



Practical & Experiential Outcomes

A typical approach to planning a meeting starts with identifying clear outcomes to accomplish. Most often, this comes in the form of practical outcomes such as:

- Make a decision on _____
- Identify goals for _____
- Learn how to _____
- Outline a plan for _____

These practical types of outcomes are essential, but not sufficient – particularly when leading groups to work together on equity-focused work.

Knowing that equity-focused collaboration requires navigating significantly different perspectives, lived experiences, understanding, values, and strong emotions, facilitators must carefully design agendas based on the experience the people in the group will need to have in order to begin transforming into an equity-focused team. Ultimately, what people remember most from any meeting or collaboration is the experience - how it felt to be there. Given this, we design agendas by first identifying the kind of experience we want members of the group or team to have. How do we want people to **feel** during this meeting and as they are leaving?

For example, experiential outcomes might include:

- Feeling connected to one another
- Building trust
- Feeling a sense of productivity and momentum
- Creating a sense of unity among the team
- Increased ownership and connection to shared work
- Feeling heard and valued

Identifying key experiential outcomes can completely shift the approach to agenda design. Rather than focusing exclusively on tasks to accomplish, considerations extend to what types of experiences, reflections, questions or interactions might foster a collaborative experience and strengthen the team as they work together. This creates an ecosystem in which people feel more invested, and allows for an experience of teams that encourages persistence through challenging times.

Both practical and experiential outcomes are needed to design an agenda that can move a group toward becoming an equity-focused team. And designers must always consider how to prioritize outcomes (if nothing else happens, what 1-2 outcomes are essential?) and balance the experiential with the practical in ways that work for the particular dynamics and needs of the team in question.

Adapted from Zuieback, S. (2012). Leadership practices for challenging times. Ukiah, CA: Synectics LLC.