

Creating Effective and Inclusive Meetings

October 9, 2024, 12.00-1.30pm

DESCRIPTION

Top-down leadership doesn't work in the academy. Leaders must have a collaborative approach to be effective, but collaboration isn't simply about bringing people together and hoping for positive outcomes. In this session, we will delve into specific principles and strategies that effective leaders adopt to ensure that all voices are heard and that tasks are accomplished. This presentation is a joint effort between the Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and Academic Impressions.

PANELISTS:

Amy Giordano, Senior Learning and Development Manager, Academic Impressions

Meghan Paladino, Chief of Staff, Academic Impressions

HOST

Jane Okech, Professor & Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs

Upcoming Academic Leadership Workshops AY2024-2025

Leadership Workshop III: *Chairs and Associate Deans*, November 13, 2024, Noon-1:15 PM

Title: Strategies for Effective Faculty Performance Review: A Focus on Annual Performance Review, Workload Planning and Documentation

Location: Microsoft Teams

Leadership Workshop IV: *Chairs and Associate Deans*, January 29, 2025, Noon-1:30 PM

Title: How Deans/Chairs Can Combat Burnout and Support Faculty Wellbeing

Location: Microsoft Teams

Leadership Workshop V: *Chairs and Associate Deans*, March 5, 2025, Noon-1:15 PM

Title: Strategies for Effective Management of Department/Unit RPT Process and Documentation - Issues and Concerns

Location: Microsoft Teams



PROFESSIONAL AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

For Faculty, Staff, and Administrators in Higher Ed

Amy Giordano, Senior Learning & Development Manager
amy@academicimpressions.com

Meg Paladino, Chief of Staff
meghan@academicimpressions.com





University
of Vermont

Creating Effective & Inclusive Meetings

October 9, 2024

12 PM – 1:30 PM EST

#1

Setting the Stage:

Why do effective meetings matter?

Agenda: Creating Effective & Inclusive Meetings

- Welcome and Introductions
- Reflection: What Makes a Meeting Effective and Inclusive?
- Best Practices: Inclusive & Effective Meetings
- How to Apply Our Learning
- Q & A and Wrap Up

Four Levels of Leadership Mastery



Systems Mastery

- Managing change; culture; strategy



Teams Mastery

- Creating psychological safety, ; high performance



Interpersonal Mastery

- Effective communication and collaboration, resolving conflict productively, negotiation



Personal Mastery

- Self-awareness, understanding strengths, blind spots, values and what leadership means to you





3 Ways of Learning Leadership

- Practice
- Reflection
- Feedback

Community Agreements

- Be fully present.
- Take space and make space for others.
- Keep confidential the sharing of others, those in the room and not in the room.
- Practice active listening.
- Assume positive intent: resist judgement of self and/or others.
- Your stories and experiences enhance everyone's learning.
- We acknowledge that most scenarios carry dynamics of power, privilege, and identity and we will remember to account for this.

Introductions

- Name, title, and how long have you been in this role?
- What are one or two words that come to mind when we think about meetings?

#2

**So, what is an effective
and inclusive meeting?**

Opening Reflection:

What could this look like?

Take a few minutes to think back to a meeting that felt positive and productive to you.

Write down a few thoughts about that meeting:

1. What happened before, during, and after that meeting?
2. What made it feel positive and productive?



Connect & Share

- RANDOMIZED, SMALL GROUPS OF 3-4
- START WITH INTRODUCTIONS
- SHARE YOUR REFLECTIONS & IDENTIFY 2-3 KEY TAKE AWAYS TO SHARE OUT ONCE WE RETURN TO WHOLE GROUP

#3

Best Practices for Meetings



1. Clarify the purpose of the meeting

Clarify the purpose

KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Share in advance the purpose for the meeting, support this in the meeting design, agenda, and materials
- Clarify everyone's role and how they will contribute
- Connect purpose to broader organizational mission, vision, values
- First team concept; know your peers' work
- Purpose creates a grid by which you can measure how you spend your time in the meeting, and success or where you missed the mark



5 Levels of Decision Making

LEVEL I: Leader makes the decision **alone**

LEVEL II: Leader gathers input from **individuals** and then makes the decision

LEVEL III: Leader gathers input from her **team** but still makes the decision herself

LEVEL IV: Leader has **one vote**, just like everyone else in the group

LEVEL V: Leader **delegates** the decision with criteria and constraints



2. Cultivate inclusivity and belonging

Cultivate inclusivity and belonging

KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Commit to understanding your team who are they, what their experiences and histories are, their strengths. See them as whole people.
- Make genuine and authentic connections with all persons present
- Schedule and maintain one on one meetings
- Assume positive intent (and ask others to do the same: ground rules, community norms, etc...)
- Recognize that psychological safety doesn't apply equally to all groups; be aware of intersecting identities
- Hold people accountable for actions that break group norms
- Onboard new team members intentionally and effectively, explain context for standing meetings, share group norms and expectations.
- Recognize and celebrate each team members' unique skills, gifts and talents in the context of the meeting as applicable



**YOUR
IDEAS
MATTER**

Write them down :)

2. Ensure
Equitable
Participation

Equitable participation

KEY POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Remember the rule of 4– who’s doing the talking?
- Do team members listen as much as they talk?
- When one person dominates the conversation, the collective intelligence of the group declines
- Limit the “meeting after the meeting” (or backchanneling). Try to get issues 'in the room'.
- “Any questions?” doesn’t work. What could silence mean? What could you be missing?
- Share leadership of team meetings, decision making, agenda creation, etc.
- Remember power imbalances (hierarchy, gender, race) and stylistic differences (shy, introverted)
- Impact of trust
- You need to design for equitable participation

Ways to Design for Equitable Participation

- **Brainstorming:** everyone gets a sticky notes to share ideas and input, voting with colored dots. These tactics can break down power differentials, introvert/extrovert tendencies, etc...
- **Pair/Share activities:** if you have people who tend to dominate the conversation have them pair with a partner, they listen to their partners ideas and input, then they are to share out what they have heard from their partner. They will be 'talking still' but they will be sharing what the other person said.
- **Anonymous forms/feedback:** could be electronic, submit ideas/questions in real time using a link, note card activity to gather input and questions
- **Round robin:** sharing like this creates expectation that all participate, breaks down 'content expert' isolation where only one person shares
- Leverage tools like vision cards, memes, etc.. to allow all to share and engage
- Other?

#4

Design the Meeting for the Purpose



— THE FIVE PATHS —
TO LEADERSHIP

SELF-ASSESSMENT

How to Design for Focus & Deeper Learning

- **EXAMPLE PURPOSE:** Looking at data related to the high drop, fail, withdrawal, incomplete courses in our department to identify trends and the opportunities for improvement.
- What prep work will be needed? What resources do we need access to, or to share in advance?
- How will the time be structured? Who is the timekeeper?
- Is everyone clear on their role/contribution to the meeting?
- Is all the information in the room to have an informed discussion?
- Are the right people at the table to be able to gain a complete picture of the situation?
- Have you explored risks, what may be unknown, and contingencies in a proactive way?
- Does everyone feel welcome and encouraged to ask questions, to get to the deepest understanding possible?
- How will the meeting end, and what will the next steps be for all members of the group?

How to Design for Engagement

- **EXAMPLE PURPOSE:** The department has welcomed new members in the recent past, and as a tight knit group, building trust and relationships will be key to sustaining that culture.
- How will you build community and connection in your meeting?
- What is the level of trust and safety among the participants? This can determine how to design engagement activities.
- Focus on equal participation and transparency; the process is key to gaining acceptance of the outcome and next steps
- Create space for members to check in and catch up
- Allow for celebration and recognition
- Be mindful of those with the least amount of power and privilege, offer opportunities for all to share and participate

How to Design for Creativity and Innovation

- **EXAMPLE PURPOSE:** There is a donor who would like to fund a new student retention initiative for your school. This meeting is to explore new approaches to provide support.
- Ensure space and time for big picture discussion and be clear about the end goals.
- Limit criticism. Use the “yes and” technique as a way of building on ideas.
- Make connections to purpose/mission/big picture
- Ask why and tangential questions to allow for visionary ideas to come forward
- Get all ideas into the room; explore possibilities, potential, and impact on the larger work of the group

How to Design for Action

- **EXAMPLE PURPOSE:** The state has implemented a new funding formula, and courses receive weighted funding based on what category they fall in to. Your department has been asked to review the current classifications to determine which are correct and which need to be updated and provide rationale either way.
- Have a clear purpose for the meeting: are we sharing information? Making decisions? Who makes what decision? Try to limit loose ends.
- Desired outcome is communicated from the start, and the meeting design (time, location, prep, attendance, etc) supports that
- Clearly stated action items, next steps and deadlines. Everyone is aware of their role and responsibility to keep things moving.
- Are the right people and the necessary information in the room so that the actions taken are thoughtful, and correct?

Assessment of Meetings is Key:

Given the purposes of our meeting, how effective was it
(scale of 1-10)

How involved did you feel (Scale of 1-10)

What did you like most?

What did you like least?

Please offer any advice, suggestions or comments.

Wrapping It Up:

- Meetings take a large amount of our time, energy and talent. It is worth it to build them to be effective and inclusive
- Remember the framework of best practices:
 - Clarify the Purpose
 - Cultivate Inclusivity and Belonging
 - Ensure Equitable Participation
 - Design for that Purpose
- Assess what is working, what can be improved, and implement those changes
- Be prepared should things not go as planned. Pivot as needed, and keep group accountable

Closing Reflection: Putting Our Learning to Work

Recall the start of our session today and what you wrote down about a positive and productive meeting.

Take a few minutes to reflect and think about an upcoming meeting and how you might approach planning and preparation differently.

What are 2 things you want to try in your next meeting based on what we have discussed today?

RESOURCE

- [Creating Equitable and Inclusive Meetings](#) (Academic Impressions webcast)
- [10 Tips to Improve Your Meetings](#) (Academic Impressions article)
- <https://hbr.org/2017/07/stop-the-meeting-madness>
- [Your Team Members Aren't Participating in Meetings. Here's What to Do.](#) (hbr.org)
- <https://hbr.org/2023/05/4-distractions-that-derail-meetings-and-how-to-handle-them>

QUESTIONS?