there's only one sticky place left, a little distance from the initial discussion can bring cooler heads to bear.

Just a simple "You know, that *still* makes me uncomfortable," or, "I'm still not altogether clear about our intention from now on" will open it again. Then resolve it into its final form.

List Next Steps

Again—methodically. Make a real list. Write dates for upcoming moves; who else will be involved; what else you need, to continue; and so on. Again, it's important that all this be memorialized in a memo that states it in writing for mutual sign-off.

If you're with a client, not a peer or staff member, this is still a necessary step. Writing down what you decided and sending a follow-up letter makes your mutual decision that much more binding. This is the time for clarifying what you really plan to do.

Follow-Up

Who, How, and *When* often involves checking with others and getting back to your original meeting partner with additional data. Make *that* clear as well. The immediate vs. the long-range plans need to be defined, and the process for checking back and checking up on progress made also needs to be discussed and decided on.

End on a High Note

Whichever role you played, the final exit lines and the mood created at the end are very important.

You should leave, if it's not *your* office or *your* meeting, with some vigor and some "onward and upward" quality. If the meeting was dour and even critical of you, you need to impart a sense of energy about tomorrow and optimism that you/he/we can and will fix it:

"Okay, Sam. I heard it all. I feel there are many things we (or I) can do to change the situation. Let's get started!"

If the meeting is process-oriented, or relating to a new idea, try something like:

"I must say how enthusiastic I am about the new plan and how eager I am to see how it works out. I'll give it my best. '

If you're the meeting convener, and it was a tough one, this is the time to heal and soothe. Walk with your opposite number to the door. If