

Association Executives of North Carolina

Success *Live*

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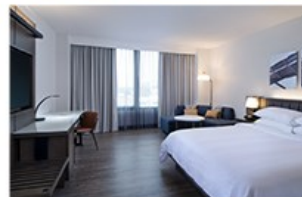
EXCITING CHANGES COMPLETED AT THE BENTON

A \$1.5 million dollar refresh has taken place in downtown Winston-Salem's Twin City Quarter at the Benton Convention Center.

The project's showpiece, The Gallery Ballroom with 24,000 square feet of expansive space, comfortably accommodates 2,000 theater style, 1,200 for receptions and 900 for banquets, plus nearly 120 exhibit booths. Designed in warm, neutral tones with bright accent colors, the conference space features new LED lighting, all new Wi-Fi and furnishings, rigging points, natural light and public art.

This reinvention also encompasses an additional ballroom, 2 boardrooms, 7 meeting rooms and an outdoor reception area. The 43,000 square foot project is awaiting your consideration.

Contact Floyd Isley at 336.397.3602 or floyd.isley@twincityquarter.com to assist with your next meeting.



Educational Article

The end of Torturous Meetings: You Need NARA!

Stefanie Adams, M.Ed.

July 20, 2022

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The End of Torturous Meetings: You Need NARA!

By: Stefanie Adams, M.Ed.
Chief Empowerment Officer
WNY People Development



We've all been there...the torturous meeting that makes you want to pull your hair out. Larry showed up 15 minutes late, causing everyone to backtrack and review what had already been discussed, Irene cut off Mabel in the middle of a sentence because she felt her work issue was more important, and Jose is slumped in his chair watching Reels on Instagram; team leader, Jessica, due to frustration, stops engaging in conversation, crosses her arms as dialog across the table (or in the zoom room) gets louder and more disconnected.

Sound familiar?

Meetings are a necessity in today's collaborative business landscape, however if left unchecked, they can be a huge drain on your team's most important resource...time. Meeting facilitation is an art, and with a few simple strategies, you'll be on your way to creating better team impact.

Just remember **NARA**: Norms. Agenda. Roles. Action Items.

NORMS

Norms are a set of meeting standards created and agreed upon by an organization, department, or work team; they outline how a group will function in collaborative spaces based on the diverse needs, expectations, experience, and motivators of members. Norms can refer to behaviors (“We will challenge each other respectfully”), logistical practices (“We will start and end meetings on time”), or a little bit of both. By taking the time to create and approve meeting norms as a team, members become comfortable holding each other accountable to established guidelines when working together.

AGENDA

Every meeting needs a roadmap, and an agenda serves that purpose. Participants should know ahead of time what is being discussed and/or presented so they are properly equipped to contribute, provide resources, and feedback. I encourage leaders to provide a general agenda at least 24 hours in advance because no one likes surprises, especially when that surprise makes you look or feel unprepared in your professional role. I encourage a standing agenda with the following:

1. **Burning Issues** It can be hard to concentrate in meetings when individuals are distracted by a perceived emergency; by providing 5-10 minutes in the beginning for team members to share current issues causing concern or frustration, it allows a quick release of information and/or emotions, and permits the group to move on and focus on other agenda items.
2. **Project Status Updates** Each team member is provided time to share progress, successes, challenges, and needs for current projects; process assures that everyone is heard.
3. **Action Items** (see below)
4. **Important Information** Organizational or team updates provided by executive leadership, manager, project leads, HR, etc.

ROLES

In every meeting, there are four roles necessary to streamline information and progress: leader, scribe, timekeeper, and active participant. The **leader** holds the group accountable to agreed upon team norms, and keeps focus and attention on what needs to be accomplished on the agenda. The **scribe** takes notes, and shares via email within 24 hours, project status updates and action items. The **timekeeper** is responsible for assuring that the meeting begins and ends on time, and that each member receives equal time to talk (ex. Everyone gets three minutes to provide Project Status Updates). Everyone else is included in the **active participant** category, emphasis placed on “active”; no Instagram scrolling in THIS meeting!

Side note, rotating meeting roles is a fantastic way to build engagement and develop leadership skills on your team.

ACTION ITEMS

Action items get everyone on the same page, and provide clear guidelines regarding what’s next and needed. Team members share what goal(s) they are working to accomplish, by when, and what resources or partners they need to do so. At the end of the meeting, the group should be able to clearly articulate (and the scribe will be sending):

- We will...
- By when...
- Who is accountable...

Meetings don’t have to be torture! Add NARA into your daily practice; communication, collaboration, and innovation will increase and drive organizational impact.



WNY People Development partners with clients to develop interactive and engaging training options that align with your needs, culture, and business goals. Whether it's a one day team building retreat, a year-long leadership program, one-on-one coaching for an emerging leader, or a specific focus like "Facilitating Effective Meetings", we've got you! Reach out to WNY People Development for your complimentary training needs assessment today! Contact us at info@wnypeopledevelopment.com.

If you would like to have one of your articles featured in *Success by Association Live* or have interest in sponsoring please contact Madi today at madi@aencnet.org.

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Mailing Address: 514 Daniels St., PMB #352, Raleigh NC 27605
Phone: 919.848.8255 | Fax: 919.848.8525



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514 Daniels St, PMB #352, Raleigh, NC 27605