

## Session 33

### Thank you, Honorable Chairperson – Being a good team member

**WHOSE FUTURE GOAL 23:** You will learn what it takes to be a good team member.



And a bright, cheery good day to you! Glad you're back! Last session we talked about how to plan for a successful meeting. You've already figured out that you will be having a decision-making meeting.



Decision-making meetings are only successful if the people at the meeting are good team members and if the meeting has an effective leader.

We've already talked about the fact that **you** are the most important team member at your planning meeting. After all...without you there wouldn't be a planning meeting about you, right?

So, you will be a team member at all your



planning meetings. You might even have a chance to lead your meeting.

You should know what to do to make sure that you do your job. We'll start with what it takes to be a good team member and

finish up with suggestions for being a good leader.

Being a good team member starts in your mind and shows in your actions. It starts in your mind because it's important to have the right kind of attitude about the team members, the meeting and the planning process.

Read about these two people and think about who you think is going to be a good team member:

Hector is always complaining about everything! He complains about going to school and staying home. He complains about being too busy and about not having anything to do. Lately he's been complaining about his planning meeting. He says that meetings are boring, a waste of time and that he has better things to do. He says he doesn't really care about his future anyway.

Margo is not sure exactly what will happen at her planning meeting, but is sure that she wants to be there. She thinks that being involved in planning for her future is a very important thing and she has worked hard to make sure she was included on the team. She's not sure that she knows everything she needs, but she is willing to listen and learn and wants to participate in the meeting.

Which person do you think will make a good team member?



Pretty easy, right? I mean, Hector has a real attitude problem. I can't see him compromising and negotiating, can you?

Let's think about it. What does a person need to do to have the right kind of attitude to be a good team member?



What did you come up with? How about these three things:

1. *A good team member is someone*



*who has a positive attitude.*

If you have a positive attitude, you can get a lot of things done! People who have a positive attitude are willing to work to make good things happen. They expect good things to happen. They trust their team members to do what is right and to do what they are supposed to do. If you think your planning meeting will be a waste of time... it probably will. If you think it will help you plan for the future you want... it probably will do that instead.

2. *A good team member is someone who will follow through with what they*

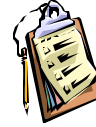


*say they will do.*

This is about responsibility. If you want others to give you more control over your life and let you make more decisions, you have to show them that you can be

responsible and do what you are supposed to do.

3. *A good team member makes sure that they get the information they need*



*to contribute.*

The truth is, you can't always count on someone else to get you everything you need. You know...that stuff about the squeaky wheel. You have to make sure that you get what you need to be a good team member. That might mean talking to other team members before the meeting. You just need to do whatever it takes.

Come into a meeting with that kind of attitude and you will be well on your way to being a good team member. But your attitude is only the first part. You have to show that you are a good team member. How? Gosh, I'm glad you asked.

Here is a list of things that you can do to show that you are a good team member:



1. Get to the meeting on time!



2. Dress neatly and appropriately.

3. Bring any information that has been



sent to you.

4. Say hello to every team member.




5. Shake hands with everyone.



6. Sit through the whole meeting, don't

leave early.



7. Listen  to others without interrupting.
8. Talk only about the topic being discussed.
9. Follow through on your

commitments.



These are all things that are just good common sense, but you'd be surprised how many people don't pay attention to them. If you want to make sure that you are an important part of your planning process, then make sure you do these things. That will show that you are a good team

member..



Now, what about leading the meeting? Why should you think about leading your meeting? Well, if you want to be successful and take greater control of your life, you are going to have to develop leadership skills. If you let everyone do everything for you, instead of being a leader and taking control of your own life...well, you will end up doing things other people want you to do for the rest of your life.

Good enough reason? I thought so. So, let's talk about leading your planning meeting.

People who lead meetings are called chairpersons or chair for short.



If you think you want to be the chair of your planning meeting, you need to make sure you want to take on all that work. Leading a meeting means you agree to do whatever it takes to make sure that meeting is a success!

If you are willing to do all the work that it takes to be a meeting chair, you should follow these basic rules. If you don't want to do all the work or don't think you can do all the work, maybe you should think about being a co-chair!



In that case, you and someone else would share the responsibilities of leading the meeting.

What are some of the responsibilities of the chairperson? Well, for one thing the person who leads the meeting will want to make sure all the planning is done and the arrangements are made. Given that all of these things are already done, here are some things that the chairperson will do on the day of the meeting.

### **Call the meeting to order.**

This means that it is the chairperson's responsibility to get the meeting started. If the chair doesn't eventually call the meeting to order, the team will probably spend the whole time talking about the volleyball game at the school the night before! It is the chair's responsibility to say something like "Let's start this meeting" or "I call this meeting to order" to let everyone know that it is time to get down to business.



This is where, if you have one of those hammer-looking things called a gavel,



you get to whack it on the table!

But, before you get too excited, most decision-making meetings don't use a gavel. Sorry!

### **Introduce all team members.**



It is the chair's responsibility to make sure that everyone at the meeting is introduced. If there are a lot of people who don't know each other, you might want to use name tags. Even if everyone knows each other, you should introduce them and tell something about why they are on the team. If you really don't want to introduce everyone, or don't know everyone, have all the team members introduce themselves. Either way, try to compliment everyone and make them feel comfortable.

### **Make sure that everyone knows the purpose of the meeting and the**



### **expected outcome.**

Remember this part? It's important to communicate the purpose of the meeting to all team members. Make sure that everyone knows why they are there and what they are supposed to get done. If you have written these down, read them to everyone. You can put them on the



chalkboard or flip chart. Don't assume everyone remembered just because you sent them the purpose and expected outcome before!

### **Make sure that everyone knows the meeting agenda and has a**



### **schedule.**

This will make your job easier in the long run. It will be easier to keep people focused on the purpose and the outcome if you have an agenda and you, as the leader, can steer people back on topic. We'll talk more about how to do this in the next session. Make sure that the agenda has a timeline on it and **KEEP THE MEETING IN THE TIME INDICATED!** This is important. If people show up for a one-hour meeting that goes six hours, they will never volunteer to do this again! Use the agenda to keep people on track and schedule another meeting to finish up if the meeting is running too long.

### **Keep the meeting focused on the**



### **topic.**

We've said this before, but it doesn't hurt to say it again! It is the chair's job to keep people focused on the topic. Use the agenda. Remind members of the purpose of the meeting. Whatever it takes...keep them focused!



### **Move the meeting along.**

Again, we've said this before but it is important. It is the chair's job to make sure the meeting starts on time and ends on time. You need to make sure that the team doesn't spend too much time on one topic, so there is no time for other topics.





In the next session we will finish talking about how to lead a meeting. We will talk

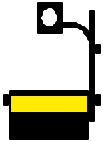
about how to get people involved in a meeting and how to come to a decision.



If you want to lead your IEP meeting yourself, or if you want to be a co-

chair,  you should talk to the person who is responsible for chairing the

meeting.  Take a few minutes and find out this information and talk with that person if you want to do some things to help lead the meeting.



Okay. Let's look at what you've covered this session.

☒ You learned that being a good team member starts in your a\_\_\_\_\_ and shows in your actions.

☒ You learned t\_\_\_\_\_ things to do to have the right kind of attitude to be a good team member, including having a

positive attitude,  following through on what you say you will do,




and making sure you have all the information you need to make a

contribution. 

☒ You learned nine actions that show you are a good t\_\_\_\_\_ member.



☒ You learned that people who lead meetings are called c\_\_\_\_\_


or just chair for short.  If two people share this responsibility, they are called co-chairpersons.




☒ You learned some of the r\_\_\_\_\_ of the chairperson on the day of the meeting.



Before the next session, you should have:

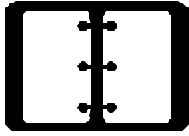
 Thought about whether or not you want to chair your planning meeting.

 Talked to the person responsible for leading your meeting about chairing or co-chairing the meeting. Together you should decide what parts you will be responsible for and follow through by getting all the information you need.

Okay. So that's it for now.



Later.



## Session 33 Summary Sheet - Being a good team member

**WHOSE FUTURE GOAL 23:** You will learn what it takes to be a good team member.

- ☒ You learned that being a good team member starts in your mind and shows in your actions.
- ☒ You learned three things to do to have the right kind of attitude to be a good team member, including having a positive attitude, following through on what you say you will do, and making sure you have all the information you need to make a contribution.
- ☒ You learned nine actions that show you are a good team member.
- ☒ You learned that people who lead meetings are called chairpersons or just chair for short. If two people share this responsibility, they are called co-chairpersons.
- ☒ You learned some of the responsibilities of the chairperson on the day of the meeting.