

TEAM BUILDER KIT

MEETING TRADECRAFT

COMMON PROBLEMS

- **Focusing on Fire o' the Week:** Letting front-burner issues dominate meetings; never looking-ahead, letting "important but not urgent" issues get short-shrift.
- **Straying off the stated meeting purpose:** Leadership meetings becoming Marketing meetings; Staff meetings becoming Project meetings - because most of the same people are in it.
- **Focusing too much on updates:** "Here's what I did last week" vs looking forward.
- **No meeting management:** No agenda; nobody empowered to call a "time-out" to see if time is being used wisely. Meetings over when time runs out.
- **Being under-prepared for meetings:** Numbers weren't pulled ahead of time, project updates are winged, surprised by meeting topics.

NEW MEETING TRADECRAFT

- **Prepare.** Treat all meetings like client meetings. There's no reason to be uptight about it but create the expectation and the culture of being prepared for meetings vs rolling-in.
- **Manage the meeting.** Create a culture where meetings are *actively managed*. This means staying on topic, "dropping down" discussion items, etc. Pay attention to time constraints. Do a mental "process check" about every 5 minutes: are you on track, is what you're talking about germane, are you driving to a point.
- **Navigate.** Some meetings are about the forrest. Some are about the trees. Stay at the proper level/altitude. The meeting manager should continue to refocus the meeting on the objective.
- **Focus.** The purpose of a meeting is to clear roadblocks and clarify priorities so that work can continue once the meeting is adjourned. Never lose sight of that. That is your North Star. If your meeting isn't doing that, either get back on track or quit the meeting.