**Do’s and Don’ts of Successful Strategic Meetings**

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* DO: Get clarity about what you want to achieve from these meetings. Frame it in terms of outcomes: “By the time you leave this meeting, you will…”

X DO NOT: Assume that bringing people together without clear priorities and outcomes will lead to good things. It’s really very unlikely.

* DO: Involve participants well before the meeting by asking them what they want out of the meeting.

X DO NOT: Fear hearing contradictory information, think you can “manage” naysayers without including their concerns, believe that this is the piece that can be sacrificed if time gets tight.

* DO: Be very clear about what you can (and cannot) achieve in a strategic meeting. Focus on the most impactful priorities.

X DO NOT: Try to pack too much in, focus on process rather than outcomes, be all things to all people.

* DO: Remember that this is not a one-off event; it is part of a longer term way of working. Focus the meeting around this longer term change.

X DO NOT: Think of this event in isolation; neglect to remind participants that this is part of something larger; evaluate the meeting without connection to longer term change.

**Remember: Planning and input are your friends.**

**Getting Input:**

**Sample Questions for Meeting Planning**

[Greeting]

As you know, I am putting together the agenda for our upcoming meeting.  To make the most of everyone’s time and to ensure we cover the key areas, please take a few minutes to share your thoughts on the questions below:

Current State

* What is going well on the [effort] right now (e.g., strategy, processes, relationships, etc.)?
* What may be limiting or getting in the way of progress?

Meeting Goals and Priorities

* What would be a good use of participants’ time during the meeting?
* What would meaningful progress look like coming out of the meeting (e.g., changes or steps forward)?
* What longer-term changes (3-6 months) would you like to see happen as a result?

Preparation

* To prepare for the meeting, what would be helpful for you to have or know in advance?

Note: In some cases, to ensure the most candid responses, it may be helpful to have people return their answers to someone outside the group – an outside facilitator or neutral third party.