

EFFECTIVE COALITION MEETINGS



Coalition meetings should be a time of dynamic dialogue and interaction between the members of the coalition to determine the action of each member that needs to be taken to achieve a common goal.

COALITION CAPACITY: ORGANIZATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Steps for Effective Meetings

- Engage the membership
- Define the role of members
- Establish an action-oriented agenda
- Determine what and when items should go to committees or workgroups



An important aspect of running effective meetings is insisting that everyone respects the time allotted. Start the meeting on time, do not spend time recapping for latecomers, and, when you can, finish on time. Whatever can be done outside the meeting time should be. This includes circulating reports for people to read beforehand, and assigning smaller group meetings to discuss issues relevant to only certain people.

BEFORE THE MEETING

Set Clear Objectives

- Define 1–3 specific goals for the meeting (e.g., approve a project, share updates, plan an event)

Create and Distribute an Agenda

- Send the agenda 3–5 days in advance
- Include: meeting purpose, timed items, presenters, and any materials to review

Invite the Right People

- Make sure attendees are relevant to the meeting goals
- Personally confirm that key voices or decision-makers will attend



DURING THE MEETING

Start with a Purpose

- Quickly restate goals and ground rules
- Keep energy positive and focused

Stay on Track

- Stick to the agenda; use a timekeeper if needed
- Allow space for input but gently redirect when discussions drift

Encourage Participation

- Invite quieter voices into the conversation
- Use prompts like: “What are your thoughts on this?” or “Any concerns we haven’t addressed?”

Document Key Takeaways

- Assign someone to take action-oriented minutes (who, what, by when)
- Clearly capture commitments, decisions, and deadlines

ENGAGING THE MEMBERSHIP

Form committees, task forces, workgroups and action teams:

- When 1 to 2 hours per month is simply not enough time to accomplish all of the work of the coalition
- Committees and/or workgroups are a useful method for keeping the forward momentum between monthly meetings
- If an agenda item requires more time than the agenda allows – send it to committee
- If an agenda item needs additional research, planning or consideration – send it committee
- Clearly define responsibilities, resources and timelines
- Groups should hold to purpose
- Make necessary changes to fulfill the purpose

TIPS FOR COALITION MEETING LEADERS

- Remember you are the steward of the process.
- Plan ahead and work on the meeting – work one on one with the members who will be presenting at the meeting
- Have a clearly understood and agreed-upon purpose. Don't meet unless you can state the purpose of the meeting.
- Be clear about who should attend the meeting and how they can benefit from as well as contribute to the meeting's goals.
- If you said it will be worked on in the meeting, make sure it is on the agenda.
- Delegate meeting roles – the timekeeper, minutes and greeter.
- Manage group dynamics – the group is counting on you to do so.
Engage local community leaders of different agencies for a presentation, giving them a purpose to attend

THE ROLE OF LEADERS IN COALITION MEETINGS

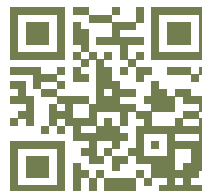
- The responsibility of the meeting leaders is to help the group accomplish a common task: to move through the agenda in the time available and to make the necessary decisions and plans
- Leaders do not make decisions for the group but suggests ways to help the group move forward
- Effective leadership engages coalition members by ensuring everyone has a meaningful role and a shared sense of ownership in the work.
- It is NOT the role of the leader to know everything or have all the answers look for skill building opportunities
- Recognize efforts of the members



FOR MORE INFORMATION AND OTHER
PREVENTION RESOURCES, PLEASE VISIT:

<http://www.dcca.org/prevention-resources>

<https://ispri.ng/mxVY1> Or scan here:



COALITION MEETINGS SHOULD NOT BE...

- Committee reporting sessions
- Leader reporting sessions
- All about members advising leaders on what action the leaders should take
- Facilitator-led sessions where the leaders do the majority of the speaking
- Time spent with limited dialogue between members without and member accountability

CHALLENGES COALITIONS FACE

- Few members do all the work
- Members serve as advisors
- Inconsistent meeting attendance
- Lots of meetings with little achieved
- Coalition does not move from assessment and planning into action
- Coalitions cannot demonstrate outcomes



Hosting Effective Meetings Requires a Coalition to Make Purposeful and Strategic Transitions in How They Use Their Time

FROM	TO
Agenda items are committee updates	Agenda items are related to the priorities and outcomes of the coalition
Agenda items are introduced by the leader and discussed by the allotted members	Agenda items list the person who will be leading the discussion, the time and the action to be taken
Agenda items are stagnant or cut and pasted from month to month	Coalition progress is evident by new and emerging items on the agenda
Members advise leaders on actions to be taken from the next meeting	Action planning and delegation happens in the meeting
The same few people at the meeting every month	Members are recruited to the meeting based on the agenda items
New members attend only one or two meetings and then never come back	New members are quickly engaged and continue to participate



ESTABLISH AN ACTION ORIENTED AGENDA

The Meeting Agenda

A meeting agenda should include the following:

- The date, time and place of the meeting
- A statement of the main purpose of the meeting (whether it is a regular meeting or a special meeting)

- Agenda items
 - o Include who is responsible for presenting each item/s
 - o Include time allotted for each item
- The date and time of the next meeting
- Any special upcoming meetings or events
- Setting the Agenda for Action
- Offer time for Networking Opportunities

Setting the Agenda for Action

- Do make sure that agenda items reflect the current work of the coalition
- Do make sure agenda is focused on results: moving discussions towards decisions, commitments and next steps
- Don't over schedule
- Don't hold unnecessary meetings
- Do set an agenda that requires members to be active participants

Establishing an Effective Agenda

HOW LONG - The amount of time allocated on the agenda for that item

WHAT - Brief title of the agenda item

WHO - The person who will be presenting or presiding over the discussion of the issue

ACTION - Clear benchmark of what the meeting plans to accomplish and how members should prepare

Agenda Items Are Focused on the Action to be Taken to Achieve the Coalition's Priorities or Outcomes (*exmple*)

1. Welcome and Introductions	15 minutes	Coalition Chair
2. Reduce the number of retailers selling to minors • Action to be taken, by who, by when • Successes, challenges and what's next	15 minutes	Access to Alcohol Committee Chair
3. Reduce the number of parents who host teen alcohol parties • Action to be taken, by who, by when • Successes, challenges and what's next	15 minutes	Access to Alcohol Committee Chair
4. Reduce the presence of marijuana paraphernalia in carryout's detection of marijuana and Rx impairment at school and school-sponsored events • Action to be taken, by who, by when • Successes, challenges and what's next	15 minutes	Marijuana Committee Chair
5. Increase detention of marijuana and RX impairment at school and at school-sponsored events • Action to be taken, by who, by when • Successes, challenges and what's next	15 minutes	Marijuana Committee Chair

HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS

Provide a sign-in sheet.

- Have the coalition Secretary or Recorder take minutes of the meeting.
- Send out a meeting reminder with location, time, agenda and minutes from last meeting a week before the next scheduled meeting.
- If certain people are dominating the conversation, make a point of asking others for their ideas.
- At the end of each agenda item, quickly summarize what was said, and ask people to confirm that that's a fair summary. Then make notes regarding follow- up.
- Note items that require further discussion.
- Have a welcome packet available for new participants.
- Ensure the meeting stays on topic.
- Watch body language and make adjustments as necessary. Maybe you need a break, or you need to stop someone from speaking too much.
- List all tasks that are generated at the meeting. Make a note of who is assigned to do what, and by when.
- Celebrate your progress!
- At the close of the meeting, quickly summarize next steps and inform everyone that you will be sending out a meeting summary.
- Follow up by sending a thorough follow-up that includes clear, detailed meeting minutes

After the meeting is over, take some time to debrief, and determine what went well and what could have been done better. Evaluate the meeting's effectiveness based on how well you met the objective. This will help you continue to improve your process of running effective meetings.

Basic Coalition Meeting Evaluation Form (good for monthly meetings)

- *Was the meeting well-organized? (Yes/No + Comments)*
- *Did you feel your input was valued? (Yes/No + Comments)*
- *Were the topics discussed relevant to the coalition's goals?*
- *What did you find most useful?*
- *What could be improved for next time?*
- *Suggestions for future agenda items*
- *Rating scale: 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree)*

SOURCES

Coalition Evaluation Form

CADCA

Coalition Meeting Evaluation Form

Coalition Name: _____ Meeting Date: _____

1. Was the meeting well-organized?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Comments: _____

2. Did you feel your input was valued?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Comments: _____

3. Were the topics discussed relevant to the coalition's goals?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Comments: _____

4. What did you find most useful in today's meeting? _____

5. What could be improved for next time? _____

6. Suggestions for future agenda items: _____

7. Overall Rating of the Meeting (circle one):

1 - Strongly Disagree

2 - Disagree

3 - Neutral

4 - Agree

5 - Strongly Agree