

# **BRINGING PARTNERS TO THE TABLE**

## **HANDOUTS**

# Action Plan

At the end of your meeting record:

Tasks: What are you going to do? Be as specific as possible.	Person or People Responsible: Who is going to do it?	Target Completion Date: By when will it be completed?

## Key Elements of Active Listening

- **Actively listen.** Listen with the intent to understand the speaker's words, putting aside your own agenda and the need for an immediate response.
- **Listen for meaning.** Use all your senses to take in information. Listen not only with your ears, but also with your eyes and heart. Take in the non-verbals, the tone, the pace and feel what the other person is saying.
- **Try to understand speaker's point of view.** As you take in all this information, focus on understanding what the speaker intends. Put yourself in the person's position. Be aware of your own values and beliefs that act as filters between the speaker's message and your interpretation. Resist the temptation to advise, criticize, or judge when listening and asking questions. Make a conscious effort to understand other points of view.
- **Paraphrase or reflect what was said.** Paraphrasing is a check for understanding. It also serves the purpose of letting the speaker know you were really listening.
- **Draw the speaker out.** Ask open-ended questions to obtain more information.
- **Clarify as necessary.** Ask questions to gain a clearer understanding of what has been said, especially when you think there are differences in the way a word is used or defined.
- **Test the unsaid.** Sometimes, the real issue has not been spoken. If you sense there is something that has not been said, test out your theory by asking questions.

# Meeting Logistics Checklist

## Prior to Meeting:

- **Pick a Convenient Location.**
- Make sure there will be **adequate space and time** for your meeting.
- Provide **refreshments** whenever possible
- Arrange for **parking** or select a location with easy parking
- Send the **meeting agenda out at least one week ahead** of time. Ask for input on the agenda.
- Send any **reading materials** pertinent to the topic ahead of time. Be sensitive not to send too much material.

## Day of Meeting:

- Arrive early to confirm room set-up, A/V set-up, and food order.
- Bring extra copies of the agenda.
- Greet the meeting participants.
- Make introductions
- Begin and end meeting at the scheduled times.
- Record Action Planning: Track targeted tasks agreed upon, who will complete them, and by what date.

## Following Meeting:

- Send thank-you emails or make thank you calls.
- Type up minutes and Action Plan.
- Send minutes and Action Plan to your group.

# Guidelines to Brainstorming

1. Give an explanation before you start of what you are doing,

Include in that explanation the following:

- ✓ Making a list of all the suggestions
- ✓ Will not judge or discuss the merit of the suggestions yet
- ✓ After we write down all the suggestions, then we can discuss them.

2. Write the list up on a surface that everyone can easily see (ie. Newsprint)

3. Find a way to include everything that everyone says (there are no wrong answers)

4. Continuously read the entire list as you brainstorm

If someone interrupts to discuss the merit of or a judgment on what is being said, thank them and remind them of the process