



Indicator: All teams prepare agendas and minutes of their meetings. (5620)

Explanation: Preparing agendas and keeping minutes is standard operating procedure for effective teams.

Questions: Do all of your teams prepare agendas for their meetings and keep minutes of the proceedings? Where are these documents maintained? How are they shared, and with whom?

Effective teams operate with agendas, keep minutes, stay focused, and follow through with the plans they make. If we look to the world of business and ask the question, what makes an effective team meeting, we can come up with this:

1. They achieve the meeting's objective.
2. They take up a minimum amount of time.
3. They leave participants feeling that a sensible process has been followed. (<http://www.mindtools.com/CommSkill/RunningMeetings.htm>)

How do you know the meeting's objective? Plan and create an agenda. The agenda is your roadmap for where the meeting should go, what sites to see along the way, and where you should end up. Have a time keeper to keep the meeting on track. Good discussion is valuable, but not if it derails you from the purpose of the meeting. Make sure all discussion is on topic and on track to move the agenda forward.

Creating an agenda also allows the attendees to know ahead of time what is to be discussed and to prepare for the meeting. Is there something they need to review before they show up (Wise Ways, indicators, task lists)?

How do you know if you met your objective? Keep detailed notes. The only way to know where you've been is to keep accurate records.

When done properly, team meetings give everyone a sense of ownership for the process of school improvement. But, it has to be done properly. Without preparation and record keeping, meetings often turn into meandering lectures or time spent discussing football games and homecoming dances. Keep in mind, time is a valuable resource. Plan your agendas well and use your resources wisely.

References and Resources

Redding, S. (2006). *The mega system: Deciding, learning, connecting*. Lincoln, IL: Academic Development Institute. . Retrieved from www.adi.org. See Download ADI Publications.

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