

MPS 29: Chairperson skills © copyright Donald R. Woods, 1998

Applicability:

High school and higher. Any context.

Time required:

1 h of introduction plus a chance for the person to be chair at least three times. Ideally, you also give everyone in the group a chance to be chair so that the *norms* of the group can be established. In our context this takes about 15 hours of meetings.

Brief description:

Summarize characteristics of effective chairpersons. Agenda writing for different group tasks. Provide practice in completing the feedback form for chairpersons. Rotate each through the role of chairperson and establish norms for the group on Task and Morale. Then determine whether the group functioned above or below the norms while each person was chairperson. Try to keep the size of the group to 5 or 6. Each person gets feedback and sets goals for improvement. Chairperson feedback form available. (Described in the McMaster SDL videotape. **HTGTM** Chapter 5. See Problem-based learning on this site.)

Comments:

This takes many meetings. Everyone should be chairperson for at least three meetings. Need to allow enough time between each meeting for each person to write a reflective report, receive feedback on the report, set goals and create an agenda. It is worth the effort. Dramatic improvements with all moving to be about 30% higher than initial norms of task and morale.

Prerequisite Group skills workshop, MPS **28**. It also helps to have had MPS **52** on interpersonal skills and MPS **45** coping creatively with conflict.

Additional work you need to do: The meetings should be pertinent and productive. We use a business game as the vehicle for the series of meetings to establish norms. Then we use PBL meetings and design meetings for the remaining meetings.