

Description of Meeting Roles

Your meetings will be more effective if you have clearly defined meeting roles. Asking for a timekeeper and a note taker at each meeting is a way to involve more participants; it also lightens the load on the facilitator or chairperson/group leader. You might consider rotating all the meeting roles so that everyone shares responsibility for running meetings effectively.

Facilitator – helps make the group’s work go smoothly; focus is on the group’s process (vs. content)

- Develops an agenda with input from the group and chairperson/leader
- Guides the group through the agenda
- Balances discussions so that participants have equal opportunity to participate
- Leads group activities such as brainstorming and multivoting
- Involves the group in summarizing decisions, actions and questions about each agenda item so that the group can move to the next item
- Confirms decisions made and affirms responsibility taken for action steps
- Sets the next meeting date
- Closes the meeting

Timekeeper – helps the group make deliberate decisions about how it spends its limited meeting time

- Alerts the group when it is getting close to the time limit set for each item
- Asks the group to decide whether it wants to continue the discussion or move on

Note taker – maintains a written record of the group’s meeting

- Documents key decisions made, issues left unresolved, a summary of discussions, action items and responsibility taken
- Uses a standard, concise format

Scribe – keeps a visual representation of the discussion in front of the group (using flip charts, white board or blackboard)

- Records brainstorming or other group process contributions
- Writes large and legibly

More about these functional roles for effective meetings can be found on pages 106 through 109 in *The Handbook for SMART School Teams (Second Edition): Revitalizing Best Practices for Collaboration*.

