Tips for Planning and Conducting a Staff Meeting

The Goal: To conduct a meeting that is effective, productive, predictable, successful, and as short as possible.

Before The Meeting

1. Define the purpose of the meeting
2. Develop an agenda in cooperation with the staff.
3. Distribute or provide the agenda and circulate background material, documents or articles prior to the meeting.
4. Choose an appropriate meeting time. Set a time limit and stick to it. To keep meetings short, consider having members stand during the meeting.
5. Choose a location suitable to your group’s size, and if possible, arrange the room so that members face each other, i.e., a circle or semi-circle.
6. Use visual aids for interest (e.g., posters, diagrams, etc.). Post a large agenda up front to which members can refer.
7. Be sure everyone knows where and when the next meeting will be held.

During The Meeting

1. Greet members and make them feel welcome.
2. Start on time. End on time.
3. Review the agenda and set priorities for the meeting.
4. Stick to the agenda.
5. Encourage group discussion to get all points of view and ideas.
6. Encourage feedback. Ideas, activities and commitment to the organization improve when members see their impact on the decision making process.
7. Keep conversation focused on the topic. Feel free to ask for only constructive and non-repetitive comments.
8. Keep minutes of the meeting for future reference in case a question or problem arises.
9. As a leader, be a role model by listening, showing interest, appreciation and confidence in members. Admit mistakes.
10. Summarize agreements reached and end the meeting on a unifying or positive note. Summarize action items, indicating who is responsible, and when the activities are due.
11. Set a date, time and place for the next meeting.

After The Meeting

1. Write up and distribute minutes within 3 or 4 days.
2. Discuss any problems during the meeting with other staff; come up with ways improvements can be made.
3. Follow-up on delegation decisions. See that all members understand and carry-out their responsibilities.
4. Give recognition and appreciation to excellent and timely progress.
5. Put unfinished business on the agenda for the next meeting.
6. Conduct a periodic evaluation of the meetings. Note any areas that can be analyzed and improved for more productive meetings.

And remember, effective meetings will keep them coming back!


Source: Strengthening Laboratory Management towards Accreditation