AO Survival Guide
Meeting Participation

1. Use your calendar.
   a. Keep your calendar up to date so other AOs, your boss, etc can use outlook to
      schedule meetings (really simplifies the coord process when trying to pick
      date/time)

2. Be on time for meetings.
   a. Set the calendar to warn you with enough time to arrive at mtg location.
   b. If you don't know where you're going, leave early!
   c. If it's obvious you're not needed at the meeting then excuse yourself; let them
      know you can be reached if your help is needed

3. Come prepared to address the issues, do your homework.
   a. If you cannot make it, ensure someone attends who is familiar with material
   b. Know why you're going to the meeting, is it to gather info, collect solutions,
      solicit feedback, influence...?
   c. Time permitting, research the subject matter.
   d. Review the read aheads and know your section/agencies position on the issues
      before you get there.
   e. Think about what might be asked of your organization and prepare to answer.
   f. What does your organization bring to the table?
   g. Know who you are representing, make sure you have your boss's opinion on the
      subject and have enough background data to represent that office.
   h. Use the restroom prior to meeting start time, they sometimes become lengthy.
   i. Don't hog the conversation.

4. Be constructive, help be part of the solution vs being part of the problem.
   a. Keep emotions in check. The first one to lose their temper loses the fight.
   b. If you don't agree with the direction an issue is taking, don't just refute it, suggest
      a solution.
   c. Be careful with what you say; a comment by you may be interpreted as an OK to
      press with a decision your boss is totally against.

5. Take good notes; others (your boss) may use them for decision making.
   a. Expand on your notes as soon as you can while it is still fresh in your memory
   b. Share your notes when you return to the office. Putting them in an email for
      office mates creates a memo for record that can be used later.
   c. Briefing may touch on other functional areas in your directorate. Be sure to
      inform other AO's if it involves their area.