

## The Power of an Agenda

### Objectives

1. To identify the causes of ineffective/nonproductive meetings.
2. To assess the effectiveness of your team's meetings.
3. To demonstrate how a good agenda can overcome many causes of ineffective meetings.

### Participants

Unlimited but works best with a maximum of 20 people.

### Time Limit

1 hour.

### Physical Setting

Chairs around a set of tables arranged in a U-shape. For larger groups, several sets of tables and chairs spread out around the room.

### Materials and Resources

1. Overhead transparencies (OHT) 27.1 and 27.2.
2. Overhead projector, screen and projector pen.

### Process

1. Explain the purpose of the session. Display OHT 27.1 on the overhead projector.
2. Ask team members to pair up with the person next to them and discuss: "Which of these causes applies to our team?" And: "Do you want to add any other items to the list?" Allow 10 minutes.

### *50 Activities for Self-Directed Teams*

3. Ask each subgroup to report. As appropriate, add causes to the list.
4. Facilitate a discussion on how an agenda might eliminate some of these problems.
5. Conclude the session by displaying OHT 27.2 on the overhead projector. Show how this agenda addresses many of the causes.

#### **Variations**

1. Show OHT 27.2 before step 4. Ask team members to point out how each of the causes are addressed by specific parts of the meeting notice and agenda.
2. A companion exercise is Activity 38, *Meeting Monsters*.



## WHAT CAUSES A POOR MEETING?

1. Too long
2. Too many people
3. Wrong people attend
4. Nothing accomplished
5. Members unprepared
6. Discussion off track
7. Side conversations
8. No action items at end
9. Important items not discussed
10. Members arrive late





## SAMPLE MEETING NOTICE

*Meeting Title:* AAA Project Meeting

*Meeting Date:* April 1, 1994

*Starting Time:* 2:00 PM

*Ending Time:* 3:15 PM

*Location:* Conference Room A

*Pre-work:* Read First Quarter Report; Review Your YTD Budget; Review March Minutes (especially the proposal for a new district).

### AGENDA

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Time</i>
1. Status of '93 Budget: Plan v. Actual	Decision on Overruns	J. Kaplan	30 min.
2. Creation of New District	Decision	V. Ku	20 min.
3. Feedback from Customers	F.Y.I	S. Edwards	15 min.
4. Presentation at ACM Conference	Who will Prepare?	A. Carlin	10 min.

### ATTENDEES

*Required:*

J. Kaplan  
D. Provencher  
D. Lasley  
R. Lakshmanan  
S. Langion  
V. Ku  
A. Carlin  
S. Edwards

*Optional:*

R. Bowyer  
L. Kelley

