

MEETINGS

Leading and Participating Effectively

Meetings were obviously intended to serve *some* important function in the workplace because there are so many of them! But why do so many people walk away from them mumbling, "Endless," "Boring," "Waste of time," "Didn't get anywhere," "What are we supposed to do now?" and other such critical comments?

In this chapter we'll find out first what meetings are really for; then discover what internal dynamics one can expect in *any* group interaction and what goes wrong with meetings most often. Then, communications skills for leaders and participants, and how to design agendas and meetings and run them successfully.

WHAT GOES WRONG AND WHY

In order to change the perception *and* the techniques with which meetings are run, let's first look at what goes wrong. You've been to meetings. I'm sure you'll find your overt complaints and hidden concerns in what follows:

Factual Issues

Passivity

"I feel like I'm just supposed to show up there ..."

The meeting is the leader's idea and doesn't always feel truly participatory. You arrive to a fixed agenda that you're *supposed* to tune into and