

STEERING COMMITTEE INSTRUCTION SHEET



A steering committee meeting is an essential element in preparing for an Annie's Project course. A steering committee meeting is a well-planned, one-hour discussion with female stakeholders from the area. A one-hour discussion means the facilitator must be prepared and keep on time.

The goal of the steering committee meeting is to build credibility and investment with stakeholders. Credibility and investment come from stakeholders giving their input and the facilitator using it.

OBJECTIVES

- Have steering committee members prioritize and expand on topics (NOTE: all topics need to meet the guidelines of covering all five areas of risk management).
- Gather names of agricultural professionals who will be presenters, preferably female.
- Collect names of potential participants.
- Ask steering committee members to promote the course.

SOURCES FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

There are several sources for receiving steering committee member recommendations. These are just a few examples:

- Farm loan officers
- Local bankers
- Extension staff

This can be done easily and quickly. The provided sample letters can be updated to reflect your information (replacing all red text and changing the final copy to all black font) and pasted directly into an e-mail.

The provided steering committee selection worksheet provides a convenient way to keep track of those invited and their responses.

There is no exact required number of participants, but from 8-10 is ideal.

CONTACTING THE POTENTIAL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

In the invitation letter, make sure to thank the person for previous service (if applicable) and/or identify who recommended her. Provide a date by which you will call or e-mail for their response.

A sample letter (Steering CMTE Invitation.docx) is provided for your convenience. Replace all red text with your local information. If you have a Facebook page include the link or remove that reference from the template.

STEERING COMMITTEE HANDOUTS

The recommended handouts for the steering committee meeting are

- Agenda
- Definitions of Risk Management Categories
- Draft brochure, or a sample brochure from a previous class to familiarize them with Annie's Project. An informational brochure is also included with these materials if this is your first class.

BEFORE THE MEETING

Send reminder e-mails 2-3 days before the meeting.

Arrange for a light lunch several weeks before the meeting. Follow-up 2 days before the meeting.

Considerations: Are beverages, plates, napkins, etc. included in your arrangements. Is food allowed in the facility that will be used for the meeting?

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

Begin on time.

Have a registration sheet for each participant to sign. You can save time by having printed out the Steering Committee Sign-In Sheet with participant names and contact information already entered. They can review their information for accuracy and place a check-mark by it.

Share Annie's Project mission statement. "Our mission is to empower farm and ranch women to be better business partners through networks and by managing and organizing critical information."

Review the provided Definitions of Risk Management Categories to make sure members understand the types of risks. This gives guidance for setting objectives.

Show the PowerPoint slides. Be sure to customize slides one and five before presenting. Once customized, the red text may be changed to black.

You may bring an Annie's Project padfolio and other items are provide to class participants. It gives ladies an idea of your commitment and organization.

Explain the topics for each session. This is a good time to have your Presenter Selection Worksheet and ask members for suggestions of presenters by topic. Ideally you will get several names for each topic. It is helpful to have reviewed the Vetting Presenters document beforehand.

NOTE: The recommendations you receive are for your consideration (vetting). You do not have to use the suggested presenters.

Annie's Project methodology must be followed by presenters. The methodology is one-half time in lecture and one-half time in discussion or doing interactive activities, e.g. completing missing numbers in a balance sheet. Try to get several names for each topic. Remember, you do not have to use the presenters that the steering committee members suggest. Some are unsuitable for Annie's Project.

Each Annie's Project course, while covering basic information common to all courses, is unique because of contributions from steering committee members who mold it to fit the agriculture in the area and current topics. Not every recommendation can be used. It is the facilitator's responsibility to stay within the guidelines.

Before you adjourn the one-hour meeting, make sure to ask steering committee members to put their presenter recommendations next to their name on the sign-in sheet. Most people will not know addresses. Let them know that if all they have is the name, you will follow up with them for that information. Don't forget to ask members to tell everyone about the upcoming course.

As facilitators, take time to lay the foundation for success of your Annie's Project. The foundation starts with the steering committee meeting. Members build credibility and investment by spending their time proposing topics, suggesting presenters, and recommending participants. Facilitators model Annie's Project methodology by delivering information in a concise time frame and by mixing lecture with discussion. During the meeting, they will also find synergy and excitement about Annie's Project.