

Establishing Team Rules

At your very first team meeting, the team rules need to be established and everyone needs to explicitly agree to them. The facilitator is usually given the task of gaining consensus on and enforcing the team rules.

Use the team rules below as a starting point. The team should modify the rules as needed, then officially record and acknowledge them.

To some, these rules may appear a bit preachy. The key principle that must be maintained is this: everyone on the team must be encouraged to speak up, and their views must be respected. Traditional concepts of rank have to go “out the window.” A unit clerk should feel comfortable telling the lead physician, “I don’t think that will work because of [reason]. Why don’t we try it this way?”

In addition to these rules, it should be made very clear that potential members should notify the leader quickly if they cannot devote the requisite time and effort so that suitable replacements can be found. Timely minutes as well as quick turnaround for comments/corrections should be the rule.

TASK

Establish team rules and post a large, readable version at each team meeting.

Task assignment _____

(Team Facilitator)

Team Ground Rules . . .

- All team members and opinions are equal.
- Team members will speak freely and in turn.
 - We will listen attentively to others
 - Each must be heard.
 - No one may dominate.
- Problems* will be discussed, analyzed, or attacked (not *people*).
- All agreements are kept unless renegotiated.
- Once we agree, we will speak with “one voice” (especially after leaving the meeting).
- Consensus versus democracy, we each get our say, not our way.
- Silence equals agreement.
- Members will attend regularly.
- Meetings will start and end on time.