

What are effective team meetings?

Characteristics of an Effective Team Meeting:

- Well organised and managed,
- Clear roles and responsibilities,
- All team members are involved and engaged,
- Decisions are made and problems are solved collectively,
- People are informed,
- Results in clear actions, and
- Achieves desired results.

Why?

Time is precious. Ensuring the effectiveness of meetings can retain staff engagement (MCA, 2014). People are more likely to get involved in quality improvement when meetings are efficient as their time is well spent.

How?

Follow the suggestions below on three steps of effective team meetings.

1. Before a meeting

- Identify the team and purpose of the meeting.
- Develop a terms of reference for the team.
- Agree a regular time and place (if possible) for a meeting.
- Create a schedule of meetings for the year or lifetime of the project/initiative.
- Agree a method to communicate the aim and outcome of the meeting, e.g. agenda/action log.
- Ask for input when developing the agenda. An agenda should have timed items and identified leads.

A great meeting requires planning

2. During a meeting

- Start on time. Agree any additional roles, e.g., a note-taker and timekeeper. These roles can be rotated at each meeting (See MCA, 2014).
- Manage the discussion. Keep on topic and 'park' off topic ideas.
- Bring solutions to the meeting.
- Agree the actions / decisions made.
- Allow some time for creativity. Have some fun!
- Build in time to evaluate the meeting, e.g., what worked well today?, what can be improved for next time?
- Finish on time.

3. After a meeting

- Send out brief notes or an action log of the meeting.
- Follow up with one-to-one meetings if sensitive issues need to be resolved.
- Consider changing the meeting format or venue from time to time, e.g. a teleconference or a huddle.

References:

1. Organisational Dynamics (1993), Making Teams Work: A Guide to Creating and Managing Teams.
2. Sheffield Microsystem Coaching Academy, MCA (2014), Effective Meeting Skills.