

# SOP: Standard Protocol for Selecting Meeting Dates and Times

This SOP establishes a **standard protocol for selecting meeting dates and times**, ensuring efficient scheduling that accommodates all participants. It outlines criteria for determining optimal meeting slots based on availability, time zone considerations, urgency, and priority levels. The protocol includes steps for communicating proposed dates, confirming attendance, handling rescheduling requests, and integrating calendar tools to streamline the scheduling process. Adhering to this protocol facilitates effective meeting planning, maximizes participant engagement, and minimizes scheduling conflicts.

## 1. Purpose

To define a consistent procedure for selecting and confirming meeting dates and times that maximize participant engagement and minimize scheduling conflicts.

## 2. Scope

This SOP applies to all teams and departments required to coordinate meetings involving multiple participants, especially when cross-functional or remote members are present.

## 3. Criteria for Selecting Meeting Dates and Times

- **Participant Availability:** Collect preferred times using scheduling tools or Doodle polls.
- **Time Zone Considerations:** Factor in all participant time zones; aim for overlap during regular business hours.
- **Urgency & Priority:** Consider the immediacy and importance of the meeting subject when determining how quickly to schedule.
- **Recurring Meetings:** Select consistent slots when feasible to establish routine.
- **Conflicting Commitments:** Review calendars to avoid major conflicts or overlapping events.

## 4. Protocol Steps

1. **Initiate Scheduling:**
  - Identify required participants.
  - Send out a poll or use scheduling software (e.g., Doodle, Microsoft Outlook, Google Calendar) to request availability.
  - Include the expected meeting duration, purpose, and urgency level.
2. **Analyze Responses:**
  - Identify the most suitable time slots based on responses, balancing optimal attendance and time zones.
  - Consider alternate options in case of low consensus.
3. **Propose Dates/Times:**
  - Share top 1-3 proposed options with participants for final confirmation.
4. **Confirm & Schedule:**
  - Finalize the date/time based on collective feedback.
  - Send official calendar invitations, ensuring all participants have accepted.
5. **Handle Rescheduling Requests:**
  - Provide a clear process for notifying organizers of conflicts or requesting changes.
  - Repeat steps 1-4 as needed.

## 5. Communication Guidelines

- All communications regarding meeting scheduling should include the meeting purpose, duration, and urgency.
- Set RSVP deadlines to ensure timely confirmation.
- Use accessible language and tools for all participants.

## 6. Integration of Calendar Tools

- Leverage integrated calendar tools (e.g., Outlook, Google Calendar) to propose, confirm, and remind attendees of meetings.
- Enable automatic time zone detection and adjustment.
- Use shared calendars for visibility and transparency.

## 7. Review and Improvement

- Solicit participant feedback on the scheduling process periodically.
- Update the SOP to address challenges and improve efficiency.