

Establishing Meeting Ground Rules for Effective Communication

Consider the following approach in support of productive dialogue within staff, faculty, department and college level meetings.

Topics to consider discussing to promote effective communication and establish meeting ground rules.

1. When we have a strong reaction to what is said in our group, we _____.

- Say “Ouch” or “Wow”
- Don’t go on the attack
- Use “I” statements
- Take a deep breath
- Ask questions
- Don’t shut down

2. To make sure that the voices of all people in our group are heard _____.

- Don't Interrupt
- Ask people to comment/participate
- Speak up for others
- Maintain confidentiality

3. We make sure that people get equal “space” in our group by _____.

- Parking all job titles at the door
- Checking in before leaving a topic
- Sticking to the agenda/discussing departures from the agenda as a group
- Scheduling appropriate meetings (operational vs. strategic vs. emotional support)
- Sending pre-meeting documents and comments on these (for complex topics)
- Have a timekeeper for each meeting
- Share responsibility for sticking to the agenda

4. To help each other to follow the ground rules we _____.

- Provide positive feedback and constructive criticism
- Call “time-out” with a T-sign when rules are not followed
- Review and revise these rules on a regular basis

Non-negotiable Ideas

- Confidentiality
- Be mindful of others experiences that aren't yours.
- Speak one at a time; Listen and do not interrupt. Make space for others.
- No laptops open and all phones on silent
- Activities will be fast-paced, with short time frames and required quick transitions!