



Cornell University

### The Ten Minute Debrief Technique

Here is a technique that is easy to use and can be applied to discussions about meeting effectiveness, project plans, role of assignment lead and the like. The goal is to use a format that encourages information gathering from all team members without getting into laborious discussions or debates, which, at times, can prevent a team from debriefing at all. Furthermore, this technique encourages discussion when issues are small and easily solved!

The key to doing this exercise in 10 minutes is to avoid discussion and debate of individual contributions.

Ask each person to talk about **what went well today** at your meeting (or on the project, lead etc). Write everything they say under a smiley face on a flip chart or white board. Have someone record the information electronically as part of the meeting minutes. Collect information from everyone and when ideas are duplicated just put a √ beside the item to indicate that several people feel this way.

Ask each person **what did not go well**. Write down their input under a frowning face. Use the √ to indicate multiple points of view.

Remember, as people are sharing their input, there are no discussions or interruptions. This is often a difficult part of the exercise because some members want to debate how others are feeling or what some one has said!

After everyone has contributed, ask team members to look at the entire list of items under the two columns. **What lessons are revealed? What action items would address these lessons? Who will assume responsibility for the action items? Is there a timeline?**