

NOTES ON CONDUCTING MEETINGS

1. Often unrecognized functions that meetings serve:

- They can define the group as a unit. Department meetings are often the only place where the whole group actually gets together.
- They provide the context where the group discovers what the members know as a group.
- It is a place where people can be auditioned for other roles/positions in the group. Peer review occurs here too.

2. Some general guidelines--assuming a relatively healthy group:

- Prepare for the session; anticipate what you'll need
 - necessary background
 - materials/handouts
 - set approximate time markers
- For each topic/issue, know where you want the group to be by the end of the meeting. One way to look at meeting objectives:
 - Information conveyed/received
 - Discussion by the group
 - Decision made/conclusion drawn
 - Action determined; next steps
- Have an agenda. Note objectives by topic
- Recap/summarize briefly at appropriate points.

3. Group dynamics . . .

- Climate: implicit agendas, status
- Safety
- "Face" and its effects
- Illusion of consensus
- Coalitions
- Nominal group technique ('anonymous cards')