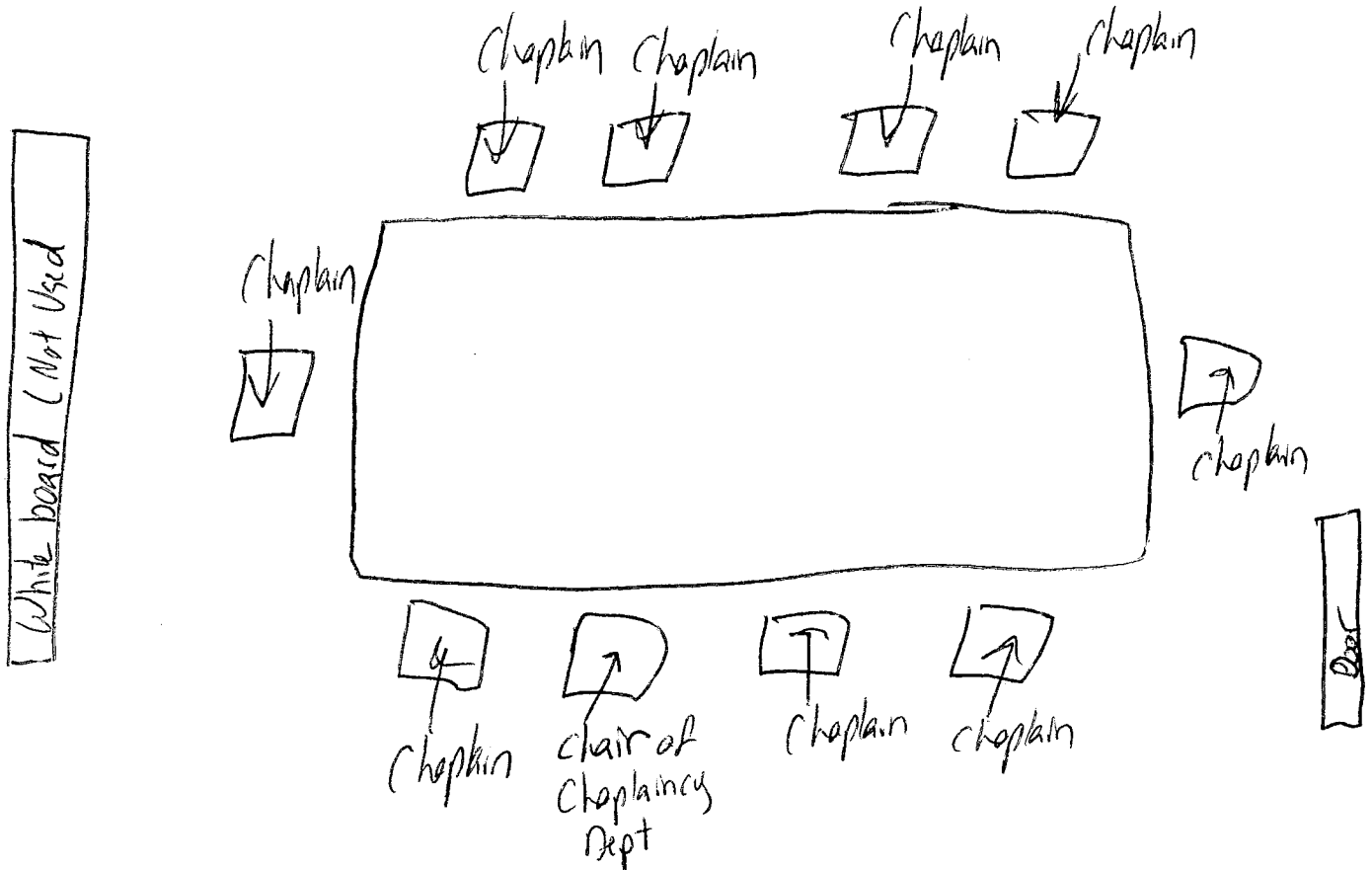


Observing and Interpreting a Meeting

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).)



Room was set up as a conference room, with a large table surrounded with office chairs

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?)

Before the official meeting began, the Chaplaincy Dept met in the hallway to work on an "Ideas Board". It is a process where members of the department brainstorm to solve problems. After that the meeting moved to the conference room. Members socialized for a few minutes individually before the meeting reconvened. A written agenda was passed out. There were no refreshments.

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 meeting was called to order by Carolanne, who is the department chair. She opened the meeting with a few quick announcements.

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

There was a significant discussion about the issue of computer space in the department. Members described some of the issues they were having while charting/and not being able to access a computer when needed.

There were reports on the major programs ~~going on~~/efforts being organized by individual Chaplains.

There was a lengthy discussion on the efficacy of efforts of outreach by the Chaplaincy department to other staff in the hospital. Majority voiced the opinion that workshops/~~and~~ Blessing of hands rituals had been effective.

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 feel like the meeting was orderly. ~~ppp~~ People were kind + professional. I think most of the people would have said it was worthwhile. I did not

What process was used to make decisions? What there more than one? ^{limited}

It was mostly concensus, although ~~to~~ those who had a direct stake in the specific issue.

What are the outcomes?

There were not many decisions made. Most were small issues which were resolved between the two or three people involved

How did people treat one another?

People were friendly collegeal and professional

Was there conflict? How was it handled?

There was no conflict.

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

Synopsis: The moderator keep the ~~adjan~~ agenda moving, and directed people to speak. Stated the group consensus and asked for any other opinions/voices

Write a one page synopsis of the key dynamics of this meeting – both the overt decisions/processes and the underlying organizational issues that you observe. How well did the person leading do? What suggestions would you make? If you were the overall leader of this organization, what steps would you take after this meeting?

I think that the main purpose of this meeting was for different members of the Chaplaincy and Education department at Lancaster General Hospital to network and inform each other about what they were working on. There were not many meaningful decisions made at the meeting. For the most part the decisions had been made, and this was an opportunity for people to clarify who was responsible for what, and report what had been accomplished and what still needed to be accomplished.

The only conflicts which came up were small and handled easily by negotiations between the parties involved. There was some conflict over the scheduling of a clergy workshops which were going to take place in the spring. A solution to the conflict was found by the two Chaplains who were leading the workshops. There was a discussion about how to handle communications, specifically who would carry the secondary phone that allowed hospital staff and patients to request a chaplain. Members of the group suggested several different ways, and problems associated with each solution.

I think that the chairperson did well. I think that she helped the group to not get bogged down in minute details, and she made sure to solicit everyone's opinion as part of the debate.

One suggestion I would make is to have an easier way for people to suggest issues which needed to be discussed at the meeting before hand. Maybe by utilizing an email chain or a blog, people might be able to familiarize themselves with what is being discussed at the meeting before it begins. That might reduce the time spent on explaining issues to everyone.

I think that if I was the leader of this organization, I would find ways to extend the free form culture of the pre-meeting to the formal meeting. I think that people were more engaged when we were working on the "Ideas Board" because they were dealing with issues which directly effected their work lives. Later in the official meeting I think the issues being discussed became less connected to the day to day work that was being done. While I think people remained engaged they were less willing to offer suggestions.