

TOOL BOX

SAMPLE GROUND RULES

Sample ground rules to help establish healthy group norms

1. Use 'I' messages.
2. What is said here stays here.
3. Speak first from your own experience.
4. No lectures.
5. This is a put-down free, safe environment. No sarcasm.
6. People need not agree.
7. Monitor your participation.
8. This is not problem-solving but learning.
9. All ideas are valid.
10. Anyone can pass on any activity.
11. Everything goes up on flip charts.
12. One person talks at a time.
13. Observe time frames.
14. Agenda times are flexible.
15. Seek common ground and action – not problems or conflicts.
16. Require mutual respect.
17. Realize interdependence.
18. Keep an open mind.
19. Contribute thoughtful exchange.
20. Help order chaos.
21. Strive for results.
22. Choose effective process.
23. Say what you mean and mean what you say.
24. If you miss any session, support the decision made in your absence.
25. We will do everything possible to reach consensus.
26. No summaries for latecomers.
27. We will start and end on time.
28. Break as you need to.
29. Cell phones on vibrate.
30. No cell phones.
31. It's okay to be emotional. It's not okay to stay stuck in your emotions.
32. Don't pounce.
33. Strive for unity not unanimity.
34. There may be more than one right answer.
35. Expect the best from one another.

