"Running Effective HR Staff Meetings - They are Crucial to Teamwork and Productivity"

Meetings – "The Necessary Evil"

Have you heard someone say:

"I dread all of the meetings we have but we must have them. They are a necessary evil. If we didn't meet how would we know what everyone in the department is doing."

Time is a zero-sum game.

HR Meetings – The Problem (Statistics)

University of North Carolina Findings:

Employee productivity was 71% higher when meetings were reduced by 40% - (Why)

Removing 60% of meetings increased cooperation by 55%. (Why)

When meetings declined by 80%, the perception that employees were being micromanaged lessened by 74% - (Why)

Communication was 65% clearer and substantially more effective. (Why)

HR Meetings – The Triple Whammy

According to the UNC study findings:

Organizations deal with the "triple whammy" of meetings that are:

(1) too frequent,
(2) poorly timed, and
(3) badly run.

This leads to losses in **productivity**, **collaboration**, and **well-being for both groups and individuals**. *This is the worst-case scenario*—and, unfortunately, the most prevalent.

The majority of our survey respondents—54%—put their meetings in this category.

Why Are We Meeting

Preventing siloed employees or groups.

Communication between teams is integral to helping everyone understand the goals and directions of the department.

86% surveyed said lack of collaboration or ineffective communication creates workplace failures.

Meetings that reach across teams and pull people who might not work closely together is great for sharing ideas and knowledge ensuring that valuable work will not be repeated.

What to Do? – Scale Back Meetings (How)

Be very selective when holding meetings. Use the "absolutely" necessary method.

This method includes:

- To review work that's occurred (what worked or didn't and why);

- To clarify and validate something (policies, team goals, etc.);

- To distribute work appropriately among your team.

Granting autonomy is allowing people to job craft, which previous studies have shown helps employees find meaning in their work.

Why Are We Meeting

Ask whether their needs to be a meeting:

- Before you schedule a meeting, ask yourself, "is what you aim to achieve or discuss need to be done in a meeting."

- If no purpose or outcome for your meeting exists, reassess the need for the meeting.

No agenda with prioritized topics – No meeting.

Do you have a schedule? No schedule – No meeting.

Elements of a Needed Meeting

✓**Every meeting should have a clear purpose and outcome in mind:**

- Clarify the purpose and expected outcomes of the meeting

- If you do not have a purpose or outcome for your meeting, reassess whether it is good use of your team's time.

- Team meetings can be fluid in nature: certain topics may generate large amounts of discussion while others may be straightforward.

Elements of a Needed Meeting

✓**Collaborate with other stakeholders prior to meeting:**

- Seeking the opinions and input of others and aligning ahead of meetings through collaboration is vital to making your meetings more effective.

- Ensure stakeholders from other departments have a channel to raise items for discussion. Use the expertise and insight of your team to deliver better meetings.

90%   **97%**

Elements of a Needed Meeting

✓ *Be clear about the purpose and scope of the meeting*

- A meeting can derailed or can focus on non-vital areas for too long.

- There is a fine line to tread between being rigid and flexible but any tension can be mitigated by being clear both before and during a meeting.

Elements of a Needed Meeting (Two Types)

Two types of meetings:

1) Information meetings.

2) Action.

    - Get things done; and

    - Make decisions.

Elements of a Needed Meeting (Action)

Who should be there?

- People who make decisions:

- ATR – At the table.

- ITR – In the room.

- OTP's or VP's – On the phone or Virtual Participant:

- Get good equipment for speaker phones.
- Have a full understanding of the application used for virtual attendees so they may participate with ease.

Meeting Preparation
(What to do before the meeting)

Preparation and **planning** is key to a successful team meeting.

Preparation – Have enough time to prepare.

Giving the team the time to properly prepare for the meeting is integral to ensuring it is a success. If they have materials to prepare or read through, ensure that everyone has time to go through them. (no surprises – generation of ideas)

Sending a document last minute and expecting everyone to receive and digest it is likely to cause issues.

Consider the location and plan ahead.

Is a power point going to be used or will there a software demo? Do you want people to be able to break out into smaller teams? Ensuring you have the **right location, room setup, and resources** for your meeting will keep your meeting on time and effective.

Agenda Creation

- Write only what you need - no more.

- Be smart with the amount of time.

- Rank items of importance on agenda.

- Longer 10 minute bladder breaks.

- Distribute at least a day before the meeting and ask for feedback.

- Make a list – off-line discussion

- Do not run long.

- Need a good leader who can keep the meeting going.

Agenda Creation – What's In It

➤ **Tailor the agenda and format to suit the purpose of the meeting.**

For example, a team meeting intended to finalize a decision-making process will need a mix of methods and techniques very different to a daily stand-up meeting.

**One size does not fit all and your
meeting should be explicitly
constructed with the purpose in mind.**

➤ **Be wary of fatigue**.

Some meetings are longer than others by necessity, though you should always consider the effect this will have on your participants. Allocate breaks preferably **at least every 90 minutes,** if not sooner.

If you have particularly dense items to go through, consider how you might make them more engaging or easy to understand.
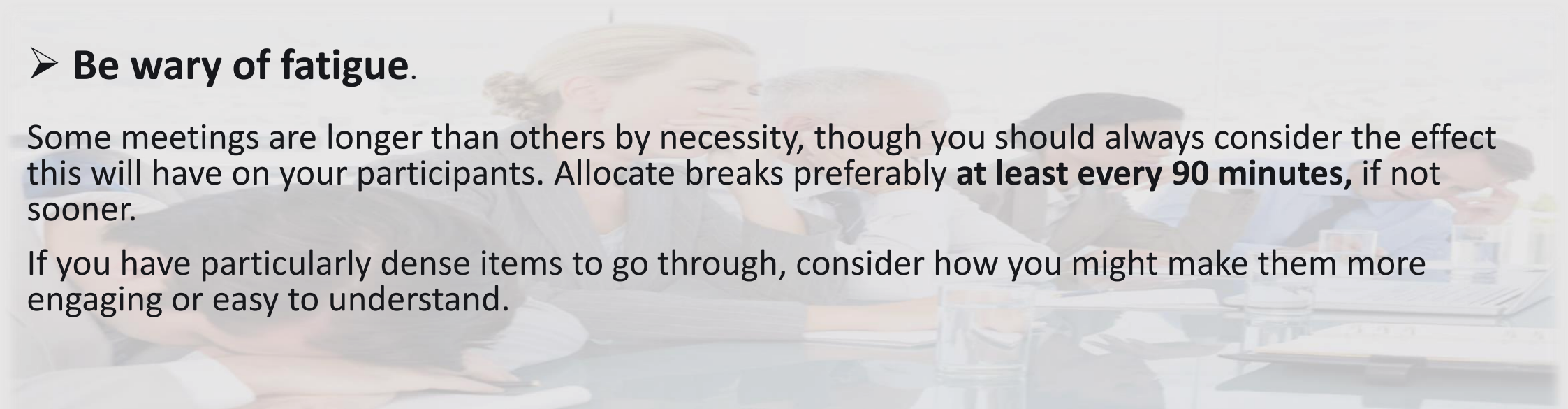
Agenda Creation – What's In It

➢ **Details:** Time, location, host.

➢ **Goals:** Let team know what you hope to achieve in the meeting.

➢ **News and announcements:** Don't assume your team reads every email announcement.

➢ **Progress reports or follow-ups on a previous meeting: W**as it a business - critical action agreed on that requires a debrief or status update to those attending this meeting?

Agenda Creation – What's In It

Key topics: Stakeholders having open and honest discussion on the topics (no more than a couple of key topics because you may need different group for different topics and you don't want to keep others waiting who are not part of the discussion)

Discussion: About something pertinent to the meeting and allow time for questions and feedback – *If discussion isn't needed maybe a meeting is not needed all can be placed in **informational document**.*

Next Steps: Always moving towards outcomes.

Being in control does not mean being inflexible: As a team leader, have a feel for what is most valuable to the team and ensuring that it happens: however, be able to adapt to what comes up in the meeting.

Agenda Creations – What's In It

➢ **Set a schedule and stick to it where possible:** This is very important so your staff can plan around their work around the meeting and be their most productive.

➢ **Having a consistent time and schedule for your team meetings is tremendously useful:** Setting a routine is great at ensuring your staff will remember to attend and get into a habit of checking the agenda and doing preparatory work.

People like to know what's coming and scheduling meetings on the spur of the moment can lead to frustration.

Distribute the Meeting Agenda in Advance

➢ **Circulate your agenda ahead of the meeting:** Giving the team time to prepare in order to arrive at the meeting with an idea of what they'd like to contribute is imperative for ensuring a productive meeting.

Some topics are complex and benefit from forethought – by circulating the team meeting agenda in advance, participants can get a head start and feel prepared.

➢ **Give your participants clear expectations of the meeting:** When circulating your agenda, ensure you give your staff an outline of what is expected of them.

If they need to prepare material, be clear about what they need to prepare and exactly what you want from them.

Distribute the Meeting Agenda in Advance

➢ **Things to consider as the meeting agenda is distributed:**

- Are you asking the attendees to bring an idea they can present in thirty seconds or is it something more robust?

- Do attendees need to bring any equipment or materials?

- Do you need them to review a document or product prior to attending?

Meetings – Setting the Ground Rules

➤ **Set the ground rules:** Set out the rules before you begin and get agreement on process and behavior.

Be clear about:

- What is expected of each attendee, and,
- What is unacceptable behavior. (For example - Becoming aggressive, shouting over other attendees or not engaging with the group)

➤ **Effective ground rules for meetings are based upon:** Respect, trust, and communication.

Attendees can operate in the knowledge they will be heard and respected within the meeting.

Setting the Ground Rules – Breaking It Down

➢ **Watch the clock:** Have a clock and use it. Keep your eye on it and ensure your meeting runs on time.

➢ **Ensure that there is a clear meeting leader**: Even when bringing in other parties, there should be a person in the room responsible for timekeeping, leading and curating the meeting.

Setting the Ground Rules – Breaking It Down

➢ **Model the behavior you want to see:** Remember that as a leader you are modeling the behavior you want to see in your staff. If you do not appear that you want to be in the meeting, your team will pick up on that.

Be positive and engaged.

Listen to the team and collaborate where possible.

Respect the airtime – don't interrupt and don't shout anyone down.

Never take cheap shots.

Own what is yours.

Avoid side conversations.

Represent all interests in the room.

Setting the Ground Rules – Breaking It Down

➤ **Be engaging:** A meeting should not be a one-way conversation. Ask open-ended questions and seek information to increase engagement. Some examples:

- What do you think about the information your have heard?

- Has this information assisted you?

- Please share some of the notes you prepared for the agenda on this topic.

➤ **Share responsibilities:** Trying to do everything as the leader of a team meeting is valiant but may not result in the most effective or enjoyable meeting.

- Collaborate before the meeting by getting input from stakeholders and the appropriate subject matter experts.

- Share tasks if applicable and leverage the expertise of your team.

- Have the subject matter experts lead the topic on the agenda.

Be Open, Generous, and Honest

Setting the Ground Rules – Breaking It Down

➢ **Encourage honesty and openness:** All teams may disagree on certain points, whether it comes to direction, focus or strategy. Build an environment where your staff can be honest, candid and direct in team meetings.

➢ **Debrief**

- Commit to starting and ending on time.

- Never leave without action items.

- Be sure to allow time for feedback both inside and outside of the meeting.

Evaluate the Meeting

➤ **When you're coming out of a meeting, ask your co-workers for feedback:**

What worked well?

What could have gone better?

Don't be shy, put yourself out there and ask! Younger generations, starting with millennials, are especially conducive to being asked what they need, so they will appreciate being asked about the meeting.

Evaluate the Meeting

➢ **Listen to the team:**

What do they need from your meetings and how can you deliver better value to them?

What's important is that every member of staff can give feedback and have their voice heard in the way that is best for them.

Thank You!

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