

Cultivating Communication Infrastructure to Achieve Workplan 2021 Goals

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Session Goals

1. Tools for meeting structure to help achieve Workplan 2021 Goals.
2. Tools to improve dialogues within Leadership to achieve Workplan 2021 Goals.

Topic 1 - Tools for Meeting Structure

1

Consider Process
Agreements Upfront

2

Establish Group
Culture

3

Establish Best
Meeting Practices

4

Facilitate the
Process

Consider Process Agreements Upfront

GOAL: have your group or committee agree upon basic rules– all will be held accountable to the same standards

EXAMPLES:

- Participate in good faith
- Lead all interactions with respect
- Acknowledge and address the concerns of all participants
- Focus on the present and future, not dwelling in the past
- Attend all meetings - properly prepared and ready to contribute

Establish Group Culture

GOAL: Establish and cultivate trust – a two-way exchange

- Group needs to trust you to lead them through the process in a fair manner
- You need to trust individuals are operating in good faith toward common goals

ESTABLISH EXPECTATIONS:

- Detail what you need from group leadership in order to do your job
- Group leadership details what is needed from you in order to execute on their role(s)

Establish Meeting Best Practices

1. Purpose

- Why are we having this meeting?
- What is the goal?

2. Product

- What product or output do you want to leave the meeting with?

3. People

- Who needs to be at the meeting to achieve the purpose or create the product?

4. Process

- What conversations need to take place for the group to achieve the purpose or create the product?
- How should these conversations be structured as to elicit the input needed?

5. Create a Focused Agenda

Meeting Tips

Before the meeting

- Distribute the agenda and background materials for feedback

During the meeting

- Begin and end on time
- Use cameras where possible
- Clarify meeting objectives at the outset
- Stay on topic but be flexible
 - Parking Lot for off topic issues – ensure you return to these

Meeting Tips Continued

- Ensure topics are “pitched” at the right level
 - Avoid overly technical or overly detailed presentations
- Use online tools to increase interaction
 - Polls; breakout rooms; collaborative documents
- Be deliberate with Chat
 - Give group direction on how to use chat
 - Consider having someone else monitor it

Facilitate the Process

PUT THE NEEDS OF THE GROUP FIRST, THE INDIVIDUAL SECOND

- Respectfully, but firmly, intervene where necessary to keep the group on course
 - Tools include:
 - Parking Lot; group process agreements; take issue offline
- Navigate the needs of the individual second
 - Tools include:
 - Be aware of feelings - treat with respect; explain why intervening to keep the group on course; check-in with the individual after the fact

Topic 2 - Tools to Improve Dialogues within Leadership

1

Utilize Active
Listening &
Summarizing Skills

2

Foster Leadership
Group Culture

3

Identify and
Collaborate with
Natural Partners

4

Streamline
Duplicative Work

Basis for Clear Communication – Active Listening



Active Listening & Summarizing

ACTIVE LISTENING

- Ensure you identify and clarify ALL the speakers' relevant positions

SUMMARIZING - verbalizing understanding of speaker's position

- Use the speakers phrasing where possible
- Ensure speaker agrees with your summary of their position
- Ultimately all operating from the same understanding

Asking all the questions necessary to understand a point of view and the dynamics informing that position

Establish Leadership Group Culture

GOAL: Establish and cultivate trust – a two-way exchange utilizing Active Listening & Summarizing skills

USE ACTIVE LISTENING AND SUMMARIZING SKILLS TO:

- Lead with transparency – foundation of trust
- **Share individual and group goals**
- Identify where individual and group goals do and don't align
- Collaborate to ensure all are working together toward shared goals
- Ensure goals are detailed, measurable and achievable

Identify and Collaborate with Natural Partners

GOAL: Streamline work and increase efficiency

- Sharing information prevents duplicative effort and maximizes volunteer time and energy

HOW TO IMPLEMENT:

- Utilize Active Listening & Summarizing to -
 - Identify shared goals
 - Examine shared goals, identifying where there is alignment
 - Create communication structures to share aligned outputs
 - Established and ongoing – identify who will own the communication exchange and how it will occur - meeting, email, Wiki etc.

Group Question:

Can anyone identify existing working groups or committees within At-Large that are natural partners?

Streamline Duplicative Work

GOAL: Maximize volunteer effort

HOW TO IMPLEMENT:

- Transparent conversations - Active Listening & Summarizing skills - to identify where goals align
- Deeper dive - utilizing the same skills - to identify how the work being done to achieve the goals
- Identify duplicative efforts and streamline the process

Final Thoughts

Be responsible for the process within the group you lead

- Act assertively on behalf of the group to decide what issues to discuss, what direction the group should go
- Be open and accepting of group input on how to effectively achieve stated goals

Be deliberate in your communication efforts

- Utilize Active Listening and Summarizing skills to understand individual positions and identify areas of agreement/alignment

Foster collaboration through transparent share of information

Identify natural partners and work with them to eliminate duplicate efforts

Reach out for help