

Managing meetings or herding cats?

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Many of us are asked to lead team meetings or training sessions. You can be well versed in a subject, but dealing with the people dynamics is another story. The art of managing people in these settings involves some subtle behaviors on your part.

Here are some quick tips you can use at meetings or training sessions.

1) Negativity-Validate, don't discount the person's concerns. Allow some venting. Ask for solutions and check in with the rest of the group - maybe they can shed some other light. Don't get defensive!

2) Monopolizing-Tactfully interrupt, set time limits on individual report outs and direct questions to others. Make minimal eye contact with the person.

3) Shyness-Establish rapport outside the meeting. Allow people to solve problems in smaller groups. Encourage time for writing responses before speaking.

4) Socializing-Move physically closer to the talker(s). Set ground rules that discourage side bar conversations. Direct a question to them to get their attention.

5) Distracted -Help person identify if the distraction is external(the heat, chairs,etc.) or internal (stressed out about workload) and help them problem solve. Keep meetings focused and moving along. Training sessions should build in a lot of variety to head off boredom.

What do you do to manage these and other behaviors from your teammates?