


TIPS FOR YES! TEAM COACHES

 Indicates a Best Practice from YES! teams

Have an agenda for each meeting

Agendas are a simple way to make sure meetings run as effectively and efficiently as possible. You might have each student take turns creating the agenda and managing the meetings.

- Team members may serve as 'President', 'Secretary' etc. to provide continuity to the meetings.
 -  Designate meeting times for specific topics i.e. Tuesday's meeting discuss Project A and Thursday's meetings discuss Project B.


Enforce a “no backs to anyone” seating arrangement rule

- This will insure good communication and give and take. Arrange chairs in a “horseshoe”-insist on it. Make it part of your meeting start up ritual to rearrange chairs and tables if you have to.



Don't waste people's time.

Start and end your meetings on time. An hour is the most you can expect students to give per meeting. If your meetings are longer, they will stop coming. Make sure every meeting has a sense of accomplishment and busy students will return.

- Most team meetings run 20-30minutes.
- Make sure to cover information that must be addressed by the whole team. Secondary or specifics can be carried out by smaller groups or individuals.
 -  Hold your meeting over the lunch hour so students can take in information as they eat

Get in the habit of making decisions early and often at meetings

Start with easy decisions and progress to the more difficult decisions. Be willing to table divisive issues. Don't force the issue if there is deep conflict.

- If no decision is made, agree upon a timeline or date on which you will have a decision.
- Don't put it off! If the newspaper wishes to meet with the team, strive to follow through that week. Students will likely avoid commitments if decisions are delayed.

Always try to determine where the consensus is.

Make it very clear to YES! team members what the choices are and ask them to speak to one choice or another and listen to differing points of view.

- Use non-binding, quick “show of hands” to take pulse of the group. Ask for ‘who may be interested’ in a particular opportunity and follow-up later.

Hold team members accountable.

- Summarize decisions at the end of the meetings i.e. who agreed to what, when etc. Helpful to all team-members should they change their mind, remember a conflict or choose to help out!
- If decisions were made at a previous meeting but were not carried out, do not be afraid to point out (non-judgmentally) that follow-through is just as important as intention

Avoid Coach Monologues meetings

Whenever possible, ask other YES! team members to share what they know about a specific information item on the agenda.

- 💡 Students can meet as small groups throughout the month and convene as a larger group once a month. Small groups can then share their individual progress with the larger group.

Reminders are a must

It is very helpful for students and community volunteers to be reminded the day prior to your meetings.

- Have one person in charge of texting fellow team members meeting times
- Create a facebook group and post reminders on the 'wall'
- Create an e-mail group
- Announce over school intercom or tv

Take Your Cue from who shows up

Don't worry too much about who is not there – make the most of who is. There is power in successful, visible collective action. Others will come along later as your group gains momentum, but it is important to work on what the students right there in the room want to work on. If they have a hand in deciding what to do, they are more likely to help make it happen.

- Include those who were unable to attend by sending out meeting notes

Be the last person to volunteer to do something

Let YES! team members know that any idea for action requires their energy and commitment to carry it out – otherwise the idea dies. Your role is to put legs under what the team wants to do, but if no one wants to help you (at least two other people) the idea is dead.

- Encourage pairs of students or *small* groups to work together
- Try to pair opportunities with activities/events in which the students are already participating i.e. hosting a booth at a basketball game, putting poster up at their place of work etc.

Continually reach out and welcome new members to the team

Change your meeting times seasonally or hold one or two extra meeting times a year to involve people who can't come to your regular meetings (unless your meetings are part of a class period.)

- Use food as a way to entice team members to attend
- Host meetings on 'neutral' territory. Local coffee shops or libraries provide a great atmosphere separate from the school building



Have FUN and celebrate your successes!

The more you care about each other, the more effective your team will be. We all want to belong to something that makes us feel good. Your job is to make sure that everyone really wants to be a part of your team.

- Acknowledge the successes *as well as* the set backs of your team's project(s) – we are learning from our mistakes and can benefit from sharing the hurdles we may face.
- Plan to attend the Earth Day YES! event as a way to publically display your work and have fun!
- Host a public celebration locally, and invite family and friends to attend to learn about your project(s).