
Facilitating the SPSR Team: An Effective Meetings Checklist

PART 1: OVERALL SUCCESS FACTORS

1. **Be prepared.** Establish a goal for each meeting, and provide your meeting participants with enough information to come prepared to achieve that goal at your meeting. Plan a workable sequence of activity with the right balance of off-line work vs. in-meeting work.
2. **Set expectations up front.** The SPSR process takes time and introspection. It can be tedious and confusing at times. If team members are fully aware of their responsibilities and are committed to being properly prepared for meetings and arrive at meetings ready to participate, the process will run much more smoothly.
3. **Articulate the desired objectives and outcome of each meeting in concrete terms.** At the end of the meeting you should be able to tell whether the objective was achieved or not.
4. **Get people properly prepared.** Take responsibility for getting the appropriate materials to your team members, giving time for preparation, reminding them, etc.
5. **Use the right process and tools in meeting.** E.g., have your files, KPIs, and rubrics organized and ready for reference. If necessary, request that an *Early On* training and technical assistance (EOTTA) representative be available to answer questions.
6. **Manage people during the meeting.** Anticipate that there will be disagreements, and possibly even conflicts between the members of your team. It is important to understand that not all issues will be resolved in one meeting and that resolving a disagreement on how to handle a sensitive issue (such as a disagreement on rules and regulations, or the accuracy of certain types of data) may require additional research and input from sources other than the SPSR team.

PART 2: GETTING READY FOR YOUR MEETINGS

1. **Have a meeting objective.** The overall objective of the meeting will determine what preparation is necessary and what materials are needed at the meeting. For example, if this is an orientation meeting, then you might want to plan to address team expectations, privacy issues, etc.
2. **Determine attendees/issue an agenda.** 1-2 weeks prior to the meeting, issue an agenda outlining the topics you plan to address at the meeting. If possible, provide participants with background documentation at this time, so they can come to the meeting prepared to ask questions. If you have agenda items that may require expertise or clarification beyond the purview of your SPSR team members, be sure to invite those experts to your meeting.

3. **Do your homework.** Now is the time to compile the background materials you will need to assure that your meeting is productive. Be sure you have adequate access to rules/regulations, if necessary. Make adequate copies of documents so each member of your team has a copy.

PART 3: RUNNING THE MEETING

1. **Establish roles and responsibilities** Understanding roles and responsibilities promotes productivity and helps new teams work effectively together. The following table outlines the roles of the *Early On* coordinator and SPSR team members.

Role and responsibility	Checklist
<p>Leader: <i>Early On</i> coordinator The person who calls the meeting. The leader will often need to participate in the discussions and help guide the group in making decisions. <i>The leader invests time in planning the meeting</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish content and desired outcomes/determine meeting processes ▪ Determine correct attendees, assign roles ▪ Prepare/gather/distribute materials ▪ Handle logistics ▪ Issue an agenda ▪ Kick off the meeting positively ▪ Maintain a tone of respect always ▪ Take notes/summarize points; make sure that everyone has the same understanding.
<p>Participant: SPSR team members Contributes expertise and participates in discussions and decision making.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Contribute your information ▪ Keep it at the right level of detail for the goals of the meeting ▪ Discuss any major issues with leader before meeting ▪ Be positive; be proactive: state position ▪ Listen; contribute; don't interrupt; stay on the subject ▪ Don't get personal; acknowledge the competence of others ▪ When convinced of a new view, say so ▪ Help the group work together well

2. **Take notes!** In addition to facilitating the meeting, the *Early On* coordinator is responsible for taking notes and summarizing the team's analysis. Because the team's analysis and rating are ultimately entered into the SPSR workbook, it is important to *succinctly* capture the group's analysis. For this reason, it may be useful to take one set of notes during the meeting and then plan to summarize those notes when making workbook entries.
3. **Facilitate discussion.** Encourage all team members to participate in the discussion. Your role as facilitator is to engage the group members in meaningful discussion and to help them arrive at conclusions. Expect your team to disagree as they wrestle with difficult concepts. Recognize that some questions cannot be answered without additional information and be prepared to document and table those discussions.

PART 4: CLOSING THE MEETING

1. **Get closure.** Clarify items as the meeting progresses, and try to resolve items before moving on to new agenda items. At the end of the meeting, review all action items and ensure that:
 - If follow-up is required, a single individual is responsible for action
 - There is an established completion date for all action items
2. **Provide a wrap up.** Give a final summation of the meeting results and be prepared to issue a meeting summary.
3. **Set your next meeting date.** Discuss the need for additional meetings and schedule them, if possible.
4. **Thank your team!** Leave on an upbeat, energized note.