Ten Ways to Manage Effective Meetings

- 1] Think through what the purpose of the meeting is or should be. The fact that it is a meeting that has been regularly scheduled in the past is not a good enough reason to have a meeting. Why do you think you need a meeting? What result do you want to achieve?
- 2] Determine who should be invited. The careful selection of attendees can make or break your meeting.
- 3] Create an agenda with well-defined topics and timeframes. Insure those topics are supportive of the result you defined above. Send it to all participants, in advance.
- 4] Set a time that is appropriate to the task at hand. The best times for meetings are between 10:00 am and 3:00 pm. The mid-morning start allows participants to attend to immediate business issues and to prepare before starting and the 3:00 pm ending prevents meeting-fatigue due to the diminishing energy of the participants. Allow blocks of activity to last no more than 90 minutes before taking a break. If you work through lunch, provide food. Also, do not set the meeting too far in advance unless you intend to send timely reminders before the meeting.
- 5] Think through the location:
  - -Ease of access
  - -Arrangement of room to fit purpose:
- ° Circle
- ° Board meeting
- ° U-shape for training
- 6] Pre-position and test any equipment you intend to use.
- 7] Use easel pads, overheads, and other visual aids to center attention and to reinforce the issues being considered.
- 8] During the meeting, assume a leadership role that is consistent with your personality but that does not allow the meeting to be dominated by the few or to drift aimlessly.
- 9] Start on time even if everyone has not arrived, and end on time even if you are not finished, unless you are very close to conclusion. Set follow-up if needed. Review accomplishments and assignments.
- 10] Send out minutes of the meeting detailing the issues addressed, results and further steps needed.