

ENSURING SUCCESS

A key benefit of university committees is that they facilitate shared governance, allowing a diverse array of stakeholders to share their expertise and perspective while contributing to decision-making and input gathering.

THE SUCCESS OF A COMMITTEE CAN BE MEASURED IN THREE WAYS:¹

1. **Output:** The final outputs produced by the committee must meet or exceed the standards (quantity, quality and timeliness) set by key constituents and the individual providing the charge. This objective may require continually checking in to ensure that the committee is on track to meet expectations.
2. **Social Processes:** The internal social processes operating as the committee interacts should enhance, or at least maintain, group members' ability to collaborate in the future. Are all team members having a positive experience interacting as part of the committee? Do they feel valued as contributors?
3. **Learning:** The experience of working in the team environment contributes positively to the experience and learning and well-being of members.

THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVE COMMITTEE ENGAGEMENT WILL HELP ENSURE SUCCESS

- In inviting members, articulate the reason(s) they were selected to participate (see [Inclusive Committee Formation](#)).
- Provide clear member expectations and gain commitment.
- At the initial meeting, move beyond just introductions and have the chair(s) articulate the expertise or constituency represented by each member.
- Give a clear charge to the committee with an expectation of the deliverables and time-frame and guidelines governing the way in which the committee will engage.
- Working with the committee, create roles based on members' areas of expertise and desired areas in which they hope to develop.
- Prepare an agenda for each meeting and circulate at least four days in advance. Indicate items for discussion and those that require a decision or action.
- Consider assigning "homework" in advance of the meeting so members come prepared to discuss certain topics. Committee summary views can often be gathered in advance via an informal e-mail survey to help facilitate conversations during the meeting.
- Curate the meeting conversations and encourage quieter voices and manage those who eagerly communicate.
- If members are participating remotely, start with them in discussions.

¹ Hackman, J. Richard (1987). "The design of work teams". *Handbook of Organizational Behavior*: 315–42. Hackman, J. R.; Wageman, R. (1 April 2005). "A THEORY OF TEAM COACHING". *Academy of Management Review*. **30** (2): 269–287. [doi:10.5465/AMR.2005.16387885](https://doi.org/10.5465/AMR.2005.16387885).

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- Assign someone to check on the remote individuals to remember to ask them for their input.
 - Send meeting notes within a week of each meeting with an articulation of action items and deliverables by member. Consider using Box to maintain committee materials for all members.
 - Check in with committee members about their experience.
 - Capture committee member reflections about the experience before the committee disbands.
 - Make appropriate arrangements for staff assistance to help in scheduling meetings, reserving space, and other logistical support.
 - If useful depending on the committee's objectives, arrange for material resources and strategies for information gathering (for example, if site visits are required or outside consultants).
 - Consider recognition of members' service, which could take many forms (e.g., tokens of appreciation such as a lunch, perhaps acknowledgement at a "University Service Recognition Day," or some other means of letting committee members know that their work was valued and appreciated).