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# Gaining High-Commitment Agreements

An Agreement is the foundation of a productive working relationship: stating your needs and expectations up front and gaining the other person's commitment to work towards achieving the results you want. This interaction is *not* a confrontation about long-standing problem performance. An agreement is about gaining someone's commitment *up-front* to something you need done.

## Directions

1. Decide what behaviors or results you want to get agreement on with a specific person. Here are some ideas:
  - deadlines
  - project scope
  - roles and responsibilities
  - procedures
  - quality standards
2. Use the Agreement example on the following page as a guide to writing notes for your own Agreement. Use the blank form provided to write the notes about what performance you want, why you want it, the what if's (possible obstacles that might block performance), and what's next (how you'll follow up to ensure that the Agreement is working).

# Agreement Preparation: Example

<p><b>What</b></p> <p>What do you need this person to do? When do you expect it done? Be specific about time frames and procedures.</p> 	<p>Attend weekly team meetings, Thursdays from 9 to 10 a.m., to discuss status of project.</p> <p>On Wednesdays, by the end of day, distribute to all team members a one-page summary bulleting three issues you want to bring up with the team at the meeting.</p> <p>Spend no more than 10 minutes at the meeting on your part of the project, issues and next steps.</p>
<p><b>Why</b></p> <p>Why is this performance important (for you, the other, the team, the organization)? Why is this person being asked? Why is it as important as other tasks?</p> 	<p>High-visibility project: your involvement is key to success.</p> <p>Weekly team meetings: good communication is essential since many areas of the project keep changing.</p> <p>One-page update, Wednesday: to brief the team in advance of important issues so the meeting is more productive.</p> <p>No more than 10 minutes: there are 5 people, with 10 minutes each for an hour meeting. Longer presentations by any person will sidetrack the meeting or take time from other people.</p>
<p><b>What If</b></p> <p>What might stop the person from keeping this Agreement (e.g., time, resources, knowing how to do the task)? Solve these at the meeting.</p> 	<p>What if unable to make meeting?</p> <p>What if too busy to get memo out on Wednesday?</p> <p>What if no issues to raise, or more than three?</p> <p>What if time required is more than 10 minutes?</p> <p>Other problems?</p>
<p><b>What Next</b></p> <p>Ask the other person to summarize their understanding of the Agreement. Schedule follow-up to ensure the Agreement is kept.</p> 	<p>Summary:</p> <p>Follow-up: I'll email a confirmation of what we've talked about.</p> <p>After the meeting, I'll check in with you, on Friday, to see how all this is working out for you.</p>

# Agreement Preparation: Notes

## What

What do you need this person to do? When do you expect it done? Be specific about time frames and procedures.



## Why

Why is this performance important (for you, the other, the team, the organization)? Why is this person being asked? Why is it as important as other tasks?



## What If

What might stop the person from keeping this Agreement (e.g., time, resources, knowing how to do the task)? Solve these at the meeting.



## What Next

Ask the other person to summarize their understanding of the Agreement. Schedule follow-up to ensure the Agreement is kept.

