



**EFFECTIVE MEETINGS
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Effective Meetings

When you go to meetings or auditions and you fail to prepare, prepare to fail. It is simple but true. -Paula Abdul

Running an effective meeting starts with preparation of a worthwhile agenda and sticking to it. Most people hate meetings and consider them a waste of time. Following are some tips that will help you facilitate the type of meeting that will have others saying, "That was time well spent."

Communicate with Attendees before the Meeting -----

Determine who needs to attend the meeting and contact them to determine if they have any topics that need to be on the agenda. Negotiate a reasonable amount of time for each topic.

Create the Agenda -----

Create the agenda showing each topic and timeframe allotted. Distribute the agenda to all in advance, when possible.

Sample Agenda -----

XYZ Sales Meeting - June 3, 2013 - 10:00 – 10:40 a.m.

- Sales Manager – Sam will review sales for last quarter. (5 minutes)
- All – The team will brainstorm missed opportunities and assign captains for each opportunity to be revisited. (20 minutes)
- Non-Profit Organizations – Sheryl will present her recommended pricing structure for non-profits. (5 Minutes)
- All – The team will discuss Sheryl's recommendation. (10 minutes)

Facilitation Tips -----

1. Stick to the agenda and designated timeframes.
 - a. Start on time (even if everyone isn't there yet). If you do this on a consistent basis, people are more likely to arrive for your meetings on time.

- b. It will help if you announce the designated timeframe as you introduce each agenda item and the person presenting the topic.
 - c. If one or two people seem to be dominating the discussions, preventing others input, gently thank the long-winded speaker and ask for input from others.
 - d. End on time. (If you run over, be sure it is by only 5-10 minutes and only if really necessary).
 2. If a discussion requires more time than allotted, consider finishing the discussion after the meeting or at another meeting involving only those needed for the discussion.
 3. Also, if an important topic (not on the agenda) surfaces during conversations consider doing the following:
 - a. Agree to another meeting for just those who are involved. If it needs immediate attention, the second meeting could begin after you complete the agenda and dismiss those who do not need to be in the second meeting.
 4. Thank attendees and ask for feedback about making future meetings more effective.
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