– Michael Healey, Sr. Consultant, Social Synergetics

The Frustration of Unproductive Meetings

We've all had the experience of sitting through meetings that have felt unproductive – wasted time, unfocussed discussions, unrelated comments. Simply put … it's frustrating!

Most meetings can be much more productive by creating a few structural protocols. One of the most important, in our opinion, is a set of agreements about how meeting attendees will "show up" and participate in the meeting.

Is the Meeting Regular or Ad Hoc?

If the group is one that meets on a regular basis, the rules can be agreed to and even signed by the members of the group to symbolically codify the agreements.

If the group is ad hoc, or has people rotating into the meetings, a set of rules can be formulated and read at the beginning of every meeting with the goal of achieving agreement amongst that specific group.

What Types of Agreements Make Sense?

Below is a list of possible agreements offered as examples – this is not an exhaustive or definitive list, by any means. But, it is a good start. Ideally each meeting group would use a collaborative process to develop their own unique set of rules.

We, the ABC team of the XYZ company agree to:

> **Participate fully and appropriately in every meeting.**
> **Speak with good purpose at all times and always participate when I have something relevant to share.**
> **Support the purpose, goals and processes of our meeting agenda.**
> **Be willing to stay on topic and on time.**
> **Be wiling to keep the topic on target and on time when others have the floor.**
> **Review the agenda prior to the meeting and arrive prepared for each agenda item.**

Your Meetings CAN Be Productive!

By following a basic set of agreements, we guarantee that any meeting, anywhere, with any group of people can be more productive. If you'd like to find out more about how we can help your organization run more effective meetings:

Contact Michael Healey at mhealey@socialsynergetics.com or at 289-228-9838