

# Northern Community & School Recreation Coordinator Program



## Tips For Holding Good Meetings

(Source: Flo Frank's Toolbox, Community Recreation Handbook)

### A. Organizing a Good Meeting

- Set the date for the meeting well in advance.
- Invite people in a personal way if possible (talk to them).
- Be clear about the purpose of the meeting. If possible send out an agenda and background documents in advance of the meeting.
- Have comfortable space to meet and provide refreshments.
- Start the meeting on time – review the purpose and the agenda.
- Have a chairperson or an individual assigned to lead/host the meeting.
- If there are decisions to be made, be sure everyone understands the decision-making process before the discussion starts.
- Assign someone to keep notes. A summary of key points is usually all that is needed - not a record of everything that is said.
- Keep the discussion on track. Summarize discussion and decisions.
- End the meeting on time.
- Identify next steps (for example, action needed, further meetings).
- Thank everyone for participating. Identify the next meeting time and date if there is one

### B. Strategies for Improving Your Meetings

Ineffective Meetings	Effective Meetings
<p><b>Don't know what the meeting is about.</b></p> <p><b>Not having an Agenda or not following</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Circulate Agenda and other materials are circulated in advance.</li> <li>• Chair is prepared and reviews purpose at the beginning of the meeting.</li> <li>• Chair follows Agenda. Good leadership is needed for good meetings</li> <li>• Suggest the following agenda design: Call to order, opening prayer, approval of minutes, new business/items, finance, updates and reporting back on priorities, other business, new actions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Dirty, dusty, stinky, loud area to hold a meeting.</b></p> <p><b>People are not comfortable</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make the meeting place a welcoming and comfortable environment</li> <li>• Take breaks during the meeting</li> <li>• Ensure refreshments are in place (i.e. Coffee, tea, water)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Meeting does not start on time and is disorganized</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hosts of the meeting to arrive early to make sure logistics are taken care of.</li> <li>• If key people cancel or cannot attend, rearrange the meeting. Do not take on more than you can manage or be successful at.</li> <li>• Ensure technical equipment is working (i.e., PowerPoint presentations)</li> <li>• Be prepared. If you are making a presentation. Try and think of the questions you will be asked.</li> </ul>
<p><b>No translation is in place or poor translation</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Translation and recognition of culture is important. Be respectful of the interpreter.</li> <li>• If you are a translator. Make eye contact with participants. You want translation to be part of the conversation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Disrespectful behaviours</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active participation by everyone.</li> <li>• Respectful behaviour in meeting.</li> </ul>

Ineffective Meetings	Effective Meetings
<p><b>Presenting too much information without interacting with participants</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Well organized – paperwork sent out in advance to make informed decision.</li> <li>• Give all people an opportunity to talk after presentation of issue/concern/agenda item.</li> <li>• Meaning is important. Depending on the type of meeting engage people in activities to keep people engaged.</li> <li>• Have some fun. Door prizes are good idea</li> </ul>
<p><b>Unable to make a decision.</b> <b>No solutions, talking in circles</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure purpose of meeting is clear</li> <li>• Make sure people understand the decisions made and what that means for each person.</li> <li>• Ensure all facts are available to make an informed decision. If you cannot reach consensus. Take vote/make a decision</li> <li>• Need to acknowledge new/other issues while sticking to the plan, too: time needs to be set aside for the unexpected.</li> <li>• Health Committees pass formal motions and meetings. Use Roberts Rules of Order. Motion agreed to has to be clear written in both languages and sometimes needs translation</li> </ul>
<p><b>Lack of communication</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform people that they are in a safe environment to express their thoughts</li> <li>• No side conversations</li> <li>• Turn cell phones off</li> </ul>
<p><b>Follow-up</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Summary of meeting with an action/to do list at end of meeting. Need to establish decisions and action items at the end of the meeting.</li> <li>• Congratulate and acknowledge everyone’s efforts at the end of the meeting.</li> <li>• Circulate a meeting minutes as quickly as possible.</li> </ul>