

## Gathering Guidelines *Guidelines for Creating the Ultimate Staff Meeting*

- 1. Sit in a circle.**  
You generate more synergy when a team of people are all sitting in a circle, facing each other, *on the same level*, without a “boss” controlling the meeting.
- 2. There are no “problems”—only “challenges” and “opportunities.”**  
The words you use have an effect and impact on others.
- 3. There’s no such thing as a “complaint”—only “suggestions” with at least two solutions.**  
Make it a policy that no one can even voice a suggestion unless they’ve already thought of at least two solutions.
- 4. There are no dumb questions, dumb answers, or dumb ideas.**  
Create a sense of safety by checking your judgments and attitudes at the door and by encouraging each other to share your questions, answers, and ideas freely.
- 5. Criticizing, teasing, put-downs, and sarcasm are the only taboos.**  
Brainstorming means letting your creative minds soar, without any boundaries. No idea is too outrageous.
- 6. It’s okay to say, “I don’t know,” or “I changed my mind.”**  
It can be very empowering to hear each other say, “I don’t know the answer to that, but why don’t we discover the answer or solution together?”
- 7. If you don’t agree, say so and explain your thoughts.**  
In explaining why you don’t agree, you can’t package your words in the form of a put-down, in sarcasm, or as an attack.
- 8. It’s good to have a mind of your own—use it only when it matters.**  
Do you really need to voice your thoughts about the idea? Not always, *only* when it really matters.
- 9. Keep asking until you really understand.**  
If you don’t understand something, or need more information, ask questions.
- 10. Failure is not fatal.**  
Create an environment where making a mistake is okay.