



Document Information

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Approvals

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History

Revision	Change Order #	Updated by:	Checked by:	Date

Table 1: Document History

Revision	Date	Changes
0.1	November 16, 2003	Initial version. Content incomplete.
0.2	December 7, 2003	Incorporate comments from Karen Walker. Add content to Section 2 (Activities). Add Section 3 (Activities involved in Conducting the Meeting) and Section 4 (Barriers to Effective Meetings).
0.3	December 15, 2003	Provided definitions for missing terms in glossary. Recommended ending meetings five minutes early, to allow participants to arrive at subsequent meetings on time. Recommended incentives for conducting and contributing to effective meetings. Miscellaneous additions and corrections.
0.4	December 27, 2003	Incorporate review comments from Karen Walker and Chris Randall.
0.5	May 5, 2005	Update for use by Monitoring EPG.
0.6	September 1, 2005	Assign Part Number (832-0118-00), and remove Monitoring EPG References. Update Scope to specify that this document defines only a procedure, not corporate or project policy.
0.7	September 6, 2005	Add definitions to Section 1.4, Nomenclature.
0.8	September 15, 2005	Incorporate Review Comments.
A	September 16, 2005	No further comments. Roll to Revision A.

1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this document is to define a reference process for conducting effective meetings.

1.2 Scope

This document specifies a procedure for conducting effective meetings. It does **not** specify project or corporate policy. It may be used in its entirety or in part at the discretion of meeting sponsors or projects as an aid for conducting effective meetings.

1.3 Definitions, Acronyms, and Abbreviations

- Action Item: An item that must be completed after the meeting.
- Agenda: A sequence of Agenda Items, along with the Goals, Methods, Roles and Duration for each item.
- Agenda Item: An item to be presented, discussed, and/or decided at a meeting.
- Consensus: A decision, often a compromise, which is acceptable to **all** participants. If no consensus can be obtained, a different decision process may be required.
- Decision: A conclusion, which may be reached by consensus, by voting, by executive decision, or by delegation.
- Delegation: Assigning responsibility for a decision to another individual or group.
- Executive Decision: A decision made by an individual (e.g. Project Manager) or small group (e.g. Project Manager and Product Manager) that has the authority to make the decision for the entire team.
- Facilitator: The Participant responsible for conducting the meeting. The Facilitator may be the Sponsor.
- Goals: The outcomes that determine the success or failure (effectiveness or lack of effectiveness) of the meeting.
- Issue: A point in question or dispute.
- Meeting Announcement: An announcement specifying the date, time, location, and purpose for a meeting, along with any other required information for participants (e.g. items to bring or preparation required).
- Method: For each Agenda Item, the approach used to achieve the Goals; e.g. Present Information, Generate Ideas (Brainstorm), Make a Decision (Reach a Consensus or Vote).
- Minutes: A written record of the meeting, documenting Attendance, Information presented, Decisions made, Issues and Risks raised, and Action Items to be completed.
- Participant: Any Participant, including the Sponsor and the Facilitator.
- Presenter: A Participant who is listed on the Agenda to present information at the meeting.
- Process Activity: Prepare for Meeting (EM.1), Start the Meeting (EM.2), Conduct the Meeting (EM.3), Conclude the Meeting (EM.4), or Follow-up the Meeting (EM.5).
- Process Item: An Entry Criteria (E), Control (C), Exit Criteria (X), Input (I), Task (T), Output (O), Tailoring (L), Role (R), or Metric (M).
- Purpose: The reason for conducting the meeting.
- Recorder: The Participant responsible for recording the results of the meeting and producing and distributing the Minutes.
- Risk: A project (not product) risk; e.g. exposure to cost increases, schedule slips, etc.
- Sponsor: The person responsible for calling the meeting.

- Voting: A decision process in which all participants have the same number of votes. Some voting processes allow participants to cast votes for more than one item.

1.4 Nomenclature

This document identifies Process items using the Process Activity (e.g. EM.1) during which they occur, a Letter designating the type of Process Item (e.g. C for Control), and the Item Number. The following Letter designations are used:

- C: Control: A procedure (e.g. this Work Instruction), policy, regulation, standard, etc. that specifies how an activity is to be performed.
- E: Entry Criteria: States of being that must be present before an effort can begin successfully (CMMI).
- I: Input: A work product of an earlier activity that is required by this activity.
- L: Tailoring: Possible changes to the process to accommodate special situations.
- M: Metric: A measure of some property of a process or work product.
- O: Output: A work product of the Process Activity.
- R: Role: A responsibility or status of an individual or group participating in an activity.
- T: Task: A function to be performed.
- X: Exit Criteria: States of being that must be present before an effort can end successfully (CMMI).

For example, the second Exit Criteria (Agenda has been prepared and distributed) for Process Activity EM.1 (Prepare for Meeting) is identified as EM.1 X.2.

1.5 References

- Streibel, Barbara J, *The Manager's Guide to Effective Meetings*, McGraw-Hill, 2003, ISBN 0-07-139134-7.
- <http://advdev.ddiworld.com>: OPAL™ (Online Performance and Learning) web site. (Access by subscription only; provided by Welch Allyn as part of the Leadership I training program.)

1.6 Overview

Section 2 defines the five activities involved in the Effective Meeting Procedure:

- EM.1: Prepare for the Meeting.
- EM.2: Start the Meeting.
- EM.3: Conduct the Meeting.
- EM.4: Conclude the Meeting.
- EM.5: Follow-up the Meeting.

Section 3 details some of the activities involved in Conducting the Meeting:

- EM.3.1: Present Information.
- EM.3.2: Generate Ideas.
- EM.3.3: Organize Ideas.
- EM.3.4: Prioritize Ideas.
- EM.3.5: Make Decisions.

Section 4 describes some of the barriers to effective meetings:

- Organizational Barriers.
- Group Barriers.
- Individual Barriers.

Section 5 defines some metrics:

- Value Received.
- Value Contributed.
- Efficiency.
- Process Followed

2. Activities

2.1 Activity Name: Prepare for the Meeting

Activity EM.1

Purpose: To prepare for a meeting.

<p>Entry Criteria</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A meeting is required. 	<p>Controls</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Effective Meeting Procedure (this document). 	<p>Exit Criteria</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Meeting room and required facilities (e.g. networking, audiovisual equipment) have been reserved. 2. Agenda has been prepared and distributed to participants. 3. Participants have been identified and invited. 4. Required participants have confirmed that they will attend.
<p>Inputs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Purpose of Meeting. 2. List of Relevant Meeting Participants. 	<p>Tasks</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify Participants. 2. Reserve Meeting Room and required Facilities (e.g. networking and audiovisual equipment). 3. Prepare and Distribute Agenda and Meeting Invitation. 	<p>Outputs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agenda. 2. Meeting Invitation.
<p>Tailoring</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For some meetings, it is not appropriate to distribute the Agenda in advance. 2. For some meetings, participants are not required to confirm that they will attend. 	<p>Roles</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sponsor. 2. Participants. 	<p>Metrics</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.

Notes:

Activity	Item	Notes
EM.1	E.1	If a Meeting is not the most effective process to accomplish the objective, don't conduct the meeting. For example, if the objective is detailed information gathering, and information can be gathered individually from each participant, don't call a Meeting, unless the other participants are needed to review the information as it is being collected, or unless a secondary objective is information sharing or status reporting. Would it be more effective for all participants to review the information in writing after it has been collected from all participants? Try to ensure that the time spent in the meeting adequately offsets the investment of people's time.
EM.1	O.1	The Meeting Agenda specifies the Date, Time, Purpose, and Location of the Meeting, and the sequence of scheduled Agenda Items. Each Agenda Item specifies the Goals (e.g. generate ideas or make a decision), Method (e.g. presentation of information, brainstorming, consensus), and allotted time. The Meeting Agenda may include an item for Other Business, but this should be limited to items that don't require excessive time or advance preparation by participants.
EM.1	L.1	If the primary objective of the meeting is to present information to all participants simultaneously (e.g. an organizational announcement), it may not be appropriate to distribute an Agenda in advance. However, a Meeting Announcement would still be required.

2.2 Activity Name: Start the Meeting

Activity EM.2

Purpose: To ensure that all Participants understand the Meeting Purpose and Agenda, and are Prepared.

Entry Criteria	Controls	Exit Criteria
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Designated starting time has arrived. 2. Required Participants are Present. 3. Participants are Prepared. 4. Facilitator has been trained in facilitation techniques. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Effective Meeting Procedure (this document). 2. Agenda. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participants understand Meeting Purpose and Agenda.

<p style="text-align: center;">Inputs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> List of Invited Participants. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Tasks</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Introduce Participants, if required. Take attendance, if required. Review the Meeting Purpose and Agenda. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Outputs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance List.
<p style="text-align: center;">Tailoring</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Some meetings are permitted to start on time even if not all required participants are present. If Participants are permitted to modify the Agenda, the Agenda is an Input and an Output rather than a Control. 	<p style="text-align: center;">Roles</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Sponsor Facilitator Recorder Participants 	<p style="text-align: center;">Metrics</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance. Punctuality. Preparedness.

Notes:

Activity	Item	Notes
EM.2	L.1	Some Participants will never arrive on time for meetings if meetings never start until all required Participants are present. In order to change corporate culture, meetings must begin on time even without all required Participants. In other words, at some meetings, tardiness must not be accommodated. (The start of the meeting must not be delayed to accommodate those who don't have the courtesy to arrive on time, and the meeting must not be sidetracked to review previously discussed material when participants arrive late.)
EM.2	L.2	Note that brief announcements or discussion may fall under the category of other business, and do not require modification of the agenda. In most cases, items that have not been scheduled should be deferred to subsequent meetings to allow adequate time for preparation and discussion. There may, however, be situations in which the effectiveness of the meeting may be improved by modifying the agenda. For example, if participants don't have all information required to make an intelligent decision, adding a brief presentation to the agenda might lead to a speedier and/or better decision.

2.3 Activity Name: Conduct the Meeting

Activity EM.3

Purpose: To achieve the goals stated in the Agenda.

<p style="text-align: center;">Entry Criteria</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Designated starting 	<p style="text-align: center;">Controls</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Effective Meeting Procedure 	<p style="text-align: center;">Exit Criteria</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting objectives achieved.
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time has arrived. 2. Required Participants are Present and understand Meeting Purpose and Agenda.	(this document). 2. Agenda.	or 2. Allotted time exceeded.
Inputs 1. Presentations by Participants. 2. Handouts.	Tasks 1. Present information, as appropriate. 2. Generate ideas, as appropriate. 3. Make decisions, as appropriate. 4. Document Issues, Risks, and Action Items.	Outputs 1. Information. 2. Decisions. 3. Issues for later resolution. 4. Risks. 5. Action Items.
Tailoring 1.	Roles 1. Sponsor 2. Facilitator 3. Recorder 4. Presenter 5. Participants	Metrics 1.

Notes:

Activity	Item	Notes
EM.3	C.2	Modifications to the Agenda, if permitted, should be made during activity EM.2 (Start the Meeting). Time management is difficult if the Agenda is modified during activity EM.3 (Conduct the Meeting).

2.4 Activity Name: Conclude the Meeting

Activity EM.4

Purpose: To review the meeting results and evaluate the meeting effectiveness.

Entry Criteria 1. Meeting objectives achieved. or 2. Allotted time exceeded.	Controls 1. Effective Meeting Procedure (this document). 2. Agenda.	Exit Criteria 1.
Inputs 1. Decisions. 2. Issues. 3. Risks. 4. Action Items. 5. Meeting evaluation	Tasks 1. Review Decisions, Issues, Risks, and Action Items. 2. Schedule next meeting, if required. 3. Evaluate meeting effectiveness.	Outputs 1. Schedule for next meeting, if required. 2. Meeting evaluations.

forms.	4. Thank Participants.	
Tailoring 1.	Roles 1. Sponsor. 2. Facilitator. 3. Recorder. 4. Participants.	Metrics 1. Objectives Achieved. 2. Time Required.

Notes:

Activity	Item	Notes
EM.4	T.3	<p>There are two aspects to evaluating meeting effectiveness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determining whether the meeting objectives were accomplished. For example, was a decision made? Were all issues identified? Etc. Collecting metrics. For more information on metrics, refer to Section 5.

2.5 Activity Name: Follow-up the Meeting

Activity EM.5

Purpose: To ensure that the Meeting Minutes are produced and distributed, and that Action Items are tracked to completion.

Entry Criteria 1. Meeting has been completed.	Controls 1. Effective Meeting Procedure (this document).	Exit Criteria 1. Minutes produced and distributed. 2. Action Items tracked to completion.
Inputs 1. Meeting Notes.	Tasks 1. Recorder prepares and distributes meeting minutes. 2. Sponsor ensures that Action Items are tracked to completion.	Outputs 1. Meeting Minutes.
Tailoring 1. For some meetings, distribution of Meeting Minutes is not required.	Roles 1. Recorder. 2. Sponsor.	Metrics 1. Percentage of Action Items completed successfully.

Notes:

Activity	Item	Notes
EM.5	O.1	The Meeting Minutes include Date, Time, Duration, Attendees, Decisions, Issues, Risks, and Action Items, along with responsible individual and due date. If there are no Decisions, no Issues, no Risks, or no Action Items, the Meeting Minutes should explicitly state that there were no Decisions, no Issues, no Risks, or no Action Items.
EM.5	L.1	If the primary purpose of the meeting was to present information to all participants simultaneously (e.g. an organizational announcement), distribution of Meeting Minutes may not be required. This is especially true if the information is being distributed in the form of an organizational announcement or a press release.

3. Activities involved in Conducting the Meeting

The activities described in this section may be used during the conduct of the meeting.

3.1 Activity Name: Present Information

Activity EM.3.1

Purpose: To present information to participants.

<p>Entry Criteria</p> <p>1. Information must be presented during the meeting.</p>	<p>Controls</p> <p>1. Effective Meeting Procedure (this document). 2. Agenda.</p>	<p>Exit Criteria</p> <p>1. Information has been presented and understood. or 2. Allotted time has been exceeded.</p>
<p>Inputs</p> <p>1. Handouts. 2. Presentation materials.</p>	<p>Tasks</p> <p>1. Present information. 2. Ensure that participants understand information. 3. Note any issues or questions that can not be answered.</p>	<p>Outputs</p> <p>1. Issues. 2. Questions.</p>
<p>Tailoring</p> <p>1.</p>	<p>Roles</p> <p>1. Presenter. 2. Participants.</p>	<p>Metrics</p> <p>1.</p>

Notes:

Activity	Item	Notes
EM.3.1		

3.2 Activity Name: Generate Ideas

Activity EM.3.2

Purpose: To generate ideas or alternatives.

<p>Entry Criteria</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ideas must be generated during the meeting. 	<p>Controls</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Effective Meeting Procedure (this document). Agenda. 	<p>Exit Criteria</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A sufficient number of ideas have been generated. or Allotted time has been exceeded.
<p>Inputs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Flip charts, if appropriate. Markers, if appropriate. Sticky notes, if appropriate. Other aids, if appropriate. 	<p>Tasks</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Brainstorm, if appropriate. Participants work individually to supply ideas in writing rather than verbally, if appropriate. Participants divide into groups and work as small teams, if appropriate. 	<p>Outputs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> List of ideas or alternatives.
<p>Tailoring</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 	<p>Roles</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitator. Recorder. Participants. 	<p>Metrics</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Number of ideas generated. Time required.

Notes:

Activity	Item	Notes
EM.3.2		

3.3 Activity Name: Organize Ideas

Activity EM.3.3

Purpose: To group or organize a list of ideas or alternatives, and eliminate duplicates.

<p>Entry Criteria</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A list of ideas or alternatives is ready. The list has too many items or is not organized. 	<p>Controls</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Effective Meeting Procedure (this document). 	<p>Exit Criteria</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Ideas are organized. or Allotted time exceeded.
<p>Inputs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> List of ideas or alternatives. 	<p>Tasks</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Group similar or related ideas together, if appropriate. Rewrite ideas to capture related ideas as one item, if 	<p>Outputs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> An organized list of ideas or alternatives.

	appropriate.	
Tailoring 1.	Roles 1. Facilitator. 2. Recorder. 3. Participants.	Metrics 1.

Notes:

Activity	Item	Notes
EM.3.3		

3.4 Activity Name: Prioritize Ideas

Activity EM.3.4

Purpose: To prioritize a list of ideas or alternatives.

Entry Criteria 1. A list of ideas or alternatives is ready. 2. The list must be prioritized.	Controls 1. Effective Meeting Procedure (this document). 2. Prioritization criteria (e.g. cost and benefit).	Exit Criteria 1. List has been prioritized. or 2. Allotted time exceeded.
Inputs 1. List of ideas or alternatives.	Tasks 1. Ensure that participants understand the prioritization process. 2. Prioritize a. by Voting. b. by Consensus.	Outputs 1. A prioritized list of ideas or alternatives.
Tailoring 1.	Roles 1. Facilitator. 2. Recorder. 3. Participants.	Metrics 1.

Notes:

Activity	Item	Notes
EM.3.4		

3.5 Activity Name: Make Decisions

Activity EM.3.5

Purpose: To choose one or more ideas or alternatives for implementation.

<p>Entry Criteria</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A list of ideas or alternatives is ready. 2. A decision is required. 	<p>Controls</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Effective Meeting Procedure (this document). 2. Decision criteria (consensus, voting, etc.). 	<p>Exit Criteria</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Required decision has been made. or 2. Allotted time exceeded.
<p>Inputs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. List of ideas or alternatives. 	<p>Tasks</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure that participants understand the decision making process. 2. Decide <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. by Voting. b. by Consensus. c. by Executive Decision. 	<p>Outputs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A decision.
<p>Tailoring</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 	<p>Roles</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sponsor. 2. Facilitator. 3. Recorder. 4. Participants. 	<p>Metrics</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.

Notes:

Activity	Item	Notes
EM.3.5		

4. Barriers to Effective Meetings

4.1 Organizational Barriers

If effective meetings are not part of the corporate culture, effective meetings will be the exception rather than the rule. Some of the symptoms are:

Barrier	Mitigation
The Sponsor does not consider the value of the participants' time, and may be reluctant to spend (for example) an hour on preparation and follow-up, or finding an alternative to calling a meeting, even though this could save (for example) half an hour for each of the participants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require the use of the Effective Meeting Procedure for specific meetings (e.g. CCB Meetings). • Allow other meetings to adopt the Effective Meeting Procedure. • Ensure that sponsors are motivated to conduct effective meetings; for example, by evaluating meeting effectiveness during performance reviews and as part of incentive compensation plans.
The organization may not provide sufficient training for Sponsors, Facilitators, or Participants.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participants can learn the Effective Meeting Procedure by observing others conduct effective

	<p>meetings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal training (e.g. brown bag lunches) can provide a training opportunity.
Meetings may be scheduled to overlap, or provide inadequate break time for participants to get from one meeting to the next meeting on time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide time between consecutive meetings to allow participants to arrive on time. For example, schedule all meetings to end five minutes before the hour or half hour (e.g. 1:00 to 1:55 PM), to provide time for participants to get to the next meeting (e.g. 2:00 to 2:55 PM) on time.

4.2 Group Barriers

Even if effective meetings are part of the corporate culture, problems may exist in individual groups that act as barriers to effective meetings:

Barrier	Mitigation
Participants are overloaded, and have insufficient time to prepare or follow-up.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Meeting Sponsor must ensure that all participants understand the team priorities. If the meeting does not have sufficient priority to justify proper preparation, the meeting should not be held.
Participants disagree on objectives, or are unable to reach a consensus on meeting topics.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Meeting Sponsor must ensure that all participants understand the objectives. • If Participants are unable to reach a consensus, a different decision criterion (e.g. voting or executive decision) should be used.

4.3 Individual Barriers

Some individuals may have poor meeting etiquette, which may act as a barrier to effective meetings:

Barrier	Mitigation
Individuals regularly arrive late or unprepared.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all participants understand the requirement to arrive on time. • Ensure that participants are motivated to arrive on time and prepared; for example, by making these factors in performance reviews. • Don't accommodate tardiness (EM.2 L.1).
Individuals who are disruptive during meetings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the individual's manager to resolve the problem. Ensure that participants are motivated to contribute to effective meetings; for example, by making this a factor in performance reviews.
Individuals don't fully participate, or engage in other activities (e.g. reading email).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the individual's manager to resolve the problem. Ensure that participants are motivated to contribute to effective meetings; for example, by making this a factor in performance reviews.

5. Effective Meeting Metrics

Metrics are one component of evaluating meeting effectiveness. (Another component is determining whether the meeting objectives were achieved. Refer to EM.4 T.3)

Collecting metrics for every meeting is not practical, nor does it add value. For periodic (e.g. weekly or monthly meetings), it makes more sense to collect metrics quarterly or semiannually.

The following metrics are highly subjective, but have the potential to provide insight into the effectiveness of meetings: On a zero to ten scale, ten might indicate excellent (much better than most meetings), five might indicate average, and zero might indicate the worst imaginable rating.

5.1 Value

There are two components of value:

- Value Received: The value that the participant received from participating in the meeting.
- Value Delivered: The value that the participant contributed to the meeting.

It is not unusual for the two components of value to differ. For example, in a training meeting, the trainer is expected to deliver value and the trainees are expected to receive value. However, if both Value Received and Value Delivered are low for any participant, that participant should not have been required at the meeting. If both Value Received and Value Delivered are low for all participants, the meeting should not have been held. If Value Delivered is high for any participant, but Value Delivered is low for all participants, further investigation is merited to discover what happened to the value that was delivered.

Note that meetings that achieve their objectives tend to be high in value (unless there is no value in the objectives), and meetings that do not achieve their objectives (or whose objectives are not well understood) tend to be low in value.

5.2 Meeting Efficiency

This is an indication of how efficient the meeting was in delivering value. For example, if no value is delivered until the last five minutes of a meeting, further investigation is merited to determine whether the entire meeting could have been conducted and completed in five minutes. Meetings that begin late are inherently inefficient. For example, if a 60 meeting begins 15 minutes late, the maximum efficiency is only 75%.

5.3 Process Followed

The degree to which the Effective Meeting Procedure was followed. Note that this metric is secondary; if a meeting delivers high value, participants may not care whether the Effective Meeting Procedure was followed. The prediction is that there will be a positive correlation between both Meeting Value and Meeting Efficiency and the degree to which the Effective Meeting Procedure is followed.

5.4 Suggestions for Improving the Process

Suggestions for improving the process are not strictly metrics, but they should be collected.