AGENDAS

1.0 Why

Lean/IPD teams are encouraged to work in groups, not silos. This reduces rework by incorporating the needs of many stakeholders before a solution set is presented or moves forward. Though this way of working seems to require many participants attending many meetings, it ultimately reduces the total time spent in meetings. Having an effective agenda respects the participants' time and the value they add to the subject matter. Good agendas effectively move work forward by aligning participants with objective outcomes. Collaboratively-built agendas support the development of a Lean culture. It is equally important for the agenda to be well-facilitate.

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2.0 When

Prepare agendas for all meetings, sessions and group events where three or more people are involved. Agendas can be used for singular subject matter situations and can support the weekly plan for co-located teams and Big Rooms.

3.0 How

Preparation

- Develop the agenda collaboratively. Involve all participants.

- Prepare the agenda at the end of a recurring session for the next session. Another option is to prepare the agenda earlier in the recurring session, particularly if attendance drops off or participation wanes during the meeting. This is a critical step.

- Publish or post the agenda well before the session meets. This advance posting allows participants to prepare—and also allows others to participate if they feel they will add value.

Elements of the Agenda

- Determine the intention and type of session (planning, decision-making, work, etc).

- Identify the clear expected outcomes to advance the work for each agenda item.

- Identify the customer(s) of the outcome of each item/session and align the expected outcome with their expectations.

- Determine the necessary participants based on their stake in the outcome, their input on the subject matter, and their empowerment to make decisions. When inviting participants, be mindful of the time and other costs they must devote to the meeting.

- Optimize the amount of time needed to drive to the expected outcome while being respectful of participants' time.

- It is acceptable to include time buffers and flex time, but be transparent about their inclusion; and only use them if needed. End items or sessions early if the outcome is reached early.

Use visual cues such as color-coding by type of session,
visual timeframes, etc., when appropriate to provide clarity.

- Be mindful of participant's constraints in organizing agenda items.

- Be mindful of participants' time constraints when scheduling back-to-back sessions.

- Open the session with a review of previous plus/deltas for a recurring session.

- When appropriate, lead with Hot Topics. Allow for adjustment to the agenda if needed, and ensure that the group meets consensus.

- Leave time on the agenda to develop the next agenda for a recurring session.

- Include time for plus/deltas.

Tips for Building an Agenda

- Identify the facilitator of the overall agenda and individual agenda items.

- Use visual cues such as color-coding by type of session, visual timeframes, etc., when appropriate to provide clarity.

- Identify participants.

- Include contact information (location, virtual connectivity instructions, etc.) for venue(s).

- Plan to have a Parking Lot to assign actions and owners when off-subject topics arise to avoid derailing the session.

- Be prepared to build a Commitment Log for Action Items.

- Consider the manner in which output of session will be shared. (For example, determine whether minutes add value.)

Resources

Read this Before Our Next Meeting, Al Pittampalli

Death by Meeting: A Leadership Fable...About Solving the Most Painful Problem in Business, Patrick Lencioni

Effective Big Room Agenda, Inside Out Consulting/Kristin Hill

Quick Reference

For additional readings and information, please see the below information.

CHAPTER 36 - AGENDAS

Additional Readings

[Lean Construction Where Are We and How to Proceed](#)