



Checklist – Plan a Community Meeting

Whether you are expecting 10, 20 or hundreds of people a community meeting is a time consuming and nerve wracking affair. Will people be angry? Have tough questions? What if they have a question and you don't know the answer yet...?

If you're organising a community meeting for a project or issue here is a checklist to help you set it up for a successful outcome.

__Have a plan

A community meeting without a plan is a recipe for disaster. Your plan will detail:

- the outcomes you want to achieve
- the process (facilitation plan) to achieve the outcomes
- resources required
- staff roles
- escalation plan

A person is less likely to be angry if the event is well planned, genuine and welcomes participation.

__Hire an independent facilitator

If you're expecting a lot of people, have a contentious issue or an angry community you should hire an independent facilitator. A facilitator will help plan the session and will write up a report of the meeting for both you and the community.

__Pick the right venue

A venue is an important consideration. It should be accessible for all, easy to find, comfortable and have amenities (make sure the amenities are accessible and easy to find).

Make sure there is someone present who knows how to operate the lights, heat and/or cooling!

__Organise the catering

It doesn't need to be fancy but make sure you reserve some of your budget to have tea, coffee, water and some biscuits available.

Alcohol should never be available.

__Provide good great customer service!

This checklist isn't in order of importance but if it was Customer service would be number 1. Have your best people available to greet people, sign them in, make conversation and ensure everyone knows what's going on.

The venue, catering and the customer service you provide will all help set the scene and the mood of your meeting. A person is less likely to be angry if they are comfortable and have been treated well.

