



## MEETING TIPS

Find a regular place to have the meeting. Changing locations can confuse people. Make sure the place is easy to get to for everyone in your group.

Make flyers to advertise your meeting so that people come. Tell your friends and ask them to tell their friends. Use email and Myspace.

Have food at your first meeting. Pizza or brownies make people want to come!

Make sure to plan out the meeting with an agenda, so that you cover everything you need to.

One person should lead the meeting. This can be a different person every meeting if you want. This person is called the facilitator.

Tips for facilitating:

- ★ You might want to start with a “check in.” That means going around in a circle, each person introducing themselves and saying how they are doing. This helps a lot if your group members don’t all know each other. Even if they do, it is good to know if some people in the room have had a bad day or a good day.
- ★ If there are new people in the group, welcome them. At the end of the meeting talk to them one-on-one and see how they liked it.
- ★ Stick to the agenda. It’s okay to tell someone that they need to stay on topic if you’re not a jerk about it.
- ★ Don’t forget to ask someone to take notes. Make sure the responsibility to take notes and facilitate is shared by everyone.
- ★ In our society women and girls are often put in positions where they are doing work like note taking while the boys and men talk. If you notice this in your group, bring it up and make sure boys take notes and girls facilitate too.
- ★ Let people speak freely – but if a lot of people are trying to talk at once, it may be a good idea to call on people. Usually teachers call on students with raised hands, but they don’t call on everyone equally. You’re not a teacher, you’re a friend. So call on people in the order that they want to speak – this is called a “stack.” Sometimes people might signal to you or

raise their hand so that they can “get on stack” – i.e. get in line to speak. It’s important for you to keep track of who wants to talk and when.

- ★ Listen to all voices. Sometimes people are shy. Sometimes people talk over one another. Make sure that everyone feels included and that their voice can be heard. This can mean encouraging someone to speak if they are usually quiet, or even just making sure to say “good idea!” to people when they have one.
- ★ Pay attention to who speaks and who doesn’t. Is it mostly boys talking? Mostly white people?
- ★ If you are the facilitator you should not be the one doing most of the talking. Your job is to make sure everyone gets to say their piece. You are not lecturing! If you talk at people they won’t want to be in your group.
- ★ At the end of the meeting, make sure to save time for “next steps.” That means that if you have decided anything in the meeting and know what you want to do, you say specifically what needs to be done before the next meeting, AND who is going to do it. It is usually good to give the new people in your group something to do – it will keep them coming back (just don’t overwhelm them! this is fun, not homework!).
- ★ Make sure to choose a new facilitator and a note taker for the next meeting. It’s the next facilitator’s job to remind everyone about the meeting a day or two beforehand (through email or fliers or phone calls or just talking in person).

Check out the RAN toolkit for even more tips for working together as a group:  
[http://ran.org/act/activist\\_toolkit/](http://ran.org/act/activist_toolkit/)

