MEETING PREPARATION

Are you clear on:

- Purpose of the group
- Goal(s) of this meeting
- Goal of each item on the agenda (report, discussion, decision, etc.)

Physical Prep

Meeting location:

- Suitable room (not too big, not too small)
- Windows, sufficient lighting
- Furniture available, chairs arranged, where does the "front" want to be
- A/V support
- Quiet, little or no background noise
- Building & bathrooms unlocked

Arrive 30 min. early to set up

Physical supplies: easel, flip chart, markers, tape, timer, chime, handouts, etc.

Facilitator Advance Work

Read group's vision/mission.

Familiarize yourself with a sense of the group, how it typically operates, and what the main issues are at this time.

Be clear on all the rules of how this group officially makes decisions.

Plan agenda ahead of time.

Communicate with each presenter about what they'll be doing, what goals they are trying to achieve, and how much time they'll have.

Plan realistic time boundaries.

Ensure materials and background documents are ready.

If you expect controversy, interview participants from several sides ahead of time, and read the minutes of past discussions.

Think ahead about what format to use with each item.

Be aware of group's ground rules if they have them, and decide whether you want to propose any if they don't.

Be ready with your explanatory introduction to what you're doing as a facilitator.

Have "light & lively" activities on hand for opening and/or after breaks.

Expect to spend 1-2 hours on prep outside the meeting for every hour in the meeting.

Ensure roles are covered: convenor/welcome, note-taker, doorkeeper, timekeeper, set-up/clean-up assistance, food & drinks, etc.

Ground and breathe.