

50 Games to Play by Candlelight (or Around a Campfire)

Running effective meetings is crucial to any organization, including nonprofits. Here are 50 tips to make your nonprofit meetings more productive. And if you want to be a part of a meeting that you never want to end, come to the Nonprofit Storytelling Conference – <https://nonprofitstorytellingconference.com>

1. **Clear Purpose:** Define the meeting's purpose clearly. Each meeting should have a clear objective.
2. **Agenda:** Create and distribute an agenda ahead of time. This helps attendees prepare and keeps the meeting focused.
3. **Time Management:** Start and end on time. Respect everyone's time.
4. **Relevant Participants:** Only invite those who are needed. Too many people can make a meeting unproductive.
5. **Preparation:** Encourage participants to come prepared. Share relevant materials ahead of time.
6. **Facilitation:** Have a skilled facilitator to manage the discussion, ensuring everyone has a chance to speak.
7. **Engagement:** Keep the meeting interactive to keep everyone engaged.
8. **Action Items:** Clearly define the next steps and assign action items to individuals.
9. **Follow-up:** Send a follow-up email summarizing the meeting and outlining next steps.
10. **Meeting Minutes:** Assign someone to take minutes during the meeting for reference.

11. **Time for Questions:** Allow time for questions and clarifications.
12. **Respectful Atmosphere:** Ensure the meeting is conducted in a respectful manner.
13. **Meeting Structure:** Have a clear structure for the meeting: introduction, main discussion, and conclusion.
14. **Avoid Jargon:** Use simple, clear language everyone can understand.
15. **Breaks:** If the meeting is long, provide short breaks to keep everyone refreshed.
16. **Technology Use:** Use reliable technology to facilitate remote attendees.
17. **Visual Aids:** Use visuals like slides or charts to enhance understanding.
18. **Stay on Topic:** Keep the discussion focused on the agenda topics.
19. **Decision-making Process:** Have a clear process for making decisions and gaining consensus.
20. **Rotate Roles:** Rotate meeting roles (facilitator, note-taker) to keep meetings dynamic and involve everyone.
21. **Online Tools:** Use online tools like Google Docs for real-time collaboration.
22. **Nonverbal Communication:** Pay attention to nonverbal cues which might indicate confusion or disagreement.
23. **Set Expectations:** Set expectations at the start about behavior, participation, and confidentiality.

24. **Avoid Multitasking:** Encourage attendees to avoid multitasking during the meeting.
25. **Check-in Rounds:** Begin with a quick check-in round to allow everyone to share their current state.
26. **Feedback Mechanism:** Have a way for attendees to provide feedback about the meeting.
27. **Background Noise:** Remind attendees to mute their microphones when not speaking to avoid background noise.
28. **Clear Communication:** Encourage clear and concise communication.
29. **Conflict Resolution:** Have a process in place for resolving conflicts that arise during the meeting.
30. **Prioritize Agenda:** Prioritize the most important topics to ensure they are covered.
31. **Use of Humor:** Use appropriate humor to keep the atmosphere positive and relaxed.
32. **Celebrations:** Acknowledge successes and milestones to boost morale.
33. **Brainstorming Sessions:** Include brainstorming sessions to encourage creativity and problem-solving.
34. **Diversity of Thought:** Encourage diversity of thought and differing perspectives.
35. **Regular Intervals:** Hold meetings at regular intervals to ensure continuity and follow-up.

36. **Open Discussion Time:** Allow some open discussion time for topics not on the agenda.
37. **Team Building Activities:** Include short team-building activities to foster cohesion.
38. **Consistency:** Be consistent with the format and timing of meetings to build a routine.
39. **Training:** Train team members on meeting etiquette and effective participation.
40. **Active Listening:** Encourage active listening, where participants seek to understand before being understood.
41. **Feedback Loop:** Implement a feedback loop where action items from the last meeting are reviewed.
42. **Accessibility:** Make sure meetings are accessible to everyone, considering disabilities and language proficiency.
43. **Ice Breakers:** Use ice breakers to get people comfortable and engaged.
44. **Room Setup:** If meeting in-person, set up the room in a way that encourages interaction.
45. **Record Meetings:** With permission, record meetings for those who couldn't attend.
46. **Punctuality:** Reinforce the importance of punctuality to maximize the meeting's productivity.
47. **Personal Devices:** Have a policy for personal devices to minimize distractions.
48. **Energizers:** Use energizers in long meetings to keep the energy levels up.

49. **One Conversation:** Encourage one conversation at a time to avoid confusion.

50. **Meeting Evaluation:** Regularly evaluate meetings for effectiveness and areas of improvement.