PROJECT SURVIVORS

YOUR FIRST PROJECT MEETING

A survival checklist for people who weren't expecting to be here.

You don't need to understand everything immediately. You just need to leave knowing a little more than when you arrived.

Before the meeting

■ Find out what the Project is supposed to achieve.

■ Understand why you have been invited.

■ Read the agenda, if there is one.

■ Identify anything you are being asked to review or decide.

■ Write down two or three questions you would like answered.

What are we trying to achieve, and what part am I expected to play?

During the meeting

■ Listen for what the Project is changing in your Business.

■ Notice who makes decisions and who provides advice.

■ Ask for explanations when terminology becomes confusing.

■ Distinguish decisions, assumptions and things still being discussed.

■ Avoid agreeing to actions without understanding what is involved.

Can I check what that would mean for the people doing the work?

Before you leave

■ What is the Project trying to achieve?

■ Why does the Project need someone from my Business area?

■ What am I expected to do next?

■ Who should I speak to when I need help or clarification?

■ When do I need to do something by?

You may not have every answer. Knowing which answers are missing is progress.

After the meeting

■ Review any actions assigned to you.

■ Check whether you have the time, information and authority to complete them.

■ Clarify anything you did not understand.

■ Speak to colleagues who may be affected by the Project.

■ Keep a simple record of important questions and commitments.

THREE THINGS WORTH REMEMBERING

You are there for a reason. Your knowledge of how the Business works is valuable.

Questions are contributions. Asking for an explanation can help everyone.

You don't have to become a project manager. Understand your part in helping the Project succeed.