Title

Managing team meetings[1]

Short description

Meetings of the team are essential part of good team work. This is the opportunity when members can share their successes and difficulties with each other, when possible conflicts can be handled and important decisions are made.

Detailed description of the tool and required materials, attachments

Just because meetings are so important in the life of a team it has paramount importance that these are managed well. All good intentions and high working spirit could be ruined by lengthy, off-the-point, boring meetings.

A good meeting is when people leave the room with a feeling of making their job and with plans of what will they do in the future. Therefore meetings should

- Take just as much time as the tasks to be done need
- Should be about the tasks to be done
- Must allow time for "playing around" (teamwork must be fun too)
    - And therefore must have a schedule and a timeframe to be followed and kept
    - Sidetracks, irrelevant, verbose discussions must be cut
    - Should end with a confirmation of having the work done and that everybody feels OK.

The plan for the meeting (agenda) should be prepared by the team member who is responsible for leading the meeting. This is mostly the team leader but could be someone else from the team as well. The agenda should be circulated for

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feedbacks or just for information a few days before the meeting. It should contain:

- When and where will the meeting take place (from what time to what time, exact venue)
- Who is involved or will participate
- What are the issues to be discussed and what result is expected
- How much time is allocated for each subject

Before the meeting a member should be appointed for housekeeping duties (coffee, tea, cookies, flipchart, felt pens, computer and projector - whatever is needed and obviously a room). Another chore to be fulfilled is that someone in the team should write up a memo. This can be the same person at all meetings or could be rotated but this has to be decided prior to the meeting.

When the meeting starts the agenda should be agreed and possible corrections be announced. During the meeting the meeting coordinator could follow two routes:

- He/she is strictly adhering to the agenda and stops any side tracks (relevant or irrelevant) and closes the topic whenever the time has elapsed for that specific issue.
- Or he/she can be more relaxed and allow time as much is needed for each topic calling the attention to the time remaining but cutting irrelevant discussions or monologues.

In any case the total time allowed for the meeting must be kept, overtime is not allowed no matter how exciting the discussion is when time runs out. This forces the team to work attentively and efficiently.

When a topic is finished the person who is leading the meeting should summarize the decisions and the tasks to be done for the memorandum.

When the meeting is over the decisions should be read out again and the time and place of the next meeting must be decided (even if there is a regular meeting time).

The memo of the meeting should be sent out or handed over to all participants no later than a few days following the meeting.

User's guide, equipment

Equipment	Quantity
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Level of difficulty (easy, medium, advanced)

Easy

Tags

intervention on EWS team level, team, team building, team meeting