Time Management:  
Meeting Management Coaching

Do you reach the end of the day and wonder what you accomplished? Often we spend so much time in meetings that we don’t have time to do other important tasks. Meetings are important, but the majority could be more efficient. The following tips provide ideas for what to do before, during, and after a meeting to make them more efficient and effective.

**Before**

- Distribute a written statement of purpose so everyone knows why they are at the meeting.
- Select one person to chair and guide the meeting process.
- Prepare a carefully planned agenda.
- Itemize the topics, written as an objective, so you know when you’ve reached the goal.
- Identify time allotments for each objective.

**During**

- Determine ground rules for behavior; expect respect and courtesy.
- Thank everyone for coming.
- Start on time.
- Manage discussion to stay on point.
- Agree to disagree when appropriate.
- Keep a “parking lot” for ideas that are valuable but require another meeting to discuss.
- When making decisions aim for group consensus; some people may not agree with the decision but can live with it and support next steps.
- Remind everyone of the next meeting if need be.
- At the end of the meeting review decisions made and actions agreed upon.
- Evaluate your meeting; discuss what went well and what needs improving.
- End on time.

**After**

- After the meeting, write a brief summary of any decisions made and actions required and note who is responsible for what.
- Follow up to ensure progress is being made.

If some of these time-honored tools are not practiced at your organization, learn why not. Learn if the entire department or organization would be willing to try them with your help.