

Leader Skills For Improving Meetings

- 1) **Clearly establish discussion topic**
- 2) **Clarify nature of discussion, *before* beginning**
 - To give information; briefing
 - To air opinions; forum
 - To develop new ideas; brainstorm
 - To immediately advise; consultation
 - To advise later; recommendations
 - To decide; delegation
- 3) **For decision-making, clarify method**
 - How formal procedures
 - Vote: plurality, majority, 2/3 or 3/4 majority
 - Consensus, other
- 4) **Establish openness norms**
 - Encourage discussion
 - Hold back your viewpoint
 - Solicit participation by all
 - Keep as low profile as possible
 - Encourage creativity
 - Prevent dominance by few
 - Maintain positive climate
- 5) **Encourage critical thinking**
 - Clarify vague statements
 - Bring out underlying assumptions
 - Protect minority opinion
 - Avoid false agreement, groupthink and/or "satisficing"
 - Evaluate generalizations
 - Elicit dissenting opinions
 - Play devil's advocate
- 6) **Keep discussion on track**
 - Limit tangents
 - Give or get accurate summaries
 - Keep to agenda unless important need to amend
- 7) **Bring discussion to close**
 - Initiate vote, facilitate consensus
 - Advocate tabling if needed
 - Adhere to time limits
 - Draft next agenda
- 8) **Initiate meeting evaluation**
 - During meeting
 - At end