

21 Best Practices for *Successful* IEP Meetings



with

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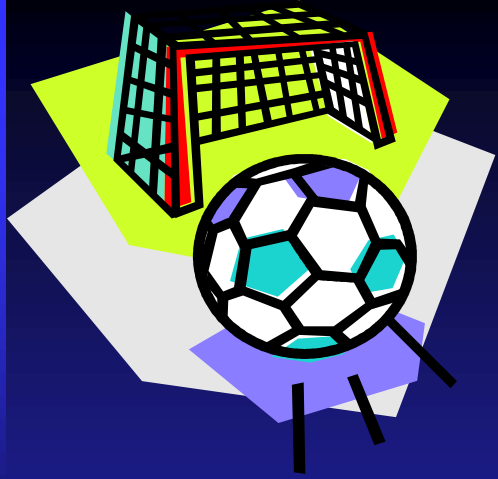
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Workshop Objectives

To enhance the skills necessary
to conduct effective IEP meetings
for the benefit of
children with
special needs



Interviews with leaders
of parent organizations reveal
a number of frequently voiced
concerns.



Parent Leaders' Concerns

1. Getting parents involved in training and activities is very difficult.



Parent Leaders' Concerns

2. IEP team members often have differing objectives and constraints – financial, staffing, available resources, and time.



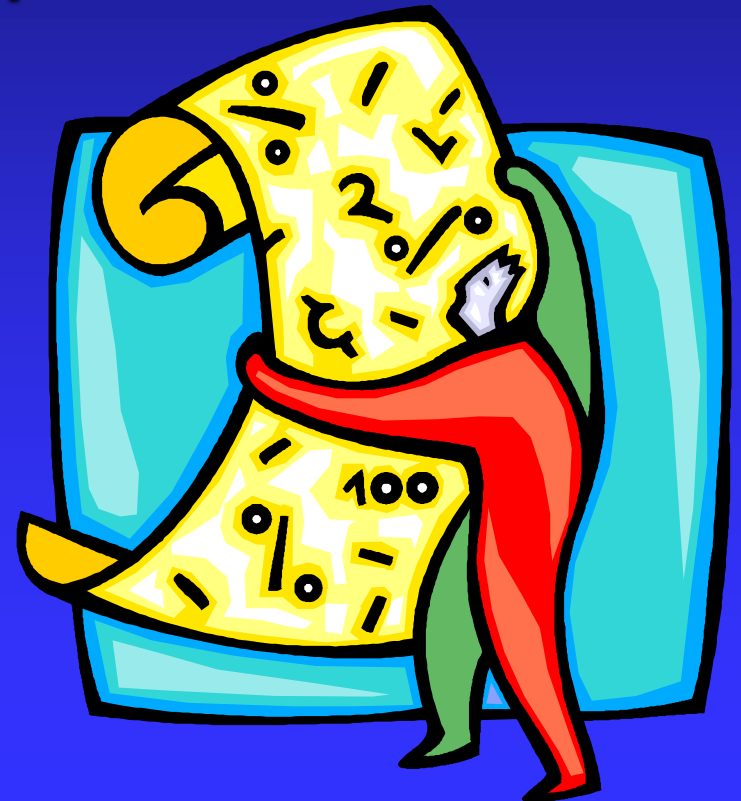
Parent Leaders' Concerns

3. Parents often feel alone with their many feelings, and school staff may be insufficiently aware or supportive.



Parent Leaders' Concerns

4. Parents may not get evaluation reports ahead of time, so they are often unprepared for and upset by what they hear at IEP meetings.



Parent leaders' concerns

5. The IEP process is often complicated, confusing, and poorly understood.



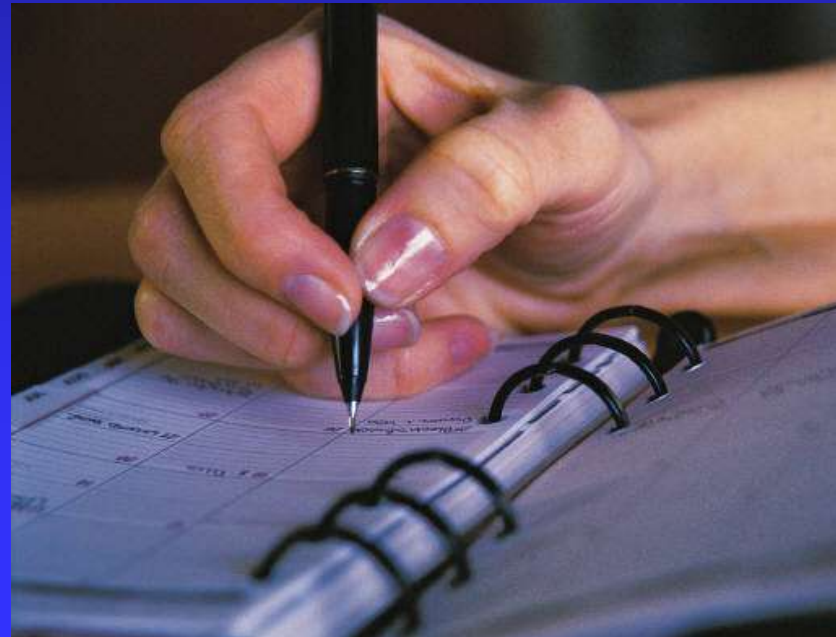
Parent leaders' concerns

6. Staff attending IEP meetings frequently have other commitments and can't give adequate time to the meeting.



Parent leaders' concerns

7. Meetings are often scheduled at the convenience of school staff rather than parents.



Parent leaders' concerns

8. Parents of children with special needs have often had a history of negative experience with school staff.



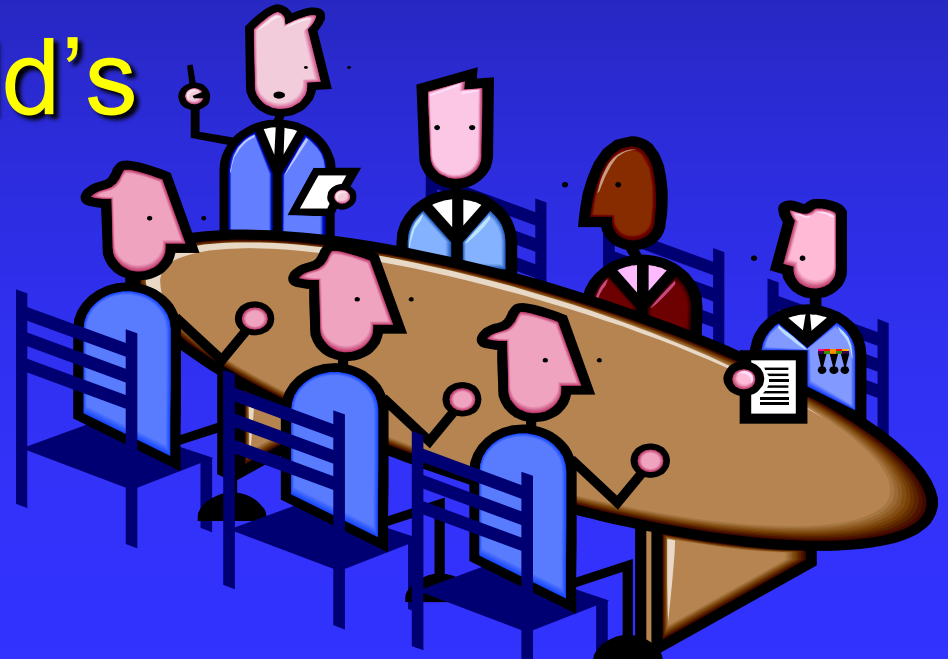
Parent leaders' concerns

9. Confidentiality is breached, especially in smaller communities where participants know each another in a variety of contexts.



Parent leaders' concerns

10. Parents often feel intimidated by the presence of several school personnel and don't see themselves as equal partners on the IEP team and in their child's education.



Parent leaders' concerns

11. General classroom teachers often have a limited understanding of the IEP process and may see the child with special needs as a burden and intrusion.



Parent leaders' concerns

12. IEP meetings lack a clear structure, including introductions, agenda, and objectives. Tangents are common, as is running out of time.



Seeds of Conflict

1. Process is not well understood.
2. Perception of one against many.
3. Lack of structure.
4. Lack of time.



Maybe DPHs and formal complaints don't always address the real issues?

Good and Bad Meetings



Think of meetings you have attended that you really enjoyed.

What made them effective? What did you like about them?



Good and Bad Meetings

Think of any meetings you have attended that you dreaded.



What made them ineffective and what did you not like about them?

The Good

The Bad and the Ugly

X

no X

Y

no Y

Z

no Z

There's only one list.

Good and Bad Meetings

How can we use these insights to make our IEP meetings the best that they can be?



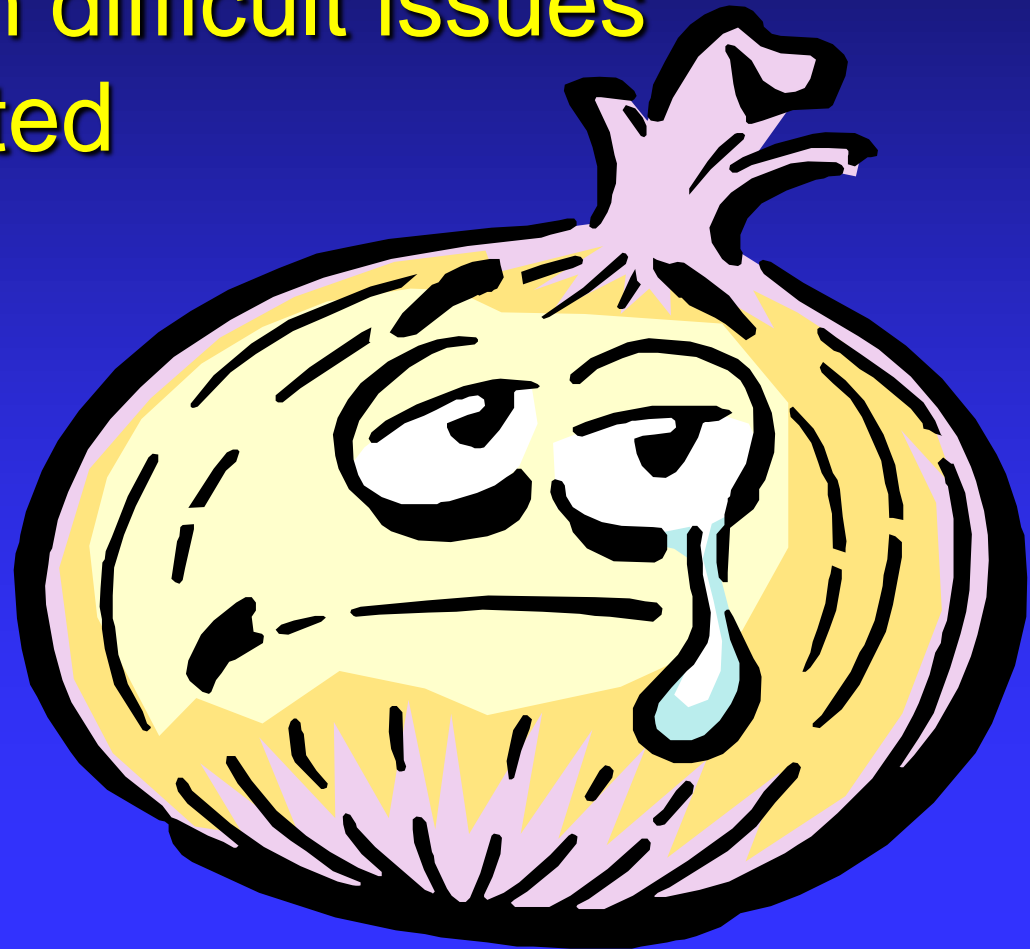
Characteristics of Ideal IEP Meetings

1. pre-conferencing occurs to assure adequate preparation by all participants



Characteristics of Ideal IEP Meetings

2. pre-conferencing with parents occurs when difficult issues are anticipated



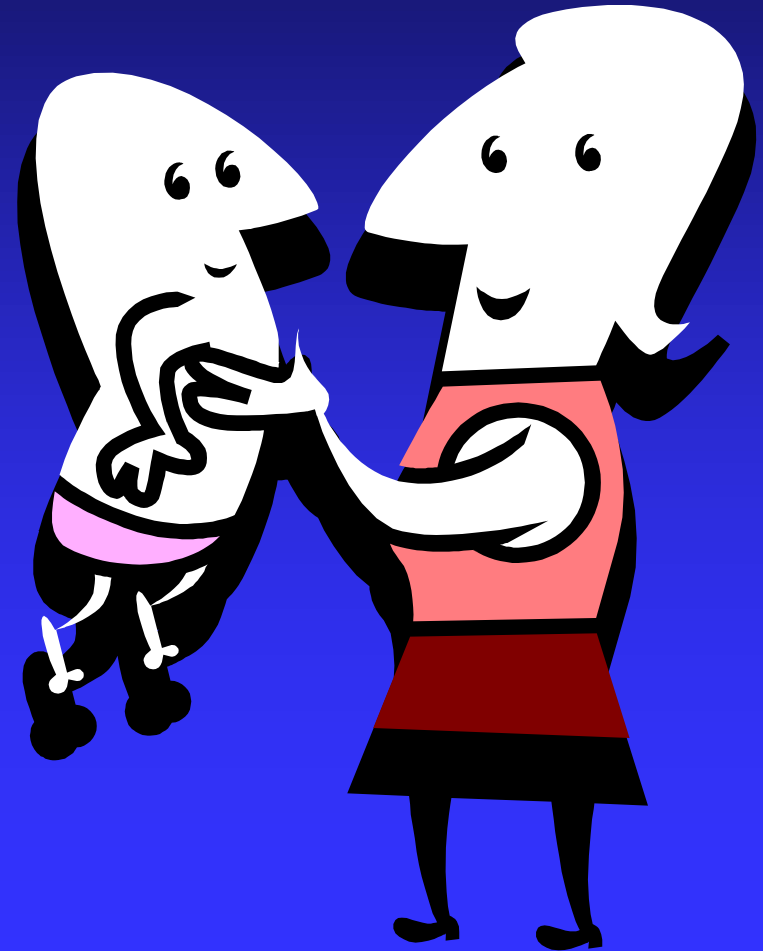
Characteristics of Ideal IEP Meetings

3. evaluation results are reviewed in advance



Characteristics of Ideal IEP Meetings

4. child care has been arranged in advance



Characteristics of Ideal IEP Meetings

5. chairperson meets informally with parents before the formal meeting (to welcome, answer questions, cover procedural safeguards, etc.)



Characteristics of Ideal IEP Meetings

6. all participants are introduced to each other

See
checklist



Characteristics of Ideal IEP Meetings

7. a written agenda is visible to all participants, on paper or posted

See sample agenda.



Any additions?

Do we agree?

Characteristics of Ideal IEP Meetings

8. round table seating in a comfortable setting, free from noise and distractions



Characteristics of Ideal IEP Meetings

9. refreshments are provided to promote comfort and a welcoming atmosphere



Characteristics of Ideal IEP Meetings

10. each member is time conscious



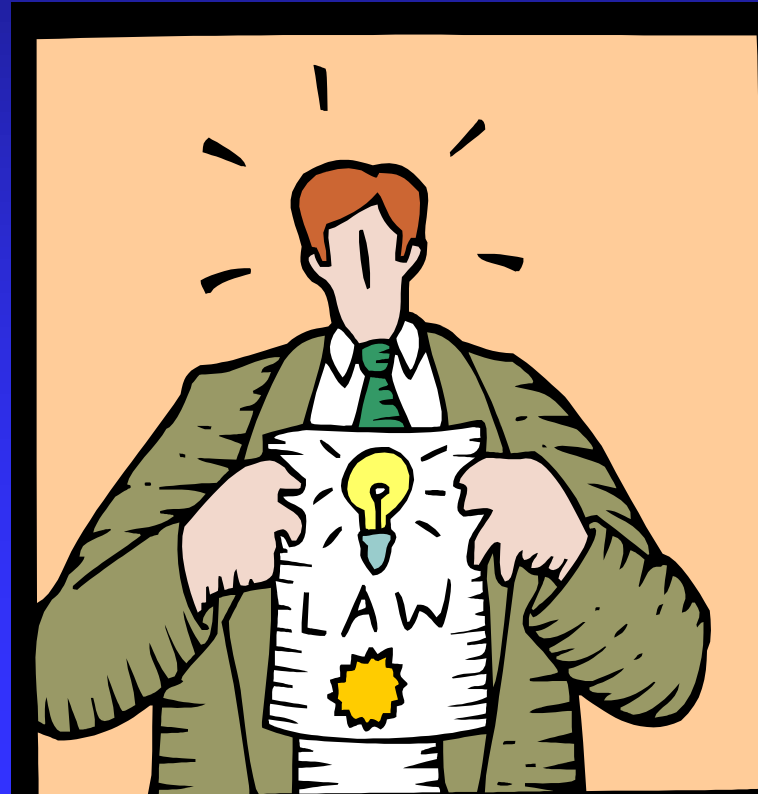
Characteristics of Ideal IEP Meetings

11. the chairperson budgets the available time and politely redirects participants who wander



Characteristics of Ideal IEP Meetings

12. ground rules are agreed
(phones, focus, time, respect,
leaving, owies, etc.)



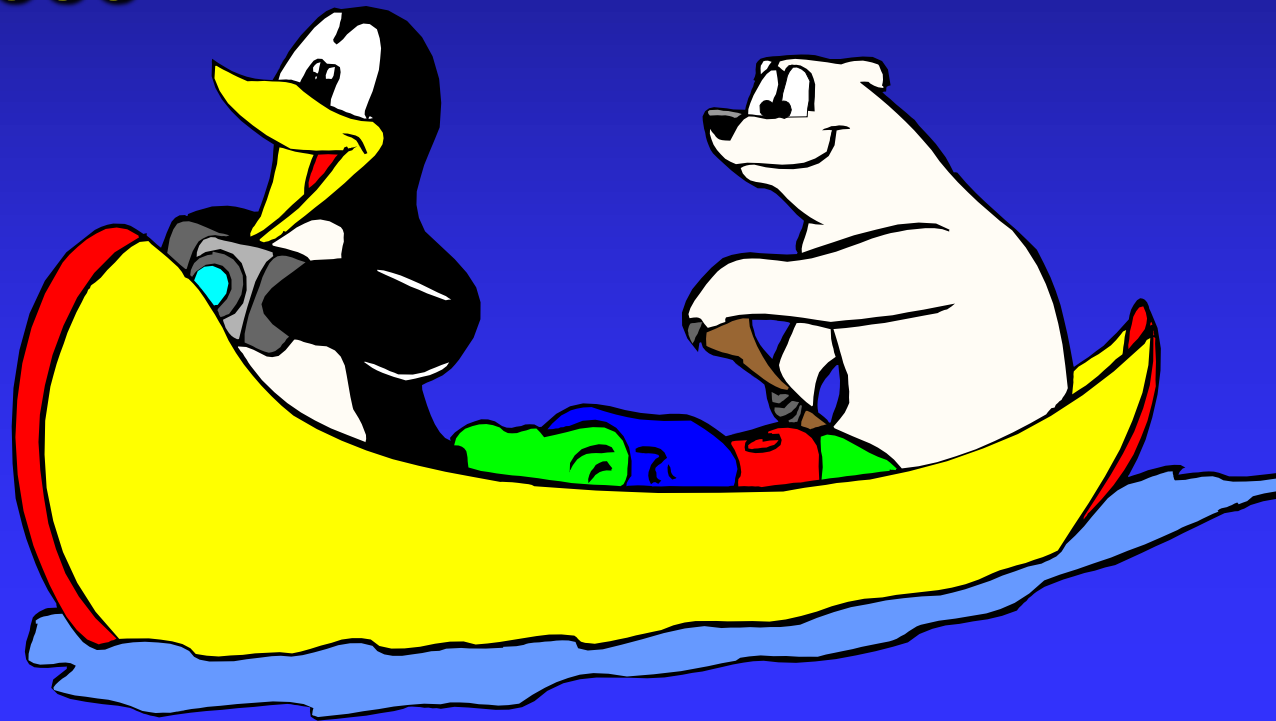
Characteristics of Ideal IEP Meetings

13. an atmosphere of mutual respect exists



Characteristics of Ideal IEP Meetings

14. participants share in and contribute to a common purpose



Characteristics of Ideal IEP Meetings

15. breaks are taken as needed



Characteristics of Ideal IEP Meetings

16. the meeting has a clear purpose; and roles and responsibilities are clear for tasks occurring before, during, and after the meeting



Characteristics of Ideal IEP Meetings

17. the outcome of the meeting is restated at the end for clarity and any necessary correction



Characteristics of Ideal IEP Meetings

18. a written “parking lot” is established for issues to be addressed at a later date, rather than letting them



Characteristics of Ideal IEP Meetings

19. an “open door” exists for airing and sharing between meetings

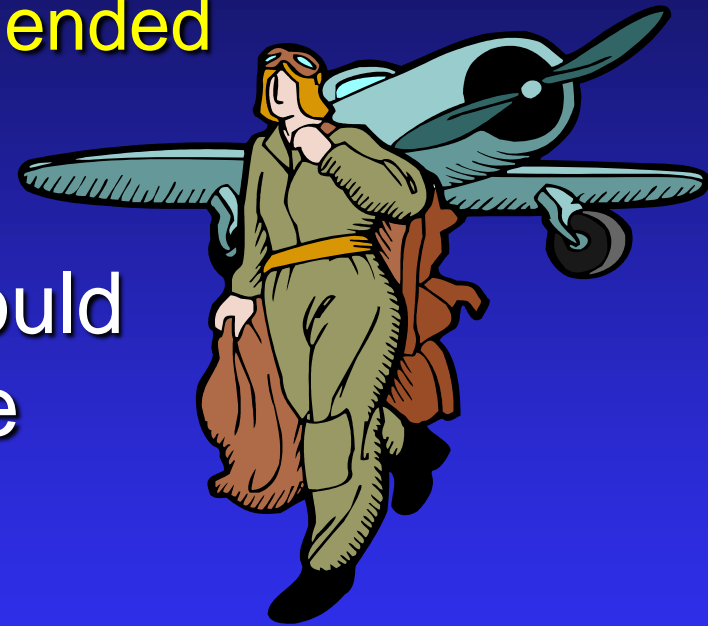


Characteristics of Ideal IEP Meetings

20. Closing remarks as SOP

What if every meeting ended with a “debrief”:

- Anything anyone would like to say before we close for today?
- How do we feel about today’s meeting – anything we should do differently next time?



IEP COMMITTEE MEETING EVALUATION

This evaluation form is intended to help us work more effectively together and do our best possible work as a team for the benefit of our student. Thank you for caring enough to share your honest thoughts and feelings.

- 1) On a scale of 1-10, with 10 high, please indicate your overall satisfaction with today's meeting by circling one of the following:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

- 2) What did you find most worthwhile or commendable about this meeting?

- 3) How might this meeting have been improved, or what might we do differently next time?

- 4) Any additional comments?

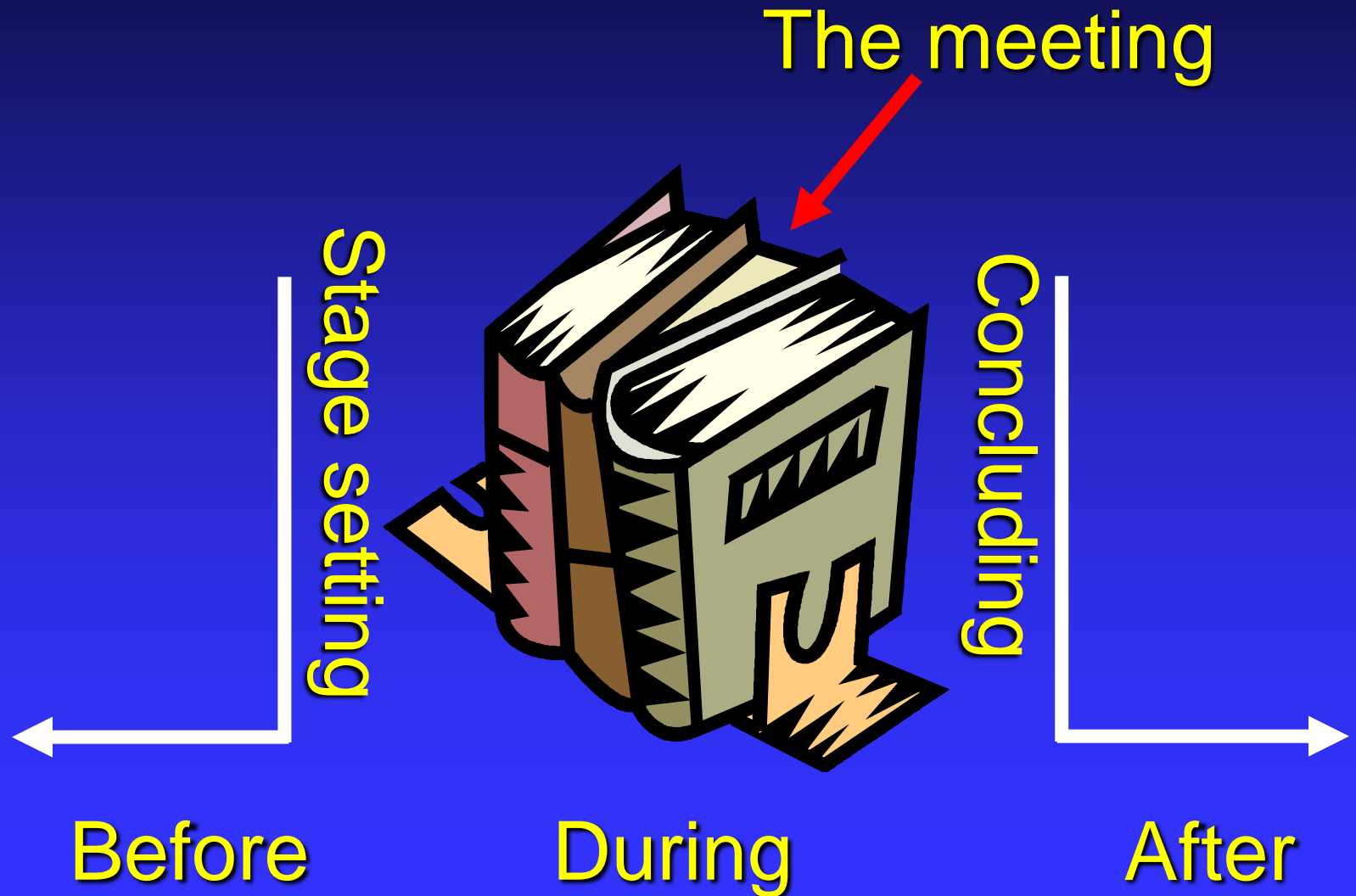
See
handout

Characteristics of Ideal IEP Meetings

21. the meeting ends on a positive note, and participants are thanked for their time and contributions



The IEP "Environment"



Exercises in Meeting Management

Exercises in Meeting Management

How might we best respond if

1) a parent seems
overwhelmed by info

1. make it a group issue
2. point at self (avoid singling out parent)
3. ask for clarification



Exercises in Meeting Management

How might we best respond if

2) two members are side talking

1. call on them
2. praise them
3. build them a bridge



Exercises in Meeting Management

How might we best respond if

3) a report is too
lo-o-o-ng-winded

1. politely interrupt
2. praise them
3. ask for what you need



Exercises in Meeting Management

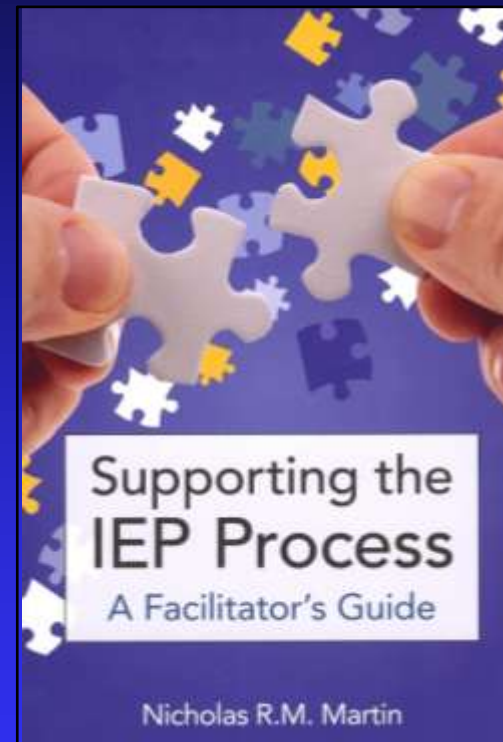
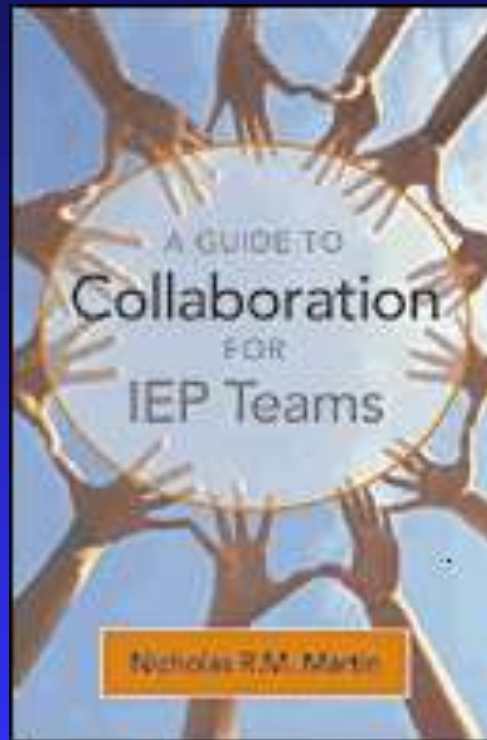
How might we best respond if

4) a parent becomes
tearful and silent

1. offer tissues
2. support
3. ask for help
4. offer several options



Resources for further study...



Brookes Publishing Co.
www.brookespublishing.com

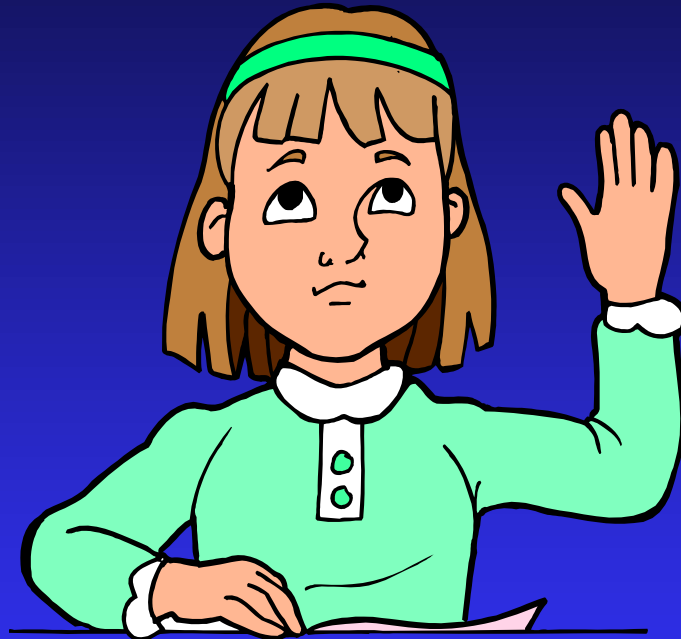
Resources for further study...

Articles and videos at

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Questions?



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