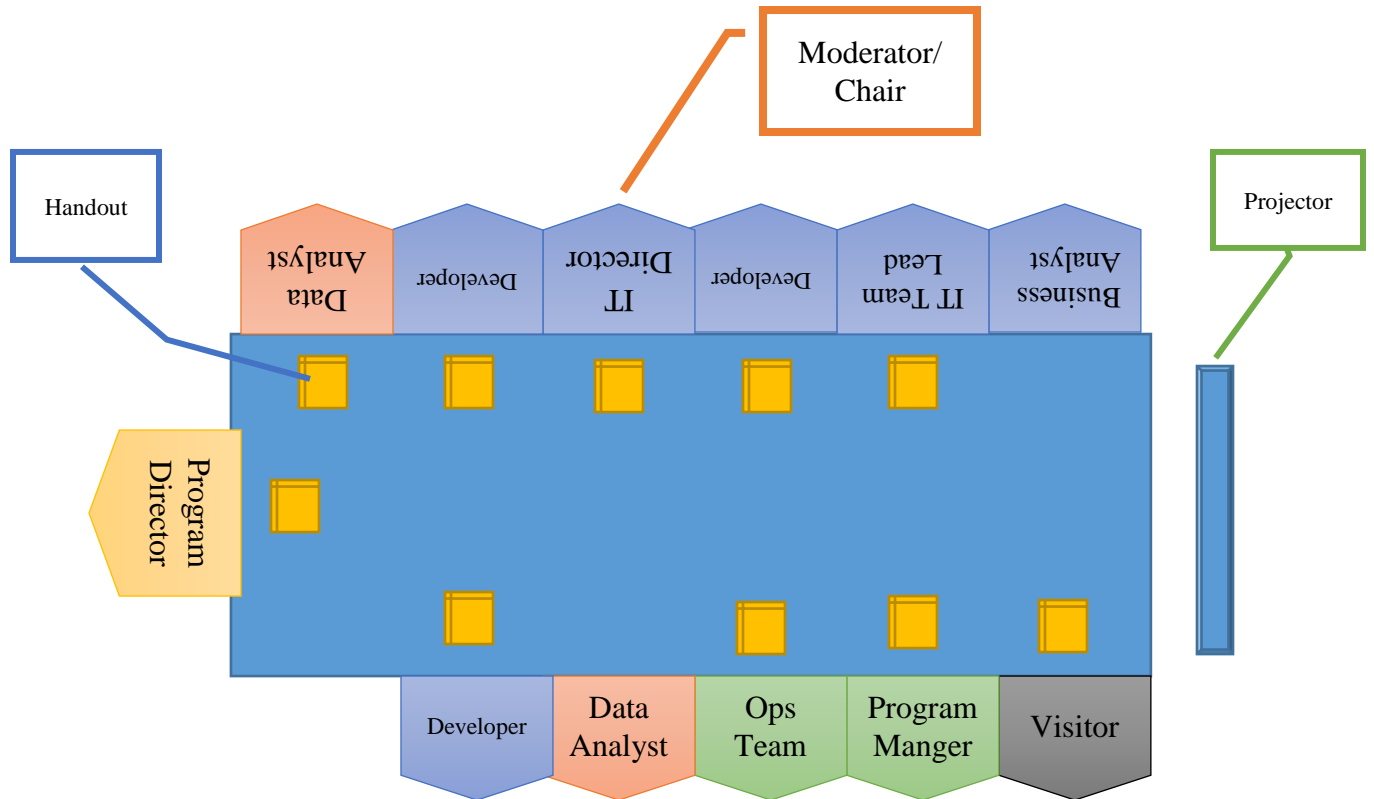## *Observing and Interpreting a Meeting*

Observation:

How is the room set up? Who is sitting where? (Draw a rough diagram of the set up, noting where the chair/moderator, members, participants, visitors, etc. are sitting and the location of any kinds of presentation materials (white board, projector, newsprint).)

What is going on before the meeting? (Who is talking to whom? What is the mood?

What kinds of interactions occur? Is there a written agenda? Did members have

materials beforehand or did they receive them as they arrived? Are there

refreshments? What are they? Who takes them?)

As people walk in the room they had a relax attitude. Some people complaint about

the room being too hot and smelling strange. They all talk to each other. No agenda

was given to the participants prior to the meeting neither was one presented at the

beginning of the meeting. The chair provided handouts to each participant but she did

not brought enough handouts two people did not get a copy of the material. Those

who received the handout soon found out they weren't able to read it as the print was

very small. No refreshments were given during this meeting.

How does the meeting begin? (Who calls the meeting to order? How does it get

started? What are the initial comments or items of business? Note both the official

start to the meeting and any other comments and how this shapes the course of the

meeting and the mood of the room.)

The chair called the meeting to order in a very informal way. Once the called

everybody's attention to begin the meeting the chair let everyone knows the purpose

of the meeting and asked the Program Director how she would like to start reviewing

the items for discussion. It was a big pause as the chair was having issues projecting

the spreadsheet for everyone to see.

I know that this meeting is to discuss IT related tickets open by the client or the Operations team to perform some functions depending on the contract needs. It also includes tickets related to fixes needed for the software the Operations team uses on a daily basis to perform help desk duties.

What happens during the meeting? (Note two or three significant events or decisions that were made. Describe the process by which those decisions occurred.)

During the meeting there were times in which people started talking over each other. The chair was very unprepared for this meeting and her team was trying to help her run the meeting however the Program Director who is the decision maker was notably upset at the lack of information or the non-charlatan way of conducting the meeting. During the meeting the following decisions were made.

1. Update the IT ticketing system with accurate status of the tickets. – During the meeting it was obvious that the system was not kept based on items worked. Some of the tickets discussed were already closed.

2. Search for the minutes of previous emails to find out what approvals were received. – During the meeting it was pointed out by the Program Director that the client has provided authorization to work some of the tickets and the IT department had the ticket on hold status. It was very upsetting for the Program Director, who at this point took over the meeting, the fact that the IT

department was preparing to bring those tickets back to the client when the

client has already approved them and was under the impression that the tickets

were closed.

3. Tickets assignments- During the meeting the tickets that were still open and

    workable were assigned to the developers.

Most of the decisions made were made by the Program Director who oversees all

departments. The program director was visible upset during this meeting and the

decisions she made were made quick and she was very short and direct while making

this decisions. I have to point out that I know this not to be her usual self and I can only

assume that the actions of the responsible parties made her demeanor change.

Analysis:

What are your impressions of the meeting (Was it orderly? Was it worthwhile? Was there energy in the room? Where the people engaged in the meeting?)

I think the meeting was much unorganized, the chair of the meeting was not prepared for the meeting and her relaxed demeanor manifested on her team. They were able to get the job done regardless of the energy in the room.

What process was used to make decisions? What there more than one?

Decision making wad done by asking questions, the Program Manager asked the developers the time it would take a ticket to work and also asked the operations team how much impact would not having the ticket worked had in the daily operations. On occasions decisions were made based on the age of the ticket or the client needs.

What are the outcomes?

Decisions were made and a request to be better prepared next time was given. The Program Manager was the note taker and she was assigned the task to work with the IT department to ensure all the notes discussed in the meeting regarding each ticket gets transfer to the ticketing system.

How did people treat one another?

I would like to say that people were polite with each other however if I take in consideration non-verbal cues I can say they were tolerating each other. Some of the

IT department members were rolling their eyes as the others talked. Some were joking

around and making sarcastic comments. The program director was very upset and her

face became very red when the others went off topic or gave a non-viable excuse for

why the ticket was still open.

Was there conflict? How was it handled?

Conflict came to surface when a developer was explaining the reason why a ticket

should be closed. The Program Director was not in agreement with it and the IT

director intervened to redirect the developer and explained to him in front of the

attendees that the director's decision is the final decision.

What was the role of moderator/chair? (How did she/he function in the meeting?)

The role of the chair of this meeting was to introduce the tickets and aid the

conversation between the developers and the program director. I don't think the chair

did a very good job at being prepared or had much group control.

Synopsis:

After analyzing this meeting there are couple of things I would suggest specifically to the chair of the meeting. This meeting involved a lot of discussions that went on and on for no apparent reason. The language used was not a familiar language to all participants making it hard for everybody to keep track of the discussion and prompting them to ask numerous times for a clearer explanation. I believe the chair of the meeting could've changed some things to make this a more productive meeting. My suggestions to the chair are the following;

1. Before meeting with the Program Director about the open tickets have an internal meeting with your own team to review the tickets this way you are prepared to speak about each ticket. During your internal meeting determine which tickets are open and which are closed this will be of benefit to the meeting with the Program Director as you would not have to spend time reviewing items that are closed.

2. Prepare an agenda for the meeting and stick to it assigning the tickets to each developer to discuss instead of having everybody speaking at the same time regarding the ticket.

3. Arrive to the room 15 minutes early and prepare the stage for the meeting. Make sure the temperature is comfortable and that you can project the

document. Also it is important to review the list of attendees and ensure you

have enough handouts for each person who will be present in the meeting.

After the meeting I would've set up a follow up meeting with the team to update the

tickets and send a follow up email with the updated list based on the notes of the

meeting. A follow up email was never sent. The follow up checklist in the book

"Running Meetings" would be beneficial to the chair of the meeting.