

# MAKING MEETINGS WORK

## Determine if a meeting is necessary

- ✓ What do you hope will happen as a result of the meeting?
- ✓ What will be different after the meeting?
- ✓ What are the current obstacles?
- ✓ Will everyone who needs to be at the meeting attend?

## Before the meeting

- ✓ Solicit agenda topics
- ✓ Give members as much advance notice of the meeting as possible
- ✓ Personally invite those members who need to be at the meeting
- ✓ Make sure that members have an agenda and previous meeting minutes in advance
- ✓ If appropriate, determine who will bring refreshments

## Starting the Meeting

### Create a comfortable setting

- ✓ Arrange the room so participants can hear and see one another
- ✓ Meeting room: temperature, seating, visual aids, space, should be conducive to discussion
- ✓ Provide refreshments whenever possible

### Start on time

- ✓ Introduce a brief warm-up or icebreaker
- ✓ Introductions and acknowledgment of members
- ✓ Share accomplishments/community stories

### Get organized

- ✓ Develop and/or post group ground rules
- ✓ Post and review the agenda; ask for additions or changes
- ✓ Agenda should include a clear objective for the meeting
- ✓ Determine responsibility for the roles of timekeeper and recorder

## **During the Meeting**

- ✓ Support participation from all members
- ✓ Ask open-ended questions
- ✓ Encourage the use of examples
- ✓ Applaud creativity and “off the wall” ideas
- ✓ Use “tell me more...” to explore ideas
- ✓ Pay attention to body language, “Listen” for nonverbal cues
- ✓ Maintain focus on the task
- ✓ Help build agreements; stay positive and neutral
- ✓ Make at least one decision
- ✓ Use visuals - flip charts, overheads, other aids
- ✓ Use humor whenever possible
- ✓ Acknowledge participation

## **Ending the Meeting**

- ✓ End on time unless the group agrees otherwise
- ✓ Review and acknowledge meeting accomplishments
- ✓ Determine next steps: what needs to happen before the next meeting, what is the tentative agenda for the next meeting?

## **Periodically**

- ✓ Assess effectiveness of meetings quarterly
- ✓ Rotate the facilitator role
- ✓ Celebrate accomplishments