



## How to Conduct Meetings that Matter

*For Education Leaders*

How many meetings have you attended begrudgingly, reviewing your text messages while information was being presented? Worse yet, how many meetings have you led while others were similarly disengaged?

There are a few key strategies for conducting meetings that engage participants and convey and receive relevant information regardless of the group size.

1. Outline the purpose and process for the meeting. If the meeting is for the leader to provide information, use the following steps to allow participants to respond to the information.
2. Early in the meeting, provide an opportunity for every person to be heard. If the crowd is large, ask them to share a response to a specific question with the person next to them. If the group is small (10 or less), ask them to share their responses with the whole group. These questions should be personal: *What is one thing no one here is likely to know about you? What is the most adventurous thing you have done in the last five years?* Ask participants to keep their responses to one minute each and then listen to other responses.
3. State the issue to be discussed and ask participants to share their viewpoints. As the leader, you will want to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to speak without interruption. The issue may be as general as, “What are the strengths of our school district?” or as specific as, “What is the value of parent/teacher conferences in relation to improved student achievement?” Keep a record of responses.
4. Summarize the input with the group and invite participants to clarify or correct the summary if necessary.
5. Ask each person what they would consider the best possible outcome related to the subject. If the purpose of the meeting is to provide information, ask participants how the information can be useful to them in their roles.
6. Solicit ideas for next steps and/or determine if next steps are necessary. Reiterate that it is important that answers are brief so that everyone has the opportunity to offer their thoughts
7. Bring closure by summarizing the value of the insights gained and how it will be utilized. Express appreciation for the engagement of the individuals in the group.

This meeting model, based on **opening, engagement, strengths, vision, action,** and **outcomes**, is adaptable for large or small groups as well as large or small topics. The framework provides an opportunity to share and gather information respectfully,

and to involve individuals from a variety of backgrounds, interests and perspectives. It can become the bedrock of topical communication and decision making.



These materials are provided by  
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