

Running a Meeting

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Regular and effective team meetings will keep your Venture on track. Organized team meetings update team members on what everyone on the team has already done, assign tasks for future work, and make sure that everyone has a chance to contribute.

At your first meeting:

- Agree upon a regular day, time, and place for your team meetings. With regular meetings, everyone on the team knows what's going on and can plan ahead.
- Decide who is going to lead team meetings. It's important that for each meeting someone is in charge of preparing for the meeting, leading discussions, and keeping the meeting on track.

TIP: Add something fun to the meeting to get people there. For example, take turns bringing snacks or leading an icebreaker.

- Decide who is going to take minutes for team meetings. Meeting minutes are notes about what happened at the meeting—what was discussed and decided, who's going to do what, and when the next meeting is. Minutes are helpful because they can be given to people who missed the meeting and they serve as a record for future reference.
- Agree upon how your team will make decisions. Will everyone at the meeting vote? Will your team's leader or a small group make decisions? If you can figure out early on how your team will make important (and minor) decisions, you can avoid confusion and conflict later.

Before each meeting:

- The leader of the meeting should write an agenda and make copies to pass out. Try to be realistic about how much you can talk about during your meeting time and put the highest priority items at the top. Set goals for each meeting.

During each meeting:

- Start the meeting on time. If you can't start on time, start as close to on time as possible. Meetings that start late tell people that it is okay not to arrive on time. This forces meetings to start later and later each time. Make sure the person who is supposed to take minutes is there and ready to take notes.
- Go through the discussion topics on your agenda one by one. Finish talking about one thing and make decisions about it before you move on to something else. When you are finished talking about one topic, the meeting leader should summarize what was discussed and decided, and lead the group on to the next discussion.
- Ask for feedback from members and encourage everyone to contribute, but respect that every individual might not want to share.

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