

TIPS on running GGF Working Group and Research Group Sessions

It is a difficult challenge to productively direct a large group so that the discussions remain focused, particularly when attendees may have very different preconceptions of the purpose of Groups. Please consider the following as you run your sessions.

1. Minutes and Attendee Lists for WG/RG Sessions are Required

It is essential that minutes are kept. These should record any decisions or major points, but should not attempt to capture every detail - i.e. they should record the high points of the meeting, but they are not intended to be a transcription of the meeting. The minutes should be posted to the group's website as soon as possible after the session concludes. Also please email them to the Manager of Community Activities, Stacey Giannese at giannese@ggf.org.

An attendee list should be circulated during the meeting. There are several reasons for the list, including (a) providing information on participation level to help with future planning with respect to room sizes per group, and (b) record of participation for any future discussions with respect to intellectual property.

2. Content and Agenda Preparation

The agenda for each session should be circulated to the mailing list several weeks before the actual meeting, and GGF meeting procedures require that agendas are in place *prior* to being allocated a time slot at a GGF meeting. The majority of the time should be focused on business which is directly related to the Charter and in particular the documents (or equivalent) which represent the goals (or deliverables) of the Group.

Some attendees may wish to give presentations on their own work for interests sake, but where it is not directly relevant to the goals of the group. Please use your best judgement here. If you elect to allow such presentations, please limit them to 5-10 minute summaries. If you do not allow these presentations, you have the full support of the GFSG in doing so in the interest of getting the group's work done.

3. Setting the Stage at the Session

At the start of your sessions, please remind the participants (remember- many are new) of the planned agenda, and that the purpose of the sessions are to further the objectives of the WG/RG per the charter of the group. It will be important, even if you feel it is redundant for some, to remind the participants at the start that WGs/RGs are intended to have (i) Specific goals - mostly related to producing quality documents, (ii) Measurable progress toward those goals - not an endless debate (iii) Rough consensus - not 100% agreement, nor top-down dictation. Please also remind participants of the Intellectual Property ("Note Well") notice at the bottom of this page (but don't spend the WG/RG's time discussing this topic- rather point people to the document or to a GFSG member).

4. Rules of Engagement

One of the group chairs should serve as moderator for the session. It's important that the moderator realizes that the rules of engagement between a moderator and a large group are *different* from a one-on-one or small group discussion. It is the responsibility of the moderator to *interrupt people* when necessary and to *ask them*

to stop when their point has been made, when their point is off the topic, or when they cannot bring themselves to conclude with any point at all! Each person who speaks should be allowed to make a succinct point, then yield the floor to the next person. The moderator must enforce this, even though it is at times uncomfortable. If you feel more comfortable with a set time limit for speakers, that can work well also.

Finally, be careful not to suppress disagreement or minority views while a discussion topic is open. What you are trying to avoid is endless discussion about irrelevant topics, repetition of points already made, or to re-open previously concluded discussions.

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