

Meeting Ground Rules

- Listen openly and actively.
- Avoid distraction—is your cell phone off?
- Withhold judgment until the other person’s view is understood.
- Stay on point and on time.
- Give everyone equal opportunity to speak—one speaker at a time.
- Focus on concerns and interests rather than positions.
- Examine future improvements rather than dwelling on the past.
- Emphasize the situation rather than the people.
- Value disagreement and constructive argument.
- Regard one another’s views as legitimate and deserving respect.

Groups that are going to work together over a long series of meetings typically benefit from developing their own set of ground rules. The set above can serve as a starting point for that discussion.

Meetings that involve participants who have not worked together before typically have a set of ground rules posted on the wall when the participants arrive at the meeting.

From: Daniels, SE and G.B. Walker 2001. *Working Through Environmental Conflict: The Collaborative Learning Approach*.