

Ground Rules

Ground rules are a set of guiding principles that the team creates through collective input to decide how they will work together. The tool is often facilitated during the early stages of the team formation process to help the team create a cohesive work environment. The ground rules tool is facilitated through brainstorming, collecting a list of ideas that the team wants to consider and approve as their formal rules of conduct. Once the list is created, the group builds consensus on the rules, and then uses the rules to guide their work going forward.

Do

Start on time

Even if you don't have 100% attendance, don't circle back to reorient late arrivals.

Stay on topic

Use a parking lot to record off-topic items.

Ask questions

Be attentive and engaged. Ask clarifying questions. If the question cannot be answered in the meeting, create an action item to follow-up on the question.

Be action-oriented

Ensure that the team is making decisions, reaching agreement on goals, and setting plans in place to advance their work.

Respect for all

Keep it about process, not people.

Don't

Check your phone

Turn your phone on silent and keep it stowed. Never lay it out on the table.

Dominate the conversation

Allow everyone equal opportunity to contribute.

Leave confused

Draw out important questions, seek to close the loop, and ensure team understands their objectives and next steps. Also, plan to follow up with the attendees on agreed upon action items.

Assume silence is agreement

Seek to build consensus. Allow all team members to have equal input and to contribute to the overall decision that has been made.

Assume ownership is understood

Record action items - who is doing, what, by when.

