How-to: Plan and Run Effective Meetings

Goals
Run effective group meetings to make decisions, get input, delegate responsibility and build a sense of accountability and community

Best Practices
• Have an agenda and follow it
  o Respect everyone’s time
  o Create space at the end (“parking lot”) for other issues that arise
• Make it action-oriented
  o Don’t meet just to meet
  o Is there a campaign action or training component?
• Always be recruiting
  o Make it fun, welcoming, and social so everyone wants to keep coming back.

How-to
1) Before organizing a meeting, make sure one is needed
   • We suggest meeting every other week or once a month, depending on the timeframe of your campaign.
     o Working groups might meet every other week with large group meetings held less often (once a month).

2) Prepare for the meeting (*Tip: This can take as long as the meeting itself*)
   • Know your goals
     o Figure out what decisions or discussions need to take place in order to help the group achieve their identified goals
   • Set an agenda to accomplish your goals
     o Have as many group members as possible leading sections of the meeting.

Sample Group Meeting Agenda (1 hour)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th>Minutes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Introductions/Sign-in</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Overview of meeting: Agenda and goals</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Updates/Share information</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Discussion of plans</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Delegate tasks</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Skills training or campaign action prep</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Review what was accomplished or decided</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Parking Lot/Other Announcements</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Adjourn</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Socialize</td>
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3) Prepare participants
   o Make sure all meeting attendees have a basic sense of the all the goals of the meeting beforehand

4) Anticipate pitfalls
   o Group dynamics can be difficult. Anticipate problems and develop solutions beforehand.

5) Recap assigned roles at the end of the meeting
   o Be sure to check in on what was assigned at the next meeting to maintain a level of accountability among the group

6) Keep it social
   o We’re not just doing important work, we’re building a powerful social network. Create opportunities for the group to have fun and if possible, hang out after the meeting.

7) Debrief afterword
   o Take time to consider how the meeting went; consider if the agenda was appropriate, who to follow up with, and what should be done differently next time.