Essential Elements of Meetings

1. LOGISTICS
   a. Reserve an accessible meeting location
   b. Get materials (if needed): chart paper, markers, refreshments
   c. Agree upon time and length of time (accessible to majority)
   d. Give enough advance notice to attendees

2. THE AGENDA
   a. Agree upon agenda items
   b. Limit to a realistic number of topics/decisions
      i. Approximate the time per topic
   c. Define desired outcomes for each topic
   d. Leave room for announcements/new topics
   e. Announce the topics in advance

3. DECISION-MAKING PROCESS
   a. Make sure process is clear and agreed upon
      i. How are decisions made?
      ii. Who makes what decisions?
      iii. Consider using “gradient” of agreements when possible
   b. Orient people, especially as new people join

4. DOCUMENTATION
   a. Have a note taker
      i. Note brief summaries of discussions
      ii. Note clear definition of decisions (check it)
   b. Store notes where they are accessible to more than one person
   c. History: make notes accessible to future memberships

5. OUTREACH/orIENTATION
   a. Reach out and talk with people
   b. Inform people so everyone feels prepared to contribute
      i. Encourage people who don’t talk as much
      ii. Don’t lobby (inform, give opinion, but don’t pressure)
   c. Find out if other topics need to be discussed
   d. Do research if a topic is unclear or needs more info
   e. Make copies for everyone if needed

6. FOLLOW UP BETWEEN MEETINGS
   a. Check in/update members who weren’t at meeting
   b. Do assigned tasks from the meeting
   c. Check in with members who have assigned tasks

SOAR/2007