

P.S.P./P.E.P. SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT

Strategies for Successful Senior Staff Meetings.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Senior Staff meeting is a critical cog in most schools decision making apparatus. This brief practical paper offers the school's administration advice on how to get the most out of these meetings. Here are hints on planning an agenda, and conducting problem solving discussions.

2. PLANNING AGENDAS

There is more to making agendas than asking Senior Staff to jot down their ideas. Here is a checklist for monitoring the effectiveness of your agendas.

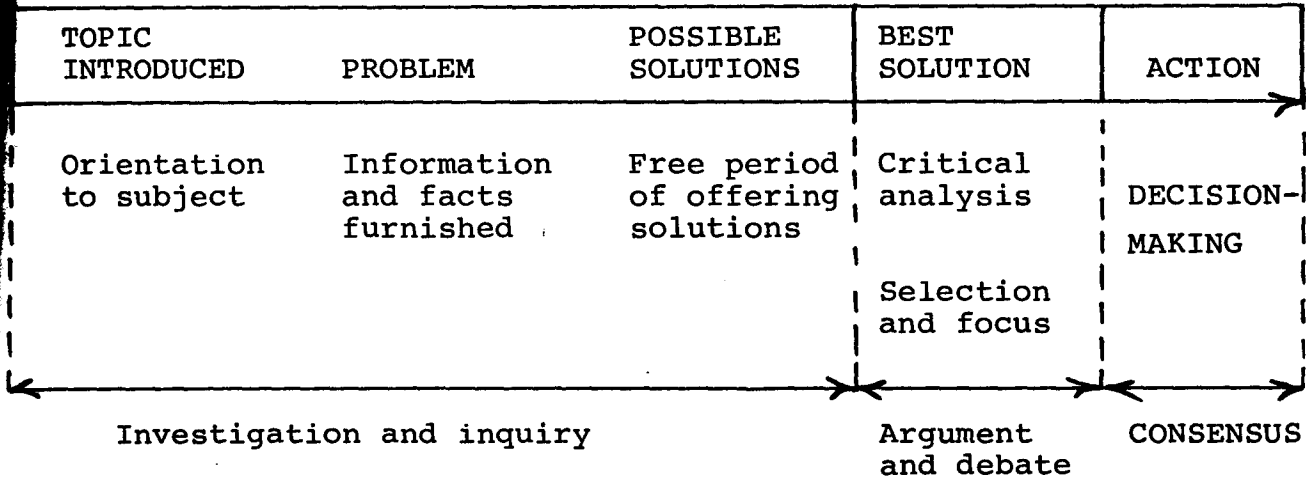
AGENDA PLANNING CHECKLIST	YES	NO
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Is this meeting necessary?2. Has an agenda been prepared and circulated in advance to all members?3. Do committee members understand the meaning of each agenda item before the meeting?4. Do they come prepared to each meeting?5. Have agenda items been placed in priority order?6. Has a time allocation been made for each agenda item?7. Does the time allocated correspond with the importance of each item?8. Do you state discussion topics<ul style="list-style-type: none">● as questions.● using words such as "how" and "what" to stimulate interest.● using a minimum of words.9. Have you prepared your own outline for the meeting including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">● method: (lecture, brainstorm, discussion)● techniques eg. blackboard, overhead, cards● resources eg. data to present		

3. DECISION MAKING

Effective decision making is vital for effective Senior Staff meetings. Consider these questions:

DECISION MAKING CHECKLIST	YES	NO
<p>1. Do Senior Staff know the procedure for decision making?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Whose decision is it?● Have you informed the group of how the decision will be made? <p>2. Are you clear as to the strengths/weaknesses of the types of thought processes used to reach decisions?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● inductive) reasoning● deductive)● causal reasoning● analogies <p>3. Are the tools of decision making wisely used?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● examples● illustration● statistics● testimony		

4. THE PLACE OF DECISION MAKING IN THE DISCUSSION PROCESS:
A MODEL



DO YOU:	YES	NO
<p>1. Permit informed decision making by promoting presentation of information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● theory as it applies to the topic. ● testimony on other school's practices. ● statistics on performance/practices in your school. ● commonwealth/state/region guidelines. <p>2. Use 'lateral' thinking techniques to promote consideration of creative solutions.</p> <p>3. Have a means by which to recognise the 'best' solution?</p>		

5. TYPICAL DISCUSSION OUTLINE PATTERN

INTRODUCTION

- I. Chairman's opening words
 - A. Greeting
 - B. Introduction of participants
 - C. Statement of topic or questions

ATTENTION

MAIN DISCUSSION

- I. What is the problem out of which this grows?
 - A. How serious is it today?
 - 1. Whom does it affect?
 - 2. Where is it?
 - 3. How much does it cost?
 - B. When and how did this condition start?
 - 4. How long has it been with us?
 - 5. What are the causes?
 - C. Is the total problem clear to all of us?
 - 1. Are there any ambiguous terms?
 - 2. Should we raise other questions?
- II. What are the possible solutions and suggestions?

PROBLEM

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

- A. Can we list all suggestions before discussing them?
- B. Have we overlooked any possibilities?
- C. What are the values of each solution? Disadvantages?
 - 1. Will it solve the problem?
 - 2. Remove the causes?
 - 3. Be practical?
 - 4. Bring new evils?

5. TYPICAL DISCUSSION OUTLINE PATTERN

(Con't)

THE SOLUTION

III. What is the best solution? (may emerge from II,C)

- A. What goals are we seeking?
- B. Is there one solution that seems to meet these goals?
- C. Can we agree on this solution? (consensus)
- D. Should we make only tentative recommendations?

ACTION

IV. What action should be taken?

- A. Are we ready to recommend a specific plan?
 - 1. How will it be carried out?
 - 2. Who will do it?
- B. Should we postpone specific action?

CONCLUSION (or Forum Period)

- I. Summary and transition remarks by chairman.
- II. Questions and comments from listening group
 - A. Addressed to chair or individual participant
 - B. Addressed to participants as a whole
- III. Final summary and remarks by chairman

6. DISCUSSION EVALUATION FORM

DISCUSSION EVALUATION FORM

Subject _____ Leader _____ Date _____

VERY GOOD GOOD FAIR

Planning _____

Facilities _____

THE LEADER (total rating) _____

Opening remarks _____

Agenda, problem, or topic stated _____

Stimulated discussion _____

Controlled discussion _____

Use of questions _____

Use of charts and blackboard _____

Use of cases and handouts _____

Transitions _____

Summary _____

Pleasant manner _____

Tact _____

Impartial _____

THE GROUP (total rating) _____

Problem discussed _____

Facts and information supplied _____

Solutions advanced _____

Solutions discussed and evaluated _____

Decision-making and consensus _____

Cooperative attitude _____

PARTICIPATION (total rating) _____

Member A _____

Member B _____

Etc. _____

TOTAL CONFERENCE RATING _____

7. INDIVIDUAL REACTION SHEET

INDIVIDUAL REACTION SHEET

(For individual member self-analysis)

- Was this a worthwhile meeting? _____
- Was the objective accomplished? _____
- Was the meeting well planned? _____
- Did the leader do a good job? _____
- Did the leader dominate too much? _____
- Did I feel free to contribute? _____
- Did I supply information when I could? _____
- Did I have cooperative attitude? _____
- Did I have an open mind? _____
- Was my interest maintained? _____
- Was I a good listener? _____
- Did I speak appropriately? _____
- Did I help keep the discussion organised? _____
- Should I have prepared more? _____
- Did I help toward reaching a decision? _____

8. FURTHER INFORMATION

Zelko, Harold P. Successful Conference and Discussion Techniques
London: Mc Graw Hill, 1957.