

# Meeting Management: Make Them Productive

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## Overview:

Meetings are among the most overused and underutilized of all management tools, yet planning and conducting a meeting is not difficult. While there are no magic formulas to guarantee success, there are a number of simple procedures that effective managers employ to improve the quality of their meetings.

There are, of course, many different kinds of meetings, ranging from two-person interchanges all the way up to industry-wide conventions with thousands of participants. Most management meetings, however, involve relatively small groups of people in a single organization. This training will concentrate on a number of techniques for running these kinds of management meetings more effectively.

## Learn:

Our program is divided into the planning activities to carry out before a meeting and the leadership activities to engage in during the meeting. Both kinds of work are essential: the most thorough preparation in the world will be wasted if you are careless during the meeting, while even outstanding meeting leadership rarely overcomes poor planning.

## Objectives:

- ❖ Realize the importance of pre-meeting planning to determine goals and objectives.
- ❖ Understand the need for proper timing and the location of meetings to minimize distractions and increase productivity.
- ❖ Recognize the important points to include on an agenda and how to carry out their discussion.
- ❖ Learn the important leadership skills for navigating the course of discussion in a meeting.
- ❖ Develop and apply problem solving skills to learn how to effectively manage different personality styles.
- ❖ Practice the techniques of idea orchestration to create solutions.
- ❖ Learn the pitfalls of "group-think."
- ❖ Know how to establish follow-up procedures to review post-meeting progress.
- ❖ Translate what you learn into action.

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# Outline:

## **Why Your Last Meeting Failed**

- A. The Mind Drift -- What Was That Meeting About?
- B. The Tyranny Of Majority Rule
- C. Stress, Pressure, And Conflict -- How To Re-Direct Them To Work For You
- D. Hidden Agendas -- Problems That Originate Outside Of The Meeting

## **Pre-Game Plan**

- A. Determining The Specific Goals And Objectives Of The Meeting
  - 1. Goals should be stated, written, and measurable
  - 2. Considering other alternatives to holding a meeting
    - a. can the task be accomplished with a call, memo, or conversation?
- B. Who Should Attend?
  - 1. Key criteria to keep in mind when selecting people
  - 2. Keep the meeting small -- more people - more complicated communication
- C. Timing And Location
  - 1. Scheduling during a "productive" time -- never after lunch
    - a. starting on time regardless of attendance -- get down to business
    - b. avoiding the marathon -- convey a no-nonsense message
    - c. breaks -- when to give them and why
  - 2. Using a private well-ventilated room so distractions are kept to a minimum
    - a. typical seating arrangements -- which is best for your group?
    - b. the importance of controlling lighting, temperature, and crowding
- D. Planning The Agenda
  - 1. Developing the agenda and sending it to participants prior to the meeting
  - 2. Key items that must be on the agenda

## **Leading A Meeting**

- A. Leaders Do Not Just Appear
  - 1. How to communicate effectively
    - a. presenting the goals and objectives of the meeting with clarity
    - b. facilitating interaction and discussion -- understand group dynamics
      - i. focusing -- navigate the direction of the discussion
      - ii. eliciting information -- "Could you offer an example of that idea?"
      - iii. restating ideas for clarity -- paraphrase, "Are you saying...?"
      - iv. reviewing important items when moving to another agenda item
  - 2. Developing problem-solving skills
  - 3. Personality and style
    - a. staying neutral -- let the group make decisions for themselves
    - b. sharpening your negotiation, listening skills, non-verbal cues
- B. Idea Orchestration
  - 1. Brainstorming - the more the better
    - a. allowing for "silly" ideas -- they may prove useful later on
    - b. using visuals -- flipcharts/chalkboards establish content and retention
    - c. beware of the pitfalls of "group think"
- C. Ending And Summarizing -- Recap Key Points -- Where Do We Go From Here?

## **Post Meeting: Make The Most of It!**

- A. Developing An Action Plan -- Good Meetings Produce Results
  - 1. Including dates, people responsible for certain tasks, and specific details
  - 2. Establishing a follow-up schedule to review progress
- B. Conducting An Evaluation Of The Meeting -- Were The Goals Accomplished?

## **Action Plans And Summary**