

Sample Agenda

Reference Group Meeting



The purpose of the reference group meetings is to facilitate multilateral communication and cooperation to enable the smooth implementation of the change.

1. Schedule

- a) What stages are different people/groups at?
- b) What is happening next in the change process?
- c) Current key actions?
- d) Team and individual successes?

2. Communication - Incoming

- a) What are the key questions people are raising?
- b) What feedback are they giving us?

3. Emergent Issues

- a) What are the emergent issues?
- b) What response is needed?
- c) Who will take responsibility?

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- a) What is required of executives at this point in time?
- b) What is required of managers and supervisors at this point in time?
- c) What is required of individual contributors at this point in time?
- d) What is the project/coordination team doing?

5. Resources and Capabilities

- a) What resources are needed for the coming period?
- b) What skills will people need for the coming period?
- c) How will these be procured/developed?

6. Communication - Outgoing

- a) What information do people need?
- b) How will it be communicated?
- c) What are the key messages we deliver consistently after this meeting?

Notes

1. Schedule

- 1-a) It is important to monitor where each group and key stakeholder are in their journey through the transition phases. This way you can plan suitable actions during the rest of the meeting.
- 1-b) The project/coordination team or change manager can give an update of what actions are happening in the change process.
- 1-c) Identify the key actions. These may be actions that require significant effort, are sensitive, have a large impact on a person or group, or are the achievement of a milestone.
- 1-d) Gather information about team or individual successes. These are important to note and promote to help motivate people during the change. These stories are important for culture change, supporting change advocates and reassuring change resisters. They are to be included in the communication processes.

2. Communication - Incoming

- 2-a) The issues and questions people raise are an important resource for the change as they tell us what is happening, what is going well and what issues we need to address to make the change succeed. Keeping this line of communication open is essential to effective change and requires a consistent commitment to building trust and a sense of safety during the change.
- 2-b) As well as issues and questions, pay attention to feedback about the change. This helps you keep in touch with things that are going well and identifying any loose ends. It also helps you pick up the non-rational dynamics, such as how people are moving from low confidence to higher confidence in the change, its vision and benefits.

3. Emergent Issues

- 3-a) Identify the emerging issues that require priority attention and action. Especially important are issues that might delay the change, aggravate sensitivities or increase resistance to change. Emergent issues also include unexpected opportunities to get people on board and to improve the change process.
- 3-b) It is important for the reference group to consider possible responses since they have a stronger sense than the project/coordination team or senior leaders about what is happening in their part of the organisation.
- 3-c) Ensure that action is not only planned but that there are clear personal responsibilities and time frames.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- 4-a) Key executive responsibilities include communicating the purpose and benefits of the change, removing roadblocks to operational progress, ensuring it is at the top of the

business agenda for them and their teams; engaging key stakeholders to get their support; visiting local teams to promote the change and maintain a sense of urgency and momentum.

- 4-b) Key management and supervisor responsibilities require them to use their project management skills to get change actions done; focus on supporting, directing and encouraging their people; and negotiate with their own supervisors to make sure they have the room to make necessary decisions.
- 4-c) Key individual contributor responsibilities include learning and developing the skills they need to function in the new environment; work with their supervisors to get the necessary resources in place, including new local policies and procedures; and encourage their peers to get involved and make the change work.
- 4-d) The project team and the change coordinators must ensure plans remain current, actions are implemented; that they are maintaining clear, multilateral communication with everyone involved in the change and that they are keeping everything coordinated as different groups and people move through the change at their relative paces.

5. Resources and Capabilities

- 5-a) It is important to check that necessary resources are available, especially at a local level. It is easy for project/coordination roles to assume they are in place and available, even when they're not.
- 5-b) Some skills will be obvious at the planning stage of the change and may have training and development strategies in place. However, it is important to continue to check that necessary skills are there as the change progresses and its on the job impacts become clearer. This includes the capability to cope with change itself.
- 5-c) Ensure that there is a clear pathway to providing or developing necessary skills and resources. This is important to maintain people's confidence that they can succeed in the change.

6. Communication - Outgoing

- 6-a) Develop messages to respond to the questions, issues and feedback people have raised. Provide them information about what actions are taking place, the current schedules and ways to deal with change requirements or issues.
- 6-b) Select the most suitable channels for distributing information and facilitating dialogue. Sensitive content requires more interpersonal and detailed the communication.
- 6-c) Finish the meeting with agreement that everyone deliver one or two key messages to their groups. These are to top two priorities for this point in time.