



CORDIS CORPORATION
BUSINESS
COMMUNICATION CENTER

Tip sheet

February 2008: Making Meetings More Productive

In today's business environment, optimizing time spent in meetings is an essential skill of a successful leader. Below are tips to assist you in planning and executing a more efficient and productive meeting.

PRIOR TO THE MEETING:

- 1. Define Clear Meeting Purpose & Objectives:** Be clear on the purpose of the meeting. Answer the following questions:
 - What are the objectives; what would I like to accomplish during this meeting?
 - What information do I need to meet these objectives? Who can provide this information?
 - Who are the key decision makers that need to be present to accomplish these objectives?
 - What is the timeline for accomplishing these objectives?
- 2. Prepare Agenda & Information Packet:** After you have defined clear meeting objectives, prepare a very specific agenda that outlines the flow and timing of the meeting. Send the agenda and relevant information (ex. PowerPoint presentation) to meeting attendees prior to the meeting.
- 3. Select Appropriate Attendees:** Only invite individuals who can provide information or are instrumental in making decisions associated with the defined meeting objectives. Not having the key decision makers present typically means that another meeting will be required.
- 4. Select Appropriate Time & Venue:**
 - Select a time that is feasible for the key decision makers.
 - Ensure that the meeting is of sufficient length.
 - Use past meetings as a guide to determine the amount of time it will take to accomplish the objectives.
 - Reduce the length of the meeting if possible. Forward relevant information to attendees to review prior to the meeting.
 - If the meeting is longer than 1 hour, consider having beverages available and taking small breaks.
 - Determine the equipment required, such as a projector or a dry-erase board, and make sure these items are in position prior to the start of the meeting.

DURING THE MEETING:

- 1. Stick to the Agenda:** Closely follow the agenda so as to accomplish defined objectives. Be prepared to tactfully redirect the course of the meeting if needed, and identify a process for recording actions not related to current meeting objectives.
- 2. Record Minutes:** Designate someone to take detailed notes that highlight participants, key points, and action items presented during the meeting.
- 3. Recap Key Points and Action Items:** At the close of the meeting, recap the key decisions made and key points of the meeting to ensure that all attendees are on the same page. Also review the action items, including the owner and the timeline for delivery.

AFTER THE MEETING:

Email Minutes, Key Points & Action Items: After the meeting, email the meeting minutes, key points and action items to all meeting attendees, reiterating deadlines. Follow-up with attendees to ensure they understand their tasks and will complete their action items in accordance with the agreed-upon deadlines.

The Consultants in the Cordis Corporation Business Communication Center proudly bring these tips to you. From resumes and cover letters to presentations and PowerPoint slide design, the Cordis Center can help you with all your communication needs. Stop by and visit us in McColl 2125, or visit our [website](#) for more information.