Chapter 4 : Meeting techniques

1. Definition

Meetings are a form of formal communication carried out in a company or organisation with the aim of reaching a decision or resolving any issues raised. Meetings are also a means by which information, proliferation and sharing of ideas, instructions and orders are received from those leading a team and from their subordinates.

Another definition of a meeting is a formal discussion between three or more people to achieve common goals through the process of communication. So, in general, a meeting is a gathering organised to collect ideas from different groups in order to reach a decision.

2. The Role of the animator

A good animator is essential to effective meetings. In any order,

the facilitator is expected to stimulate and inspire (not dictate), have the right answers,

make decisions, and get things done.

The facilitator should be:

- Authoritative but flexible;
- Impartial and impersonal;
- A quick thinker and attentive listener;
- Capable of succinct expression;
- Willing to clarify points of view that have not been well expressed;
- Mature and tolerant;
- Equipped to handle disruptions and inappropriate behavior; and
- Courteous, but lively and professional

3. Forms of meeting

The meeting can be physical or virtual:

➢ **Physical**: People are physically present.
➢ **Virtual:** By using means such as teleconferencing and the Internet.

4. Type of meeting
4.1.Briefings

A briefing is called to direct or instruct. These meetings serve to provide information and instructions to subordinates, to clear up misunderstandings, and to integrate ideas and viewpoints.

4.2.Consultative Meetings

A consultative meeting is convened to share information on issues of concern.

4.3.Committee Meetings

A committee meeting brings together interest groups to decide on issues of common interest. Such meetings are characterized by a sense of authority, compromise, and resolution of disputes through voting.

4.4.Board Meetings

A board meeting is held by people of equal status to contribute to an ongoing issue. Such meetings are characterized by group accountability, resolution of disputes through discussion, and consensus decisions.

5. The different phases of a meeting
5.1.Preparatory phase

1-determine the subject of the meeting;

2-Define the objective of the meeting: The objective must be:

-Sufficiently precise,

-Adapted to the time allowed,

-Formulated in a direct style;

2-Select the participants: Who should attend this meeting to achieve the objective?

-Choose the participants responsible for the subject

-Choose the participants interested in the subject;

3-Structure the meeting: How should the meeting be organized to best achieve

its objective? Some techniques may include: guest speakers, videos, panels, discussion groups, demonstrations, etc.);

3-Select a meeting venue that fits the needs of the participant, the objective, and the structure of the meeting;

4-Choose the time of the meeting (this depends on the availability of the participants and the meeting facilities);

5-Prepare and distribute the meeting agenda to all participants;

6-Draft the invitation, and send it to all participants at least 2 weeks before the meeting

5.2. The meeting process

1- Round table: A "round table" allows everyone to briefly introduce themselves and thus allow new or external personalities to situate the function of each speaker;

2- Recall the agenda: Before getting to the heart of the matter, it may be useful to briefly summarize the agenda for the day, the time allocated for each subject and the speakers;

3- Present the objectives of the meeting and the work plan;

4- Structure the group's progress towards the objective using questions, reformulations, summaries;

5- Write a decision record: A "decision record", drawn up collectively by all participants, highlights the essential decisions taken during the discussions;

6-Set the date of the next meeting: If it is a series of meetings, it may be appropriate to take advantage of the presence of the participants to agree on a common date for holding the next meeting.

5.3. At the end of the meeting

-Write the report: They should be short and easy to read. This document is written by the animator

-Evaluate the meeting: After a meeting, it is up to the animator to do a self-evaluation

-Distribute the report: The report should be distributed to all participants for validation. After a period of about a week, if proposals for changes have been made, the final report should be sent again to all participants.

6. Hosting a remote meeting online

1. Use videoconferencing tool. Ex: Google a meet, Zoom, etc.

2. In addition to the animator, provide a resource person to monitor the chat, manage the tools, share their screen, etc.

3. Allow a welcome time to ask participants to introduce themselves, explain the "chat" function, and ask participants to mute their microphones when they are not speaking.

4. Open the PPT or document to be presented and share the screen.

5. Once the presentation is finished, click on "Stop sharing".

6. For small group work times:

- Use small group sessions to divide participants into smaller groups in Google Meet.

- Divide participants into subgroups, they then meet in separate sub-rooms (option on Zoom)