

Plan Your Meeting

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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA • AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE

It is important to plan meetings well. Detail work may take time but is essential to the success of your meeting.

This information sheet may be used in conjunction with the filmstrip "How to Put Together an Effective Meeting", produced by the National Project in Agricultural Communications.

Fourteen steps in planning a meeting are suggested. If you consider each one and allow ample time to carry it out, chances are you'll have a very successful meeting.

I. DECIDE WHO SHOULD ATTEND

Decide Who Should be at Your Meeting



Should there be separate meetings for portions of your total audience?

By inviting certain people, can you--

create additional support?
get a variety of viewpoints for analysis?

give status to the meeting?
help in the follow-up process?

Should wives and older children be invited?

Should farmers indirectly concerned be invited?

How many people will make the optimum size for this particular meeting?

II. STUDY YOUR AUDIENCE, FIND OUT EVERYTHING YOU CAN ABOUT THOSE WHO WILL COME

At what stage are they in knowledge of the subject? (Awareness, interest, evaluation, trial, acceptance.)

What is their usual rate of accepting change? (Innovator, community adoption leader, local adoption leader, later adopter, non-adopter.)

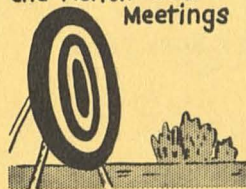


What experience has the audience had with your subject?

Does the group, or individuals, have generally accepted goals?

III. DECIDE ON THE OBJECTIVE AND THE ACTION GOAL OF THE MEETING

Decide on Objective and Action Goal of Meetings



What should your audience do as a result of the meeting?

Would a planning committee of prospective participants be of help in identifying these?

IV. CHECK THE OBJECTIVE AGAINST THE KNOWLEDGE AND ABILITY OF THE AUDIENCE TO MAKE SURE IT IS ATTAINABLE

Will the situation at your meeting be sufficiently conducive to reach the goal? If not, establish a lesser objective or plan other means to reach it.

Perhaps some re-selection of the audience would make it possible to achieve the original goal.

V. DECIDE WHAT YOU WANT TO OCCUR AFTER THE MEETING, AND PLAN HOW TO MAKE IT HAPPEN

If a drive is to be organized, who will the leaders be?

VI. OUTLINE THE MEETING MESSAGE

Will the message gain and hold the audience's attention because of its significance and its clarity? Will the message be immediately believable?



DECIDE.... Will Message Gain and Hold Attention on its Own?

Construct the message so that--

it arouses interest in reaching the objective.

it moves logically toward the objective.

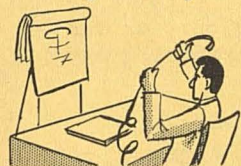
it uses words, ideas, symbols, things familiar to the audience.

it is pitched to this specific audience.

VII. SELECT EFFECTIVE METHODS OF PRESENTING THE MESSAGE TO YOUR AUDIENCE

Plan how--

Determine Methods Of Presenting The Meeting Message



To establish mood and atmosphere of learning---quickly.

Platform will communicate with the audience.

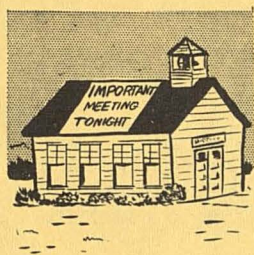
Audience will communicate among themselves.

To demonstrate to the audience that this is their meeting.

VIII. SELECT THE BEST POSSIBLE MEETING PLACE

Keep these things in mind--

1. Size--your audience should nearly fill the room.



2. Comfort--temperature and ventilation must be under control (this applies when the shades are closed, too).

3. Seating--chairs must be placed so everyone can see and hear. Usually an informal arrangement around tables is best.

4. Control of light--there must be ample light in the room for everyone and spot or other lights for the speaker. You should be able to darken the room completely for projected material.

5. Acoustics--if the room has hard walls which echo, drapes or other devices might help.

6. Accessibility--is the building located within a reasonable driving distance for everyone? Is the room easily accessible or on the top floor.

7. Does the character of the meeting place fit your audience?

IX. PLAN THE DETAILS OF THE PROGRAM

Arrange for--

1. Something for early arrivals to do.

2. Starting and ending on schedule.

3. Continuity--tempo.

4. Steady progress toward the objective.

5. Equipment to use for audio-visual aids--projectors, screen, PA system, correct voltage, convenient outlets or extension cord, tape recorder.

6. Someone to operate visual equipment.

Allow participants time to catch up on their thinking.

Plan for--

Recognition of individuals.

Distribution of take home literature.

Briefing of all meeting leaders.

X. PUBLICIZE THE MEETING

Your publicity should, of course, encourage people to attend. It should also arouse, motivate, and prepare them for your message.

XI. MAKE LAST-DAY CHECKS

Make sure--

1. The meeting place is arranged for.

2. All equipment is in place and working. Have spare lamps for projectors and know the location of house fuses.

3. Materials--films, bulletins, charts, mimeographed hand-outs--are on hand.

4. Meeting personnel is present and briefed.

XII. HOLD YOUR MEETING... AND BE PREPARED TO PLAY BY "EAR"

Maintain some flexibility.

XIII. AFTER THE MEETING... EVALUATE THE RESULTS

XIV. AFTER THE MEETING... FOLLOW UP