

THE BIG AMNESTY SKILL SHARE



HEALTHY GROUPS 3

EVALUATE & CHANGE

Healthy meetings are vital to the success of local groups and their campaigns. They make all the difference between feeling motivated and dynamic and getting stuck in a rut. Almost everything about your meetings is under your control. So take control and have happy meetings...



However good you think your meetings are there is always room for improvement!

Quick evaluations can become a regular feature of meetings. They 'give permission' for everyone to make suggestions which may lead to improvements and surprising new directions.

TIPS

- ▶ Do it in a way that ensures everyone has a chance to join in.
- ▶ Make opportunities to list good things as well as improvements.
- ▶ Make sure the evaluation questions cover both task and process elements of your meeting. (What you do and how you do it).
- ▶ Don't forget to evaluate your campaign actions too – reinforce the great things you achieve and think how to make improvements before moving on to the next one.

HEALTHY GROUPS

GETTING IDEAS INTO THE OPEN

Evaluating your meetings is time well spent. Try one of these ideas at your next meeting. Ask different people to lead the discussion.

Ask: what are you taking away from this meeting? (Something you will do, and something you are feeling?)

Complete short questionnaires anonymously and feed back the results at the next meeting.

Stop and have a quick 15 minute session on improving meetings. Try a reverse brainstorm – ask what makes a terrible meeting, one that ensures nothing gets done and newcomers don't return. This will make you laugh and help you think about the next stage - what would you do differently to make your own meetings more inclusive and productive?

If I could change one thing about this group... There may be some wonderful ideas in your group that have never been explored. Ask everyone to have a think on their own or with one other and write down an idea for making the group even better. Read out each idea without comment, then discuss. Are there patterns emerging? What one thing can we improve straight away, and what can we work on changing and how will we do it?

Ask: what went well, and what could have been better about the meeting? Give people a minute to think first before going round.

Put up a sheet with a line down the middle and a plus and minus each side of it – people could put comments on Post-it notes about what they want more or less of.

Ask: what tasks got done? Was the meeting enjoyable? Have we made good use of our pooled talents? What one change can we make next time to improve things?

Plus and minus flowers: Use Post-it notes as petals. Brainstorm. What makes a good meeting? And a bad one? Ask: what makes our meetings interesting and useful? Peel off the relevant positive petals, and re-write some of the negative ones. You now have some suggestions to help your group re-flower.