

FACILITATING YOUR WAY OUT OF THE MEETING MIRE

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HAVE YOU EVER . . .

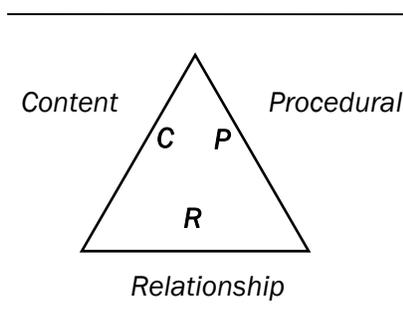
- Attended meetings that had no focus and no end point?
- Tried to participate in meetings where the same people always monopolize the time?
- Left a meeting with a totally different idea of what went on than the person who sat next to you?
- Been exasperated because people came to your meetings late, were not prepared, or left early?
- Sat in meetings where issues that needed to be discussed were not brought up because it was not safe to do so?
- Gone to a great meeting with lively discussion, but no action plans resulted or people did not follow through afterward?

Experiences like these can be frustrating whether you are the meeting leader or in the participant role. Typically, such scenarios cause people to respond in a way that only serves to further compound the problem. For example, everyone decides to be late to meetings because they never start on time.

FULFILLING NEEDS

Each person has a set of needs that must be met in order for that individual to agree to an approach, to buy-in to a decision, or to support an action plan. These needs form a triangle that is in balance. If any side is neglected, then the balance is thrown off and the agreement, or buy-in, diminishes. It is easy to see in this example that if:

- There is no clearly defined process for developing a plan (P), the team may not buy-in to the budget (C).
- Contributors to the plan hedge on committing to writing assignment deadlines (C), the coordinator may feel unfairly treated (R).
- The review process is perceived to be punitive or critical (R), then there is likelihood that the plan will be late and there will be no time for sufficient review (C).



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| C | Content Need (<i>The What, Time, Money, Resources</i>) When is the proposal due? How many hours are budgeted? |
| P | Procedural Need (<i>The How, the Process</i>) How will we edit the proposal sections written by different authors? |
| R | Relationship Need (<i>The Who, the Communication, the Behavior</i>) Who is going to be doing the final review on the proposal and how will the input be viewed? |