



Opening a Session

Every group meeting should have an **Agenda**.

A group facilitator should open every meeting by providing the 3 participants **3 key things**:

The **Purpose**. Provide the group a short, concise statement of the “what” and “why” of the meeting.

The **Output**. A brief description of the outcome or output for the session. What will the group walk away with?

Their **Level of Empowerment**. How are they empowered in this meeting? What is their responsibility?



The Definition of Consensus

Recommend you gain consensus on the following definition of consensus:

Consensus is: “I can live with it and support it.”

Note, consensus does not mean everyone in the group agrees it is the best idea in their mind. In most situations, that level of agreement is not possible.

Gaining consensus means the group will leave the session and support the decision(s) made, even if for some individuals it is not their preferred course of action.

To reach consensus, everyone must be heard, healthy conflict is essential, and everyone must feel comfortable to disagree.



Parking Boards

Parking boards are used to manage information and to prevent dysfunction. Not all meetings may require them, but if your meeting lasts over an hour or is complex, do not hesitate to use them.

A standard spread of **parking boards**:

Agenda	Visual display of the plan; track progress.
Ground Rules	Visual representation of the meeting ground rules.
Issues	Issues that arise not germane to the current topic.
Decisions	Decisions made by the group.
Actions	Post-meeting actions. Who/what/when due.



Ground Rules Recommendations

Ground Rules are a group facilitator's best friend and a primary means of mitigating dysfunctional behavior. Create the beginning of a list even before the start of the session. Work with the group when you introduce the Ground Rule Parking Board for the participants to add more.

Make a point of gaining consensus on the session's Ground Rules before you move on. Emphasize: **“are you willing to be held accountable to this list?”**

Be Present:

- Keep discussion relevant
- Phones off
- Everyone speaks
- Be punctual
- No outside work

Be Courteous:

- What is said here, stays here
- One speaker at a time
- No “side bar” discussions
- Be respectful
- Be on time
- No finger-pointing

Be Open:

- Be creative
- Be open to change
- No idea is bad

Note- do not use all of these. Start with a list of 4-8, and then let the group add to them from there.

JCTM Resources and Contact Information

JCTM is excited to bring the effectiveness and usefulness of facilitation to your organization. Keep informed on our latest class dates, resources, and offerings by visiting us on numerous web platforms.

JCTM EPIC Group Facilitation Webpage:

<https://jctm.us/epic-group-facilitation/>

JCTM EPIC Group Facilitation YouTube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChIbEEIZgzPIWE37usVAccg>

JCTM EPIC Group Facilitation on LinkedIn:

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/28143547/admin/products/jctm-epic-group-facilitation/>

JCTM EPIC Group Facilitation on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100086305482629>

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