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Title: Oppose having only electronic meetings

ABSTRACT

This paper tries to discuss the advantages of having traditional face-to-face meetings in comparison to the evolving e-meeting approaches used by organizations like GTO where developing countries like Mali are not up to par with the latest technology advancement.

Introduction

Meetings and conferences play a critical role in the dissemination of information into the wider community right to the grass roots. They provide an opportunity of questions and answers to be discussed and dissected to get to a consensus agreement agreed to by all. Personal contacts are made and enhanced, leading to collaborations and research opportunities.

Discussion. (Why we need to have face-to-face meetings as well)

Time-zones-
- With electronic meeting, we need to synchronize our watches to see all members are on board for the meeting to take place
- Difficult to connect to all users at an appropriate time
- Not all members will be happy if their times zones asks them to be present for a meeting at 2am

Major decision Making – the following should be considered:
- How can one know if video conferencing is not used; who is on the other end of the conference call
- Can major decisions be made without full concentration and discussion of members as electronic meeting can tend to be not interactive.
- How does the chairman judge the "mood of the room" when they cannot see everyone?
- Will the principle of "silence is agreement" that works so well in a physical meeting also work with remote participation?

ICT facilities – for electronic meeting you need to have:
- Availability of reliable broadband services
- Telephone, mobile and other online services that come with a cost etc.

Keeping in mind the above challenges in hosting an electronic meeting, face-to-face meeting are still the way to go. It can be used actively for the better decision making and lively interactive sessions that electronic meeting seems to miss out, in turn will allow working networks to be made which enables us to think outside the box and either agree to disagree on issues and topics.

Conclusion

Considering the difficulties discussed above, it is recommended that face-to face meetings are the way to go as they capture a more lively and interactive way of communicating and also allows contacts to be made and enhanced, leading to collaborations and research opportunities as opposed to electronic meetings.

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