

Partners in Prevention Coalition Toolkit

Step 7 Coalition Meeting Topics and Facilitation Tips

Compiled here are some suggestions for coalition meeting topics and for facilitating discussion at meetings. A common pitfall of coalition meetings is that they can turn into report-out groups, a space to only provide updates. Focusing on specific topics and setting a clear agenda can help avoid this. Additionally, it is recommended to meet with your coalition at least monthly and to set a regular date and time (such as the first Friday of every month) for meetings.

Meeting Topics

- **Focus on putting your strategic plan into action.** If momentum is lacking you can have members pair up or share in the large group one thing that they plan to do in between now and the next meeting to help accomplish a goal in the plan. You can also review your available budget and discuss what funding you have and how you plan to spend it (on items in your plan).
- **Share MACHB or other data and set the meeting around that specific topic.** Invite other stakeholders to share data they have access to.
 - **PIP can assist by pulling any data you need** (please submit a data request) and you can also request data in the form of a PowerPoint presentation.
- **Provide training or educational opportunities.** Whether before or during a meeting, engage members in professional development and discuss the value and potential impact on the coalition work. Some options are included in Step 8 of this toolkit in the 'Prevention Education Training' document.
- **Dedicate a meeting to identifying your coalition members' individual strengths** and how they work in teams. Have them share what they're good at, what motivates them, what they value, what role they typically take on in groups, etc. You can also have members complete a formal assessment, see the resources below for some options.
- **Assess your coalition and the work you do.** There are some simple tools listed below that can help you with this. A simple SWOC/SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges/threats) analysis can also provide some insight.
- **Work on the Drug Free Schools and Campuses (DFSCA) Annual Review** throughout the year. This may involve members providing data, talking through the inventory of programs, or completing the SWOC and recommendations for the coming year.

Assess Your Coalition Work

- [Assessing Collaborative Functioning Resources - Build Initiative](#)
- [Collaborative Effectiveness Assessment Activity - Prevention Institute](#)

Identify Coalition Members' Strengths

- [Personality Tests - Truity](#)
- [Coalition Member/Leader Inventory - CoalitionsWork](#)
- [Skills Inventory - Wilder Research](#)

Meeting Facilitation Tips

- **Set meeting and coalition expectations/ground rules.** Have the group come up with these together and revisit them as needed.
- **Encourage team building and trust building.** You can do quick ice-breakers as part of introductions so people get to know each other better.
- **Ask open-ended questions** and encourage dialogue and discussion about topics.
- **Be a good, active listener** and take all thoughts, ideas, and opinions into consideration.
- **Be welcoming and create a positive atmosphere**, try not to focus on the negative (even though this work is challenging and deals with tough topics).
- **Keep in mind both the rational aim and the experiential aim.** The rational aim is the intent/goal of the meeting or conversation - what do you want to learn, be aware of, and/or accomplish? The experiential aim is the inner impact or overall experience of the conversation - the experience, mood, or feelings during and as a result of the meeting.
- **Check out our Program to Go** on 'Facilitation Best Practices' (in Basecamp or on Google Drive)

Additional Resources

- [Coalition Meeting Checkup - CoalitionsWork](#)
- [Chair or Facilitator's Guidelines - CoalitionsWork](#)
- [Guidelines for Coalition Meeting Etiquette - CoalitionsWork](#)
- [Meeting Effectiveness Inventory - CoalitionsWork](#)