

## Questions to Ask Stakeholders about Ground Rules

Reference Chapter 6 in  
*Requirements by Collaboration* by Ellen Gottesdiener, Addison-Wesley, 2002.

The following questions can help you and your planning team define workshop ground rules. You can preface these questions by saying, “The next set of questions will help us determine what guidelines for participation, or ‘ground rules,’ will help us to interact effectively during the workshop.” (Note: Some of these items are listed in the book as sample questions.)

- How would you describe the working atmosphere of the participants?
- What is their history together?
- What are their strengths?
- In what ways are they particularly effective?
- To what extent are they honest and open?
- Do you anticipate that everyone will contribute during the workshop?
- Does the group ever stop and evaluate how it’s doing?
- What’s the best thing about this group?
- What’s the worst thing about this group?
- Are there any topics that are off-limits?
- Are there any skeletons in the closet or hidden agendas that you are aware of?
- What interactions are wasting the team’s time right now?
- What has been tried that failed?
- Is there anything coming up for the project or the business that people need to know about or be concerned about?
- How do they typically make decisions?
- What recent decisions will affect the work of the group?
- What is your greatest concern about the workshop?
- Do you have any hidden agendas for this workshop?
- How do you feel the facilitator can help the participants interact effectively?
- What else should I know?
- Are there any questions about ground rules that I should be asking but have not yet asked?