

effective environments  
*designing innovative solutions for success*



## SAMPLE STAFF AGREEMENTS

The following are some examples of staff agreements our clients have created and adopted. The organizations represented in this list range from large corporations to small nonprofits. The size and nature of the organization doesn't matter. All it takes to create and adopt staff agreements is a commitment to excellence and a commitment to having a work environment that supports relationship, effectiveness and productivity. Use these as a guide to crafting agreements in *your* organization.

1. We agree to communicate our availability and times to call us to other Board Members.
2. We are compassionate with ourselves and others.
3. We respect others and their time. (Make sure people have time to talk before beginning a conversation.)
4. We will be straight about the type of call or communication we are delivering.
5. We will use a means of communication that is appropriate to the person. We will use faxes when possible and e-mail when appropriate.
6. We will operate from "no loose ends" and "closing the loop" in our work and communications.
7. We will respond to all messages within 24 hours and all letters and memos within one week.
8. We will be on time for meetings.
9. Our meetings will begin on time and end on time.
10. We have fun!
11. We agree to be supportable by others.
12. No hiding, no fooling and tell the truth!

13. Follow through and be accountable.

## COMMUNICATION GROUND RULES

You may already assume that these agreements are in place. Even so, it is valuable to state them expressly and align on them overtly.

1. We communicate from mutual respect (if not mutual affection).
2. No personal attacks — We focus on the problem not the person.
3. Use “I” statements — Remember that no one of us has a corner on the “truth.”
4. Keep the meeting “a safe space” in which to communicate.
5. Use open, honest, responsible communication (distinguish “dumping”).
6. Speak to “forward the action” (or, in other words, further the mutually intended result).  
For example,
  - Things that must be said in order to move on
  - Observations about what is so (where we stand now)
  - Expressions of vision and/or commitment
  - Recommendations for next steps
7. Be succinct (and be willing to be reminded)!
8. Save extraneous issues on a separate list to be dealt with separately.
9. Have only one person speak at a time, uninterrupted. Have the meeting leader (or facilitator) “direct traffic.”