

## Meeting basics

One of the most important times is the first meeting. If the attendees are not regular meeting goers it is essential to get off on the right foot. According to the Penn State University site for meetings, the goal of the first meeting is usually to "reaffirm" the goals and establish ground rules/communication lines for how the team should operate and what the intended goals are.

Name your team - This may sound very trivial but having a common name is a good way to feel closer to the project. It is surprisingly important to pick a cool name!

Share contact information - You will probably want to share e-mail addresses, and possibly (cell) phone numbers.

You should also establish when and how different tools should be used.

Establish a timeline, roles and responsibilities

Set ground rules - Although disagreements will arise, it is possible to voice opinions in such a way so that conflicts do not escalate. Typically, it is suggested that personal attacks be avoided. See below for additional ground rules.

One of the most important ideas is to have a reason for the meeting. When you call meetings do the following:

- Circulate the date, time and location of meeting - Sending reminders the day before the meeting may be wise in some cases.
- List of attendees expected
- Purpose of the meeting (preliminary statement of the incident or condition)
- Order of business to be conducted at the meeting
- Where to find background or support materials required

Buy in at the end of the day you are looking for a proposal which all participants will buy into. As Paul Niquette explains in an excerpt from *Sophistication: How to get it...then what!* to get buy in "That takes sophistication. Sophistication is three things:

1. Control of Relationship Tension,
2. Management of Expectations,
3. Conquest of Ego.

The sophisticated leader

- raises comfort levels in all participants,
- reassures people that no solution is perfect, and, in place of full agreement,
- stimulates GNCD (good natured cooperative dissent). “

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