preparing before you begin will help you feel more comfortable and confident. It will take the guess work out of what to expect. Preparation includes identifying your training needs, defining learning outcomes, planning your method and approach and establishing time frames. By preparing yourself to lead the meeting, setting up the room in advance, and having an outline at your fingertips you will go a long way to ensure success.

Plan follow-up for each meeting. Follow-up makes it all stick! Before you begin answer these questions:

1. Why are you conducting this meeting and/or training?
2. What are my goals?
3. What might I anticipate with regard to participation or questions from the group?
4. What specific learning outcomes do I hope to achieve?
5. What method of instruction and leadership will I include?

Add variety for more interest and participation.

- Vary your delivery by reading out loud to the students and have them take turns reading a loud to each other.
- Always follow-up any lecture or reading aloud with group discussion.
- Be sure to hold brain-storming sessions to solve problems and gather ideas from everyone participating.
- Vary how discussions are conducted. Divide the group in pairs, groups of three or break-out sessions of 4 – 6.
- Use lots of role play.

- Aim to have fun and they will too.

Be sure to help your participants know your expectations too.

- Encourage questions, and let them know when to ask.
- Explain how you are going to handle group or partner exercises.
- Ask them to write down any areas they want additional information or discussion on.
- Always outline the time for the session.

Prepare yourself for training.

- Establish an open and relaxed atmosphere that encourages discussion by maintaining a positive attitude yourself.
- Stay focused.
- Remain neutral
- Encourage everyone to participate.
- Focus on your students rather than on yourself.
- Keep in mind the importance of the material and the goal of the session.
- Stay on track by making good notes and using them.
- Stay to the allotted time. Remember less is more. Do not include too much in any session.
- When you speak make eye contact with your participants. Switch your gaze from one person to another in a pace that is comfortable.
- Vary your voice tone and inflection.
- Be yourself and act naturally.
- If by chance you become nervous, take slow deep breaths and calm yourself.
- **Atmosphere is important.** Plan a setting conducive to training and learning. Make sure the room and area is suitable for the session. Try to avoid

distractions, loud noises and interruptions. If a session is longer than 2 hours schedule a 15 minute break.

- Refreshments for class should be high energy food like nuts, raisins, string cheese and fruit juices.
- Candy is a good idea for an afternoon break only.
- Be sure to vary class activities.
- Be sure to always check in with discussions and break things up.

Take care of yourself too!

- Get enough sleep the night before the session.
- Eat a healthy breakfast.
- Anticipate the unexpected.
- Stretch if needed to maintain good posture and presentation style.
- **Expect success!**

Here's wishing you success!



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