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# FACILITATING AND CONDUCTING STAFF MEETINGS

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**Desired Outcome:** Effective, meaningful, fun staff meetings that use the team as a constructive problem-solving force in a safe, trusting environment.

**Measurement:** Review of the Meeting Evaluation. Feedback from staff and doctor.

## **Monthly Or Semi-Monthly Staff Meetings**

1. Schedule staff meetings six months at a time.
2. Enter "staff meeting" in the appointment book and block off the needed time.
3. Implement a 3-ring binder note system for each staff member to keep all of their meeting notes.
4. Maintain a "secretary's" book containing all of the master agenda forms and notes from the meetings for future reference.

## **Staff Meetings: A Shared Responsibility**

1. Encourage the responsibility of facilitating staff meetings to be a shared duty. Ask staff members take turns as "facilitator."
2. As a group, agree on the ground rules for staff meetings. For instance:
  - A. Written agenda format.
  - B. One person speaking at a time.
  - C. Starting and ending on time.
  - D. Promptly responding to the lead of the facilitator.
  - E. Promoting a safe, trusting environment by avoiding sarcasm, put-downs, and finger pointing.
3. Identify clearly and discuss the responsibilities of the facilitator. For instance: (*Refer to the following pages for instructions pertaining to these items.*)
  - A. Preparing for the meeting.
  - B. Conducting the meeting.
  - C. Acting as a mediator, if needed.
  - D. Encouraging participation.
  - E. Maintaining an environment of trust, respect, and safety.

## **Staff Meeting Preparation**

1. Confirm the time and location of the meeting with all participants.
2. One week before the staff meeting:
  - A. Decide on the educational segment.
  - B. Distribute Agenda sheets (found in the Forms Section of this book) to all staff members and to the doctor.

3. Two days prior to the meeting, collect the agenda sheets from everyone and prepare a master agenda.
4. One day prior to the meeting, give all staff members a copy of the master agenda, even if they will not be attending.

### **Conducting the Staff Meeting**

1. Define the objective of the meeting and solicit a commitment from everyone to achieve that goal.
2. Set time limits for discussion of agenda items to ensure all meeting goals and objectives are met.
3. Redirect the group and keep them goal-oriented, if the meeting gets sidetracked. Try saying, for instance: "It seems we're getting off-track. Let's focus on the issue which I understand to be ..."
4. Ask the group to problem-solve by defining clearly and objectively what is happening, what they want to happen, and possible solutions. (Try using the Strategy/Goal Sheet and GAP Analysis forms found in the Forms Section.)
5. Encourage staff members to participate.
  - A. Make a positive inter-active statement, such as "I'd like to hear what everyone thinks. Can we go around the group and have each person state their views in turn?"
  - B. Ask everyone to take 3 to 4 minutes of quiet time, write down their thoughts, and then solicit their comments.
6. Ask the person taking the meeting minutes to record ideas on a flip chart and ask each member to indicate their top three choices.
7. Maintain an environment of trust, respect, and safety.
  - A. Insist that everyone share his or her thoughts in objective terms. For example, "Jane, I can see you're upset about this, but let's focus today on the problem itself, not the people involved."
  - B. Redirect them to problem-solving techniques described in steps five through six above.
  - C. Review and seek recommitment to meeting guidelines set by the group.
8. Call for decisions and ask the person taking the meeting minutes to restate assignments.
9. Conduct a meeting evaluation with the group and ask the minute taker to record the results. The following are potential questions for such an evaluation. (Refer to the Forms Section for a blank Meeting Evaluation form to use for this purpose.)
  - A. Did we start on time?
  - B. Did we end on time?
  - C. How many follow-up tasks were reported as completed?
  - D. How many decisions were made today?

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- E. On a scale of 1 to 4, indicate how effective you think the meeting was:
1. Did not meet expectations.
  2. Partially met expectations.
  3. Met expectations.
  4. Surpassed expectations.
10. Set the date and location of the next meeting and remind the group who the facilitator and minute taker will be.