

Strategies and Solutions for Closure and Clarity

- ⇒ Assign specific action steps before the meeting ends: what will be done, by whom, and when. Agree on follow-up.
- ⇒ End the meeting on time, or renegotiate the time contract with participants.

ASSIGN SPECIFIC ACTION STEPS

Most decisions set things in motion, and are not an end unto themselves. Action is required. Action steps have three components: what, who, and when.

The “what” should be very specific, so that there will be no misunderstanding by any group member or recipient regarding the action to be taken. Examples:

- ⇒ Conduct additional research among key customer segments.
- ⇒ Prepare presentation for executive team.
- ⇒ Write proposal to request funds.
- ⇒ Write job descriptions for analyst position.
- ⇒ Establish specifications for project RFP.

Who will do it? Assign specific responsibility for all action steps. This means asking for volunteers or assigning the action steps to individuals who agree to complete it by the time indicated.

When must it be done? This simply means laying out the target dates for completion of the action, or at least the next step. It is useful to establish checkpoints or milestones so that there are no surprises on the due date.