

# Meeting basics and invitations

Once you know your purpose, outcome and how you'll gather your learning, you're ready to think about the practicalities of setting up your meeting and how you'll invite people along.

## Boundaries

Although often unthought of, there are numerous boundaries (potentially limiting or benefitting factors) which can influence the outcome of a meeting in a big way. It's helpful to think about factors which might be limiting your meeting or influencing it in some unseen way before it begins.

Some **solid boundaries** which might affect your meeting are:

- Where it's held
- When it's held (time of day)
- How long it lasts
- The timing of an agenda
- Whether it's 'open' or 'closed' (is it a members only meeting, or can anyone attend?)
- How it's facilitated
- How it's resourced

These are all boundaries which are imposed because of the nature of the purpose, place or people who will be working together.

### More intangible, flexible boundaries:

- The nature of the session content - this may shift and change as more clarity emerges about what is most appropriate for the session itself.
- Who is facilitating a particular element of the session - you may choose to change this as you understand more about the dynamics in the room.



## Invitation

Once you know where and when your meeting will be held, you are ready to invite people to join you!

Clear communications are key when asking people to give their time, energy and resources to a meeting. The purpose of your meeting should be explained clearly, so that people know their time won't be wasted.

An invitation isn't simply a piece of paper (or email) with the details of the meeting, time and place on it.

It's a chance to influence the likelihood of someone showing up, and that one person might make all the difference in your meeting.

An invitation is a way to encourage that person who lacks the confidence or the person who isn't sure how important your meeting is to come along.

They should therefore always be made as personable and relatable as possible, using empathy, warmth, and understanding.

### Invitations can be made:

- Via email
- In person
- By personal phone call
- Through printed literature

### Some top tips for writing invitations

- Put your event title, location, date and time at the very top. Clearly communicate the purpose of your meeting next. Once the basic information is conveyed, write as yourself. *Using your own excitement and really meaning what you say can make a huge difference.*
- Ask those who represent your meeting to help you create the invitation. *For example: if you want people who speak Spanish to join the group, you should have Spanish speakers creating the invitation.*
- Let people know about the possibilities. *Clearly share what might come about after the event as a result of responding to the invitation (making new connections or becoming a part of a larger piece of ongoing work).*
- Let it be nourishing. *Any invitation is a request for people to enter a social, person-to-person relationship for a certain amount of time. With this in mind, make your invitation respectful and welcoming.*





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