

Succeeding as a Department Chair or Director

UAA Center for Advancing Faculty Excellence August 17, 2016



Best and Worst Aspects?



Common Challenges faced by Chairs

1. Dealing with bureaucracy 65%
2. Lack of time to devote to individual research 61.5%
3. Stress associated with the job 61%
4. Dealing with noncollegial, uncivil faculty 59%
5. Excessive workload 58%

*(from Cipriano and Riccardi, 2010b;
Chairs at State university system;
831 respondents; cited in Cipriano, p. 184)*



Building a Strong Department



Building a strong department ...

Through collegiality, connection and mentoring



Fostering Collegiality

A Few Ways a Chair can Foster a Climate of Collegiality

Quotes from *Facilitating a Collegial Department: Strategies for Success*



Collegiality

Establishing Values and Expectations

Creating or Revisiting Your Vision and Mission Statements

“Starting every meeting with an examination of our mission and a reminder of who we are has helped keep us all moving in the same direction.”

Faculty member in “Working with Problem Faculty,” Crookston (2012)

Collegiality

Create Guidelines for Departmental Behavior



Collegiality


Ground Rules For Airing Disagreements



- **Abusive language will not be tolerated.**
- **Derogatory comments that represent personal attacks will not be tolerated.**
- **Differences of opinion will be discussed and everyone will be heard.**
- **Individuals can express their views without interruption or fear of retaliation. Everyone needs to be mindful of being as concise and to the point as possible.**

Collegiality

Ground Rules For Airing Disagreements , cont'd.

- **Issues and not personalities are subject to debate.**
- **Unsubstantiated assertions will not influence the vote or outcome.**
- **Emotional outbursts do not derail discussion of substantive issues.** 
- **Department issues will be discussed and decided at department meetings, and not by any subgroup of faculty.**

Example from Brigham Young University

in *Working with Problem Faculty* pp. 19-20

Participation

Attend meetings.

Arrive on time.

Come prepared.

Be actively involved.



Example from Brigham Young University

in *Working with Problem Faculty* pp. 19-20

Communication

Listen; take time for full explanations.

Work toward equity in hearing all voices.

Be open to new ideas.

Assume positive intent with all comments.

Learn how to disagree agreeably.

Don't hold back; say what needs to be said.

Avoid side discussions.

Realize that being heard does not always mean acceptance of the ideas.

Seek to understand differences through dialogue and discussion.



Example from Brigham Young University

in *Working with Problem Faculty* pp. 19-20

Social Interactions

Be respectful and courteous.

Avoid sarcasm.

Learn the names of all faculty members.

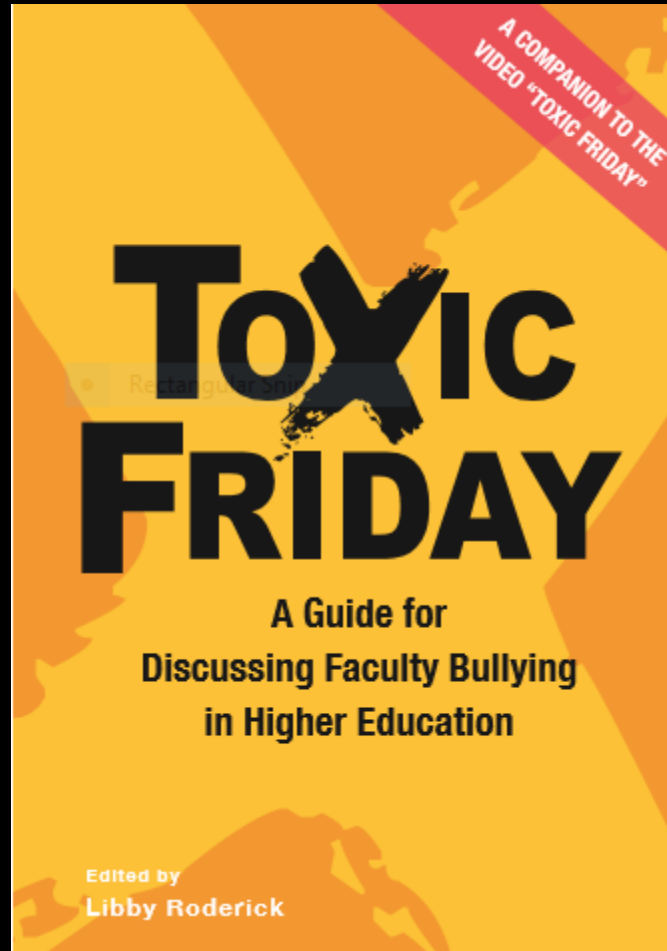
When you have difficulty with someone, talk to that person.

Interact with new people and make them feel welcome.



Resources

Addressing Faculty-to-Faculty Toxic Behavior



Discussion



Connection

Connecting with all faculty in the department:

Best ways?



Connection

Special efforts to welcome and support:

➤ new faculty

➤ international Faculty

FSDC Initiative – Gokhan Karahan & Songho Ha

➤ faculty of color; other “minoritized” faculty

Best ways?



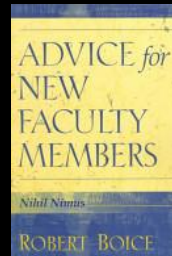
CAFE Resources

***Second Friday Faculty Mixers at Varsity Grill
September 9 – focus on welcoming new faculty***



Advice to New Faculty book group

Wednesdays August 31, Sept. 7 and 21 11:30 am-1 pm



Mid-year check in *(you could do this too!)*

Individual support from CAFE



Discussion



Mentoring

FSDC Initiative:

Toby Widdicombe; Sudarsan Rangarajan

Departmental Examples?



Buddy system — *invite new faculty to mixers, Thanksgiving dinner, Faculty Senate meeting, First Friday*

Connect people with off-campus resources in the field

Ongoing Chairs' Community?

We'll send you some questions – watch for the email!



Facilitating Effective Meetings

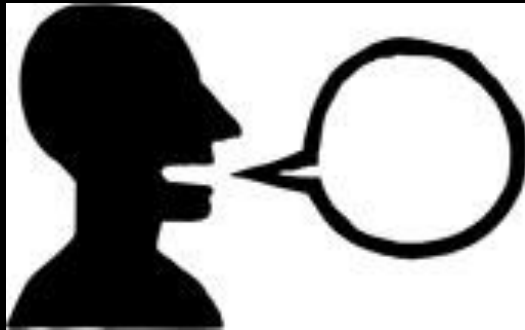


**If you had to identify, in one word,
the reason why the human race has not
achieved, and never will achieve,
its full potential,
that word would be
'meetings.'**

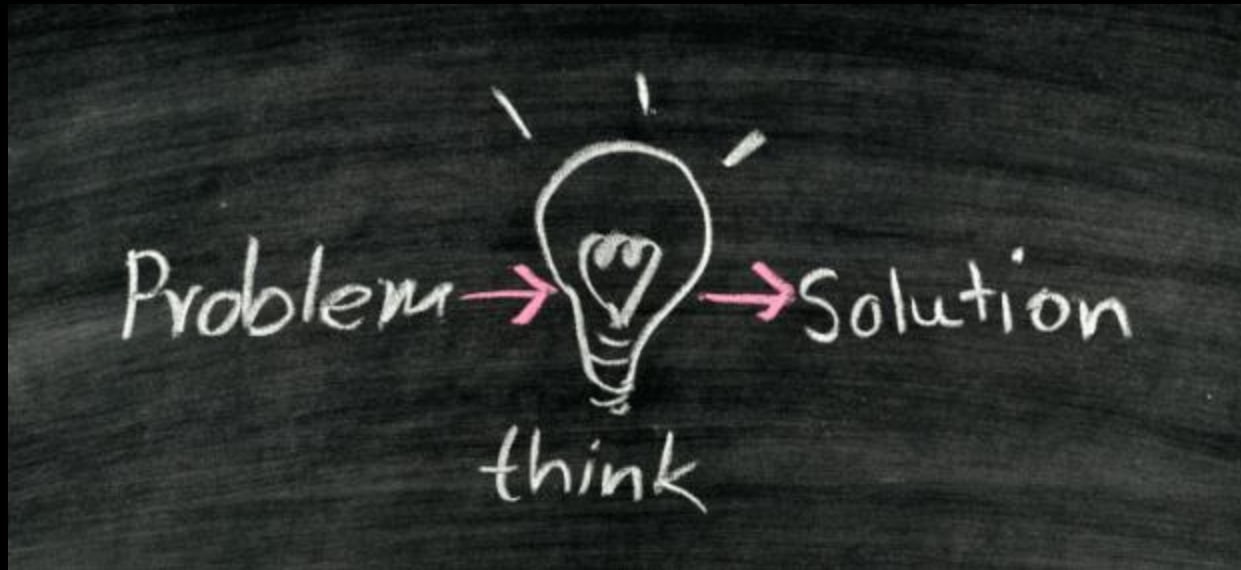
Dave Barry



Why do we hate meetings so much? What goes wrong?



Good facilitation helps prevent these problems.




Idea #1

Be **clear on the purpose** of the meeting.

Send out **agenda** beforehand.

Agenda

- Point of use technology
 - Designs That Matter
 - <http://www.designthatmatters.org/>
- Time for group meetings and Q + A on mid-terms
- WEBCAST from the Big Easy!
- Coming attractions!



2

(c) 2008, David Gute

Be Clear on the Purpose

- Identify explicit **outcomes**
 - *By the end of the meeting I want the group to have...*
 - Made a decision?
 - Generated ideas for further followup?
 - Given and received status reports?
 - Learned or shared important information?
 - Made a plan?
 - Celebrated successes?



Be clear on the purpose

Who needs to be there and why?

- Don't exclude BUT....
- Don't include people who don't need to be there



Be Clear on the Purpose

- As **short** as possible. (Stand-up meetings?)



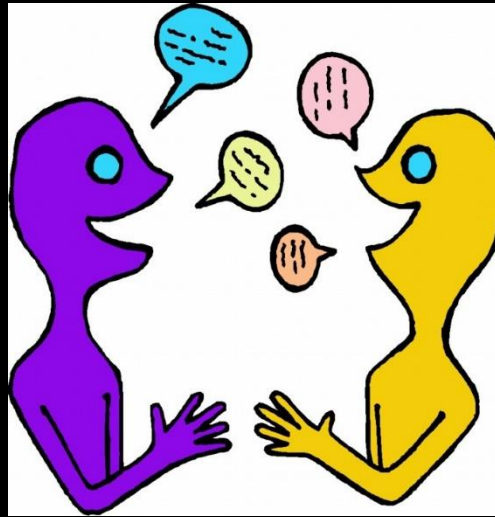
Idea #2

Create agreements for how to engage



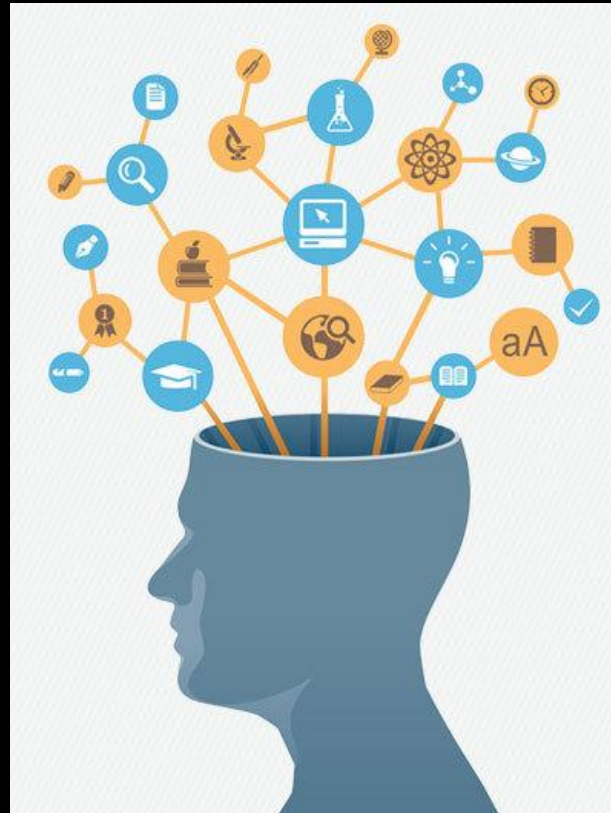
Idea #3

Everyone gets a turn to speak;
no one dominates, including the Chair.



Call on those who don't speak often.
Prepare them beforehand so they are ready.

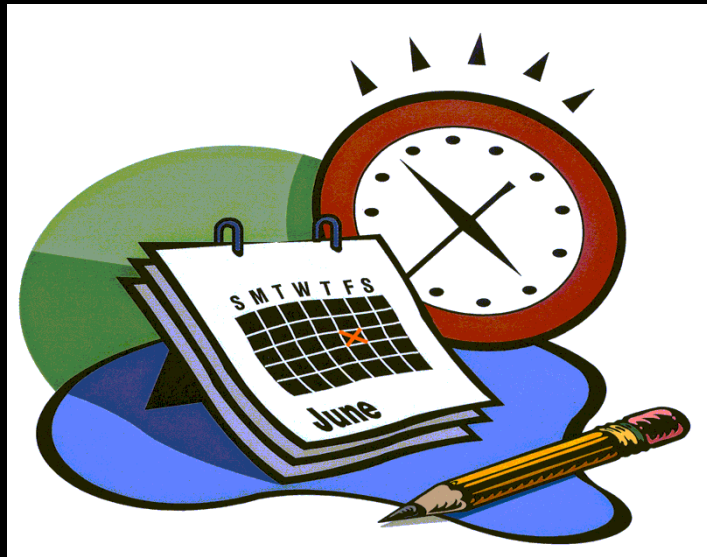
Help people learn something new every time,
e.g., faculty development; important information



Idea #5

Identify a reliable common available time slot to be used for subcommittee work; curriculum development; other departmental business.

If it's not needed, it's found time!



Resources

BOOKS

The Department Chair Primer, Chu, 2006

Facilitating a Collegial Department: Strategies for Success, Cipriano, 2011

Strengthening Departmental Leadership: A Team Building Guide for Chairs in Colleges and Universities, Lucas, 1994

Communication Strategies for Managing Conflict: A Guide for Academic Leaders, Higgerson, 2016

Working with Problem Faculty: a Six-Step Guide for Department Chairs, Crookston, 2012

Toxic Friday: Resources for Addressing Faculty Bullying in Higher Education, Roderick, 2016

Resources

Harvard Business Review

- <https://hbr.org/2015/07/the-condensed-guide-to-running-meetings>

Stanford

<https://tomprof.stanford.edu/posting/714>

MindTools

- <https://www.mindtools.com/CommSkll/RunningMeetings.htm>

Seven tips to help you facilitate an effective meeting

- <http://www.jessicabell.org/seven-tips-to-help-you-facilitate-an-effective-meeting/>

Community Tool Box: Conducting Effective Meetings

- <http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/leadership/group-facilitation/main>

NeXight Group: Stop Wasting Time! The Three P's of Effective Meeting Facilitation

- <http://nexightgroup.com/stop-wasting-time-the-three-ps-of-effective-meeting-facilitation/>