

Problems Encountered in Meetings and Groups

Multi-headed Animal Syndrome

Everybody going off in different directions at the same time.

Confusion Between Process and Content

Are we talking about how to discuss the topic or what topic to discuss?

Personal Attack

Attacking individuals rather than their ideas.

Traffic Problem

Difficulty in leaping into the conversational flow and getting a chance to participate.

Unclear Roles and Responsibilities

Who is supposed to be doing what?

Manipulation by the Group Leader

Rubber-stamp meetings and abuse of process power to achieve personal objectives.

Data Overload.

Having to hold on to too many ideas in your head at one time.

Repetition and Wheel-spinning

Going over the same old ideas again and again.

Win/Lose Approaches to Decision-Making

Partial solutions, compromises, polarization, and low commitment.

Confused Objectives and Expectations

Why did you call the meeting and what is the group supposed to be doing?
Hidden agendas.

Unresolved Questions of Power and Authority

Do we have the power to make this decision?

Problem Avoidance

"Everything is fine."; "There is no problems here."

General Negativity and Lack of Challenge

There is nothing we can do about it, so why try?

cont.

Communications Problems

Not listening to or understanding what others are saying or making faulty assumptions.

Poor Meeting Environments

Can't hear, can't see, too stuffy, etc.

Personality Conflicts

Lack of openness and trust, underlying tension, racism, and sexism.

from How to Make Meetings Work, Michael Doyle and David Straus.

