

Ground Rules for Our Meetings

As an organization – staff, board, committees and task forces – we adhere to the following ground rules for our various meetings.

1. In this room, at this time, we are all equal. Each of us – regardless of position – will participate.
 2. Each of us will behave according to the organization’s values.
 3. Each of us is mindful of confidentiality and conflict of interest.
 4. We are committed to group process, respect and candor.
 5. We will tap into the wisdom of the group, not focus on the opinions of individuals.
 6. We will question our own assumptions and those of our colleagues in order to think creatively. We will not get stuck on “what we’ve always done” and “what we do today.”
 7. We will listen to each other and suspend judgments.
 8. Our conversation is not about convincing each other but rather about listening to everything and everyone and then deciding what it all means.
 9. Each of us will be heard but that doesn’t mean each of us will get what we want.
 10. No single person(s) shall dominate.
 11. It’s okay to disagree. When issues are important and people care, they argue. But once we decide, that’s it. Once decisions are made, each of us owns and supports the decisions.
 12. Each of us will accept responsibility for speaking out. Silence is consent.
 13. We agree to focus on the meeting agenda and work hard to stay on track.
 14. We will not start over or repeat if someone is late, leaves early or is unable to attend.
 15. We recognize that the job of a facilitator is hard.
- What do you think? Do ground rules really matter? What is the added value – or not?
 - How does an organization – and its participants – articulate its ground rules?
 - And always the big question, how do privilege and power affect ground rules?