



toolbox

Getting people to meetings

One of the hardest things about a community project is getting people to the planning meetings. The following tips from Brushy Fork Associates should help.

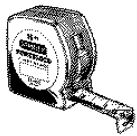
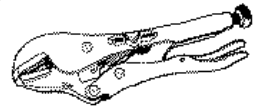
A Clear Purpose

How many times have you heard (or said) "I don't even know why we're meeting today"? The key to good attendance is a clear reason for meeting:

Step 1: Ensure there is a decision to be made or information/input needed from the team. Before setting a meeting date, the team should decide on the agenda items to be considered or accomplished at the next meeting. You can always add more if necessary.

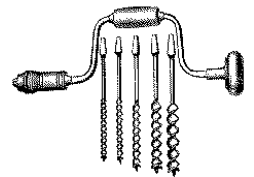
Step 2: At each meeting, set each group member's tasks to work on before the next meeting. Be sure to establish why each task is important, and how it will contribute to the project as a whole.

Step 3: If information is needed from an outside resource in order to make a decision, be sure to arrange for that person to attend the meeting. It's easy to get frustrated when decisions are tabled for lack of information.



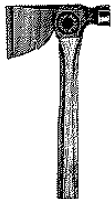
A Clear Agenda

Everyone on the team should receive a written agenda a few days prior to the meeting. A clear agenda will remind people why the meeting is being held, and remind them of their contribution to the meeting. It also assures team members that there will be an organized discussion that should stay within a reasonable time frame.



Timing is Everything!

Flexibility in setting meeting times is important, but it is also key to set a meeting time frame and stick to it. When people know they will be out at (or close to) a specific time, they are more likely to fit the meeting into their schedule. They're also more likely to come back to the next meeting!



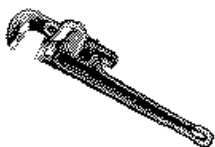
Food Never Hurts

People enjoy discussing while sharing food. Just some cookies or pretzels, and something to drink, make a meeting more pleasant -- and productive.

Reminder Calls

Even when things are written on the calendar, busy schedules can overwhelm people and make them miss a meeting. Once they miss one, it's easier to miss the next one.

Reminder calls not only remind people of the meeting date and time, but of their importance to the group and to the project. It's harder to skip a meeting when you know the team will miss you!



Appalachian Leadership and Development

www.berea.edu/brushyfork