



# Effective meetings

fact sheet

## What is a meeting?

A meeting is where people come together to resolve problems, answer questions, make decisions, network, and share knowledge.

## What makes a meeting effective?

Effective meetings result from three simple steps:

### 1. Plan

- Define the purpose, target outcomes, and who needs to attend,
- Determine the best format to achieve the purpose. In some cases, a conference call or email exchange may be just as effective as a group face-to-face meeting
- What information is required in advance?

### 2. Implement

1. **Establish the roles of chair, facilitator and reporter (See Table at right. Note. Sometimes roles are combined.)**
2. **Follow this process**
  - a. Within the cultural norms, *be on time, start on time.*
  - b. Display and explain the agenda, the desired outcomes and the time available.
  - c. Remain focused on the agenda and outcomes during the meeting's discussion. If needed, remind participants of the agenda and desired outcomes to politely keep the meeting focused. Suggest off-topic discussions are interesting but may be best served during a break or at another meeting.
  - d. Record decisions and assign responsibility for action items.

### 3. Conclude

- Review action items (who is responsible and the timeline), positive outcomes, and ask for any final (brief) comments.
- Thank participants for their time and contributions.
- If required, schedule a time and venue for the next meeting.

Simple meeting guidelines can make the difference between useful outcome and frustrated participants.



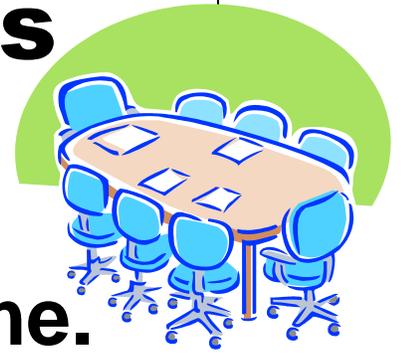
| Role               | Responsibility   |
|--------------------|--|
| <b>Chair</b>       | The Chair is the group leader responsible for the <b>content of the meeting</b> – what will be discussed? The desired outcomes?  |
| <b>Facilitator</b> | The Facilitator manages the meeting <b>process</b> – ensuring that discussion, dynamics and participation are productive and remain focused on the agenda. The facilitator ensures that people <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respect other's views</li> <li>• Debate points of view - not personalities</li> <li>• Speak one at a time</li> <li>• Keep comments brief and relevant</li> <li>• Participate</li> </ul> Facilitators summarize meeting discussion and make it clearly visible. In smaller meetings, the chair may also facilitate. |
| <b>Rapporteur</b>  | The Rapporteur is potentially the most important person in the group. They <b>record</b> and <b>interpret</b> group output, produce a written summary of the conclusions, actions, recommendations, and (may) report to the plenary sessions.  |

**Post the accompanying page titled, *Meeting Guidelines*, to help with your next meeting.**

***“When the outcome of a meeting is to have another meeting, it has been a lousy meeting.” Herbert Hoover***

**For more information visit:** International Programs [ip.ucdavis.edu](http://ip.ucdavis.edu)  
**Developed with input from MA Bell, P Marcotte and D Shires. January 2013**  
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# Meeting Guidelines



- 1. Have an agenda**
- 2. Be on time, start on time.**
- 3. State the meeting objectives and the desired outputs.**
- 4. Identify the chair, facilitator and rapporteur.**
- 5. Set meeting norms.**
  - Respect others views.
  - Speak one at a time.
  - Debate points of view—not the personalities involved.
  - Keep comments brief and relevant.
  - Encourage participation.
- 5. Capture decisions made: who is responsible for actions and when.**