

- Upcoming holidays or vacations also make a difference. If it's a tough or long-term problem or issue, remember that people get into a disengaged, euphoric mood as holidays or vacations approach. It might be difficult to make them look hard at ongoing work issues until after they come back.

### *Length of Meeting*

Next, think about how long the meeting should be. With any meeting, ask:

- What do you want it to cover?
- What forms of support do you need?
- Can visual materials be used to shorten presentation times?
- Will research or reports be presented?
- How long are they? How much time is needed?
- Is this complex or sticky? How long will the discussion phase last?
- What's the usual time length for meetings in your shop?

If it's a new subject or a long one with many ramifications, you might want to see the initial meeting as one of a series.

You might start by planning a "pre-meeting," just setting up or introducing the topic with some background on why it's a good idea. Material could then be left behind to back up ideas or plans, thus warming up and enlightening the receiver(s) at their own convenience. This first in a series should not be a very long meeting.

Plan to give intro material time to germinate. Hold the next meeting for presentations of the major thrust, the nitty-gritty of your agenda. This meeting will, of course, be longer since you'll plan a discussion period so that everyone understands what it's all about.

If it's a shorter, one-shot meeting, think of the length in terms of:

- Whether or not the participants already have enough information.
- Whether presentation(s) can be made succinctly enough to get it all in.
- Whether the multiple things you want the meeting to accomplish are naturally related to each other or belong at separate meetings.