

## Session 34

### Thank you, Honorable Chairperson – Managing the meeting

**WHOSE FUTURE GOAL 24:** You will learn what it takes to be a good team leader.



Hi! Welcome back. You're almost done with *Whose Future Is It Anyway?* In fact, if you were a racehorse, you'd be thundering down the home stretch, in full stride, with some little jockey sitting on top of you hitting



you. Aren't you glad you're not a racehorse?

Sorry. I got a little off track there. Get it? Track? Race Track? Never mind.

So, do you remember what we were talking about last session? Oh, come on... you know! All right... I'll give you a clue.



(How to be a team player and a leader.)

Remember some of the things that show you are a good team member? All right, here they are:

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 or promises.



Now, here's a real puzzler. Do you remember what the leader of a committee meeting is called?



You got it! The leader of a committee meeting is called a chairperson, or the chair,

for short.  Now, let's review the responsibilities of the chairperson.

1. Introduce all team members.



2. Make sure that everyone knows the purpose of the meeting and the



expected outcome.

3. Make sure that everyone knows the meeting agenda and has a schedule.



4. Keep the meeting focused on the topic.



5. Move the meeting along.



Boy, what a lot of work. But, guess what? There's more! Two things that the chairperson has to do that are very important....

6. Get team members to participate



and stay involved.

**And**



7. Assist the team in coming to a decision.



Without these things, the meeting will not be a success! So, these are two of the most important things that a chairperson does. They also might be the hardest! Here are some things that can help you, as a leader, get people involved and help the team reach a decision.

Get team members to participate and



stay involved.

Almost every sports team has a coach.

One of the things a coach does is to make sure that everyone is contributing to the best



of his or her ability.

This is also one of the more important responsibilities of the committee chairperson. First, you want everyone participating and, second, you want them participating fairly!

There are different ways that the chairperson might get team members to participate in a meeting. The following suggestions give you some tips for "managing the meeting."

### **Management Tips for Team Leaders**

OR

#### **"What do I do if...."**

So, you think you might want to be a team leader! If so, when you go to your planning meeting, you might find that there are some things that will happen that will make you want to leave the meeting, run down the hall, and ask someone "what do I do if...." Here are some of those things, why they might happen, and what to do.

#### **"What do I do if...." one of the team members won't participate?**

It is the leader's job to make sure everyone is participating. But, what do you do if

someone is just sitting there?



There are different reasons that person might be acting that way. One reason is that she might be very, very nervous. In

that case, it is your job to make that person more comfortable. Get the person involved in the conversation by asking her questions about things she feels comfortable answering. Don't ask questions that can be answered by just saying yes or no. When she does participate, make sure that you recognize her and praise that contribution.

Another reason someone might not participate is that he feels like nothing he says will make any difference. You've got to convince this person that what he has to say is important, and will make a difference. Use questions to get the person to say something, and then make sure that what he says is written down or included in the decision-making process.


A third reason a person might sit there is that he or she really doesn't care about the meeting.

This is kind of like the person who doesn't believe that what she says will make any difference. You have to convince the person that what he or she says is important, and will make a difference in his or her life.

**"What do I do if....." one team member talks or tells jokes all the time, and keeps disrupting the meeting?**

You know someone who is a class clown,



right?  Always joking, teasing, and generally having a good time. That's usually funny, and you probably don't really mind when that person interrupts your teacher. But, what do you do if there is one team member that does that, and keeps interrupting the meeting all the time? There

are two reasons a person might be doing that. One is that the person is nervous and joking is one way to get rid of that nervousness. The other is that the person is just a clown, likes the attention, and doesn't know when to keep quiet!

Either way, you have to let the person know when it is all right to joke, and when it is not. Sometimes a joke is a good way to make everyone feel more relaxed. You can let the person know you appreciate her humor and you can laugh at her jokes before and after the meeting. However, when it is time to get to work, you should ignore her jokes or comments and ask questions that give her another way to participate, get attention, or get rid of the nervousness.

**"What do I do if....." one team member does all the talking and keeps**

**interrupting everyone else?**



Your job as a leader is to involve everyone



in the discussion. Sometimes you have to work hard to get someone involved who is too quiet. Other times you have to work hard to keep one person from doing all the talking. That person may be talking just to impress everyone else, or because he has a lot to say and is too eager to participate.

Either way, you need to politely interrupt that person and ask other team members to contribute something. Everyone has to take a breath when he or she is talking, and you should wait until the person pauses, then say something like "you make a good point,


Mr. Smith, what do you think, Ms. Jones?" and direct the conversation to someone else. You can also give the person an extra job to do, like taking notes, that will make him feel more important or will let him contribute without talking.

**"What do I do if....." one of the team members argues all the time?**



Some people argue a lot to impress the team or because they want to be the leader. It is important to keep your temper and help the rest of the team remain calm. If you argue back with these people, they are getting all the attention they want! Like the person who clowns around too much, you can ignore some of a person's arguments and direct the conversation toward other team members.

Another reason a person might argue all the time is that he believes he is right! In this case, you should listen carefully to the

person's argument,  find areas to agree with, and make sure the person knows that his point of view is heard. You might have to explain to the person that what he said was heard, but that it is important to hear from other people and get their viewpoints as well.

**"What do I do if....." the whole team**

**seems tense and quiet?**



As a leader, you have to deal with group problems as well as people problems! Sometimes the whole group seems quiet and tense. This probably means that each

member is nervous or that they are afraid something negative will happen. In this case, you need to get everyone talking and calmed down. Start the meeting with a joke or a cartoon to loosen things up. Show that you are excited and want to hear everyone's opinion. If you can loosen things up some, people will usually calm down and get involved.

**"What do I do if....." the group won't stay on the topic and seems confused?**



If the group seems confused and is wandering, you need to change your leadership style. You need to talk with members to find out how they want to work. Involve them in the decision-making process about how to run the meeting.

**"What do I do if....." someone in the group doesn't know I have been studying all year to take a more active role in my meeting?**

This could create a problem if you haven't thought about how to make sure all the team members know your expectations. You could just tell them. Or you could write out what has been happening and what your expectations are. To help you get started thinking about how and what you want to tell them, there's a sample form at the end of this session.

Do you get the idea that being a group leader is hard work? It is. And there's more! There's that second important task we talked about.



Assist the team

in coming to a decision.



In the end, all decision-making meetings need to come to some decision, even if it is a decision to disagree or to make a decision at another meeting! But it is sometimes hard for teams to reach a decision because everyone wants something different!

Your job is to assist the team to come to a decision. Here are some ways you can help the team do this:

1. **Teach them about decision-making.** Many people don't know how to make decisions, and you have to teach them. Use the **DO IT!** procedure and show them how to make a decision.
2. **Encourage team members to negotiate.** Get people to talk about what they would be willing to vote for, and keep people talking and negotiating.
3. **Suggest compromises.** When there are several different ideas out there, come up with some way to compromise. A compromise is an agreement to part of an idea, so that a group can make a decision. When you agree to something that was different from what both parties started with, that's a compromise. Come up with ideas that get everyone at least part of what they want.
4. **Summarize the discussion.** When it comes time to reach a decision, you should review what has been said during the meeting so that everyone has all the ideas and viewpoints in front of them.
5. **Provide specific choices for decisions.** Use your authority as leader to select decision options that

have the most support and offer team members the chance to choose between them.

If you, as a leader, follow these rules, you will probably have more success. You need to remember that nobody becomes a great leader overnight. It takes years and years of practice. Also, keep in mind that it is just as important to be a good team member.



In the last two sessions, we are going to go back and look at all the things we've talked about in *Whose Future Is It Anyway?* Before you do that, you need to think about what role you want to take in your planning meeting. We've talked a lot about being a leader, but we also talked about being a team member. It is up to you to decide what your role will be.

What are you most comfortable doing? How important is it to you to be in charge of the actual meeting? How can you take more control over your life? Before you come back for the next session, decide what role you want in your meeting. Equal partner on the team, armed with lots of



ideas and goals?



Meeting chair



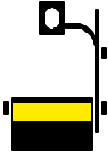
or co-chair?

You decide. After all... whose future is it, anyway?

Also, decide how you will make sure all the team members know what role your expectations are for the meeting and why.

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

- ☒ You reviewed the responsibilities of

t\_\_\_\_\_ members



and the

c\_\_\_\_\_ from the last session.



- ☒ You learned the two hardest, but most important, responsibilities of a leader are to get all the team members

i\_\_\_\_\_ and help



the team



in reaching a

decision.







- ☒ You learned six tips for m\_\_\_\_\_ the meeting.

- ☒ You learned five ways to help the team come to a d\_\_\_\_\_.



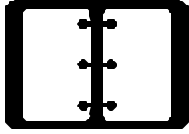
Before the next session, you should have:

-  Thought about what role you want to take in your planning meeting.
-  Learned a couple of good jokes to use during your meeting to help relax the team if needed.
-  Reviewed the "what to do if..." Tips and how to help the team come to a decision.
-  Thought about what your expectations for the meeting are, and how you will communicate that to all the team members as the planning meeting begins.

Okay. So that's it for now.



Later.



## Session 34 Summary Sheet - Managing the meeting

**WHOSE FUTURE GOAL 24:** You will learn what it takes to be a good team leader.

- ☒ You reviewed the responsibilities of team members and the chairperson from the last session.
- ☒ You learned the two hardest, but most important, responsibilities of a team leader are to get all the team members involved and assist the team in reaching a decision.
- ☒ You learned six tips for managing the meeting.
- ☒ You learned five ways to help the team come to a decision.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

To my team members:

I have been taking a class to help me learn how to take a more active role in the goal setting and planning process. I have some expectations for this school year and planning meeting that I would like to tell you at the meeting. I want to make decisions and set my own goals and help with the planning process. This will help me be better prepared for advocating for myself as an adult.

I need your help to express my opinions, ideas, and dreams that are an important part of the planning process. You can assist me by asking if I understand what is discussed, how I feel about decisions, and listening to my responses and input.

I would like you to listen to and respect my ideas. I will be open to your ideas, also. You can help me feel more confident by listening and responding positively to my attempts to be an active part of the team. Please encourage me as I learn to communicate effectively. If I talk too much, or don't say enough, let me know, and keep me from being aggressive or inappropriate.

Thank you for helping me gain the skills I will need to be an adult who knows how to ask for support when I need it and do the things I can on my own.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_