



Group Decision Tip

E-mailed every two weeks to help groups make good decisions

Available

In principle, issues that require decisions often come to us with little or no warning, when we are in the middle of something else. To be available is to be willing and able to instantly change priorities. To be available is to have a little excess capacity, a little down time in the schedule, a little gas in the tank. It is to be well-fed, well-rested, clear thinking, ready for anything.

Groups, managers, parents, and others who are always too busy and unavailable for unanticipated “stuff that comes up” are always on defense, always in crisis, often in emotional pain.

Practical Tip: When you make plans such as a work plan, a job description, a budget, or even just planning your day, leave room available for things you can't anticipate. Resist the temptation to pack plans too full. Governments grow, in part, because when legislators see what looks like latent capacity -- people sitting around -- they rush to fill the void with additional responsibilities. Then when “stuff comes up” there is inadequate capacity so new spending is needed to build more capacity. Sometimes sitting around and being available is exactly what we want; think firefighters.

Plan to be available for things unplanned. Don't hold to your plans no matter what. Be available to the people and things that are truly most important.

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