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FACILITATION AND MEETING MANAGEMENT

Agenda Format
& Explanation

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A Healthy Systems How-To Guide
Supplement

Facilitation and Meeting Management: Agenda Format and Explanation
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Healthy Systems How-To Guide Series

Healthy Systems How-To Guides focus on organization development topics such as meeting facilitation, project management and organizational change.

Each topic is presented as a Series of three stand-alone Guides —

• Process and Tools

• Principles and Mental Models

• Personal Skills and Practices

Additional Guides are published from time to time on special challenges associated with the Series.

You may start with any of the three Guides — Process, Principles or Person. All three Guides are filled with practical information, tools and illustrations. Together they form a framework of understanding and practice.
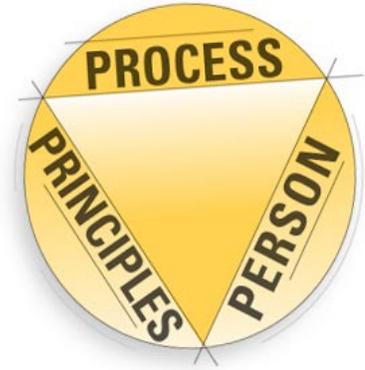
How-To Guide Supplement: Meeting Tools
Agenda Format and Explanation

Planning a meeting involves several interrelated steps or components. While we speak of them in a linear fashion, really, the process is iterative. Completing any single step requires reference forward and backwards to others. This being said, we suggest a basic order that is helpful to follow.

• Purpose: Why hold the meeting.
• Type of meeting: Information and/or action.
• Context: What's going on in the broader environment.
• Desired Outcomes: Measurable results or goals of the meeting.
• Stakeholders and Attendees: Who needs to be present or represented at meeting.
• Functions and Roles: Meeting tasks and who will take care of them.
• Decision-making Options: How decisions will be made in the meeting.
• Agenda: The road map or process that will be used to reach the desired outcomes.
• Room Set Up: Arrangement of chairs, tables, etc. for focus and effectiveness.

The design of your agenda will always be based on the Planning components that precede it, particularly the Desired Outcomes of the meeting.

Desired Outcomes are the measurable results, or specific accomplishments you want from the meeting. They always flow directly from meeting purpose and type, and may be thought of as what needs to be accomplished in the meeting in order to fulfill the purpose.

Follow the directions on the following pages to create your meeting agenda. For more in-depth information, refer to the Healthy Systems How-To Guide on Meeting Management and Facilitation Process and Tools.

The Agenda lays out what steps will be taken, and how, in order to reach the desired outcomes, and fulfill the meeting purpose. An effective agenda covers four basics: time, topic, process and person. A certain amount of time is designated for each section or topic of the meeting, and a process and the key people involved are also designated for each topic. Each of these four agenda categories is explained in more detail below.

The 4 Sections of the Agenda

Time

The time section of the agenda designates how much time will be allotted to each meeting topic. Time may be written in terms of start time and finish time, or as the total number of minutes available for each topic.

In deciding on how much time to allot to topics, remember, it often takes longer than you think. Also, in planning times for each topic, remember to begin with the "Start" and "End" sections (see below) and plan the other topics accordingly. If there is not enough time to reach all the desired outcomes, they should be changed.

Topics

All meetings have three basic sections which we refer to as: Start, During and End.

The Start and End of the meeting involve standard beginning and wrap-up activities, shown in the format that follows. Every agenda should include a section entitled "Start" and "End."

The basic content of the meeting, which is covered in the "During" portion of the meeting, may consist of several topic sections on the agenda. These will lie in between "Start" and "End." The topics in "During" are derived directly from the Desired Outcomes. They are simplified labels or shorthand versions of the Desired Outcomes, and – like Desired Outcomes - are always nouns. Each Desired Outcome should have a "Topic" section of its own in the agenda.

Process

This column of the agenda specifies what kind of process will be used for each topic.

Because topics stem from Desired Outcomes, you can think of the process boxes as explaining how each desired outcome will be accomplished. The "Start" and "End" topics, though not linked to Desired Outcomes, also are also followed by process boxes which describe how they topic will be covered.

Desired Outcomes are always nouns – identifying what is to be accomplished. Process words are always action verbs – identifying how the Desired Outcomes will be reached.

Examples of process words are: Discuss, Brainstorm, Clarify, Edit, Read, Present, Propose, Agree.

For each process on the agenda, the facilitator will identify a tool or technique to use. For example, if "Clarify" is the process, the facilitator might use the tool "Question and Answer." Or, if the process is "Prioritize" the facilitator might use the tool "Rank Ordering."

Person

The "person" column of the agenda lists key players for each particular topic. If a topic entails several processes, then the person box specifies who is involved in each process for that topic.

<u>Meeting Title</u>

Team or Project Name
Meeting Date
Meeting Location
Invited

<u>Desired Outcomes Listed in Sequence</u>

1
2
3

<u>Agenda:</u>

<u>Time</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Process</u>	<u>Person</u>
stated as start time Example: 8:00 AM OR As Minutes Example: (20)	Start Ups	• Introduce member and guests • State meeting purpose • Review action items • Review desired outcomes and agenda and edit is needed • Conduct Warm up as appropriate • Review roles • Review ground rules	examples: Facilitator Scribe Guests Timekeeper
Ditto	Desired Outcome 1	Process Steps	
Ditto	Desired Outcome 2	Process Steps	
Ditto	Desired Outcome 3	Process Steps	
Ditto	etc.		
Ditto	Wrap Up	• Set next meeting date • Identify next steps • List next steps • Evaluate meeting • Close meeting	

Other Healthy Systems How-To Guides

You have completed a Healthy Systems How-To Guide Supplement on Meeting Management and Facilitation. Each How-To Guide and Series fits into our leadership and management model illustrated on this page. The table below is a 2-D representation of the graphic. It provides a sampling of the topics covered in other Healthy Systems products.

Content	Process - steps	Principles - guidance	Person - roles
Identity and Direction	Strategic purposing and planning	If you don't know where you are going, any road will do. Identity is self-organizing.	Executive Leadership Leaders at all levels Management
Process Design	Redesign and improvement	Processes are designed to serve the goals and strategies of the organization.	Operations Managers Quality Improvement Teams
Project Management	Defining to implementing	Cross boundaries judiciously	Project Managers Teams
Meetings	Start up to wrap up	First Understanding and then agreement	Facilitators Teams
Relationships and Teams	Communication, collaboration and conflict resolution	Relationships are the most personal and meaningful way to practice integration and alignment.	All people, all positions
Culture	Aligning through story telling, surfacing assumptions, problem solving and celebrating	Surface assumptions Define Values Create heroes that define your ideal culture.	All people, all positions
Corporate Wellness	Including a human resource goal in your strategic plan.	There is a reciprocal relationship between the health of the organization and the well being of the people who work there.	All people, all positions
Design and Change	Involving, designing, redesigning, diffusing	Structure dictates functioning	Organization Development Leaders at all levels Managers
Healthy Organization	Integrating all the processes above Creating a Balanced Scorecard for the health of your organization	Focus on flow, integration and alignment. Release tensions and bottlenecks.	Organization Development Leaders at all levels Managers

About Healthy Systems

Healthy Systems is a management consulting firm that aligns and integrates the people, processes and strategic directions of an organization—for the health of the organization and the well-being of its employees.

We train and coach organizations in the dynamics of complex systems and in the skills, tools and strategies for creating and sustaining a vital and balanced workplace.

Healthy Systems works in collaboration with organization development and training specialists to meet your specific and customized needs.

Healthy Systems provides consulting and customized training for organizational effectiveness, focusing on methods to create and sustain vitality and relevance in meetings, projects, processes, planning and interpersonal relationships.

About Sara Grigsby

Sara Grigsby has worked professionally as an organizational development consultant, trainer and facilitator since 1985, providing project-based management, coaching, training and event facilitation services to a variety of corporate, public agency and health care clients.
Sara is the founder of Healthy Systems and its lead consultant.

She has been writing about Organization Development and creating tools to help others create healthy systems since 1995. Her CV is available online: http://healthysystems.net/htmls/about/sara.html

Sara is currently Senior Organization Development consultant for NWNatural in Portland, Oregon. She lives in Corbett, Oregon at Benfield Farm <http://www.benfieldfarm.com>.