Power Meetings: Undoing the Elephant

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Ask Yourself:

- Are your meetings dull and uninspiring?
- Do team members question the usefulness of meetings?
- Are critical issues avoided or overlooked during meetings?
- Do you wonder if team members are holding back during meetings?
MEETINGS:
Where minutes are kept and hours are lost.
THE UGLY TRUTH ABOUT MEETINGS

Meetings are meant to be an engine of productivity in the workplace.

But, what's meant to be an efficient way for people to get together to discuss ideas, debate issues, overcome obstacles and drive outcomes, often doesn't turn out like that at all. The truth is that many meetings end up being about as valuable as a Snapchat post -- people talk, the ideas quickly disappear into the ether with no outcomes or follow up.
90% Of meeting participants daydream

73% Of participants are busy with other work in meetings

25% Think meetings are wasted talking about irrelevant issues

62 The number of meetings the average person has in a month

75% Of people surveyed don’t have any training

50% Of participants consider meetings unproductive

33.91% Of the hours spent in meetings are not necessary and run badly

40-50% The proportion of working time the average executive spends in meetings.
What’s the Harm in Unproductive Meetings?

- **It wastes money:** More than $37 billion per year is spent on unproductive meetings.
- **It wastes time:** There are 25 million meetings per day in the U.S.
- **It wastes your organization’s time:** 15% of an organization’s collective time is spent in meetings, a percentage that has increased every year since 2008.
  - Middle managers spend 35% of their time in meetings.
  - Upper management spends 50% of their time in meetings.
  - People spend up to 4 hours per week preparing for status update meetings.
WHAT’S CAUSING UNPRODUCTIVE MEETINGS?

1. MULTITASKING

92% of survey respondents confessed to multitasking during meetings

41% admitted to multitasking “often” or “all the time”

69% admitted to checking email

49% admitted to doing other, unrelated work
2. Remote Participants Aren’t Engaged

It can be hard for remote participants to follow along, stay engaged and feel like they can contribute.

In fact, 80% of messages we receive come from Body Language – something that is hard to pick up on when you’re on the phone.

3. Lack of Planning and Structure

Facilitating effective meetings is a skill that can be learned and honed. Considering the amount of time we spend in meetings, more companies should invest in improving meeting effectiveness.
WHAT ELSE ARE EMPLOYEES DOING DURING A CONFERENCE CALL?

- Other work: 65%
- Sending an email: 63%
- Eating or making food: 55%
- Going to the restroom: 47%
- Texting: 44%
- Checking social media: 43%
- Playing video games: 25%
- Online shopping: 21%
- Exercising: 9%
- Taking another phone call: 6%

SOURCE: INTERCALL
VIDEO COLLABORATION CAN IMPROVE MEETING EFFECTIVENESS

REDUCE MULTITASKING
People less likely to multitask on video calls 4% vs phone calls 57%.

KEY BENEFITS OF VIDEO CALLS:
- Improve focus and engagement
- Enhance decision making
- Increase team productivity
THREE QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE SCHEDULING YOUR NEXT MEETING:

1. Is a meeting NECESSARY? Explore options requiring less time from co-workers.
2. Who really NEEDS TO BE THERE? Be clear about required vs. optional participants.
3. What can I do to ensure it is focused and interactive? Come up with a clear AGENDA. SEND MATERIALS in advance, and capture action items.
LET'S HAVE A LITTLE PREMEETING TO PREPARE FOR THE MEETING TOMORROW.

WHOA! DO YOU THINK IT'S SAFE TO JUMP RIGHT INTO THE PREMEETING WITHOUT PLANNING IT?

OKAY, LET'S GET THIS PRELIMINARY PREMEETING MEETING GOING.

YOU THINK YOU'RE FUNNY, BUT YOU'RE NOT.
Let's have a staff meeting and discuss the things that must happen but will never actually end up happening.
TIPS FOR BETTER MEETINGS:

- Schedule shorter meetings
  - 30 minutes max

- Set clear expectations
  - Include in preparation materials

- Send materials in advance
  - Use time for discussion

- Start and end on time
  - Respect people's time

- Avoid monologues
  - Engage participants

- Stay focused
  - Move tangents to another discussion, email and enterprise social network

- Capture key points and action items
  - Distribute after meeting
The Recipe for Meeting Agenda Productivity

Start by gathering together all of the required ingredients to assemble your actionable agenda.

Ingredients
- Overall Purpose
- Priority & Urgency
- Expected Results
- Timing Needs & Constraints
- Information to Present
- Issues to Discuss
- Problems to Solve
- Decisions to be Made
- The Key Players Involved

Facts
Possibilities
Perceptions
People
Time

How much time do you have?
How much time is needed?

It's time to bake....

Information, issues, and problems form the "agenda items".
Pending decisions form the expected results.

Time available vs. time needed establishes a meeting "framework".

Take your ingredients & mix them together in the right proportion to suit meeting purpose. Every agenda item should fill a need and contribute to overall meeting success.
Meeting invitations should always specify: 

**P** - Preparation. Who needs to do what before the meeting to make the meeting productive. E.g. X to write document and circulate 3 days before the meeting; Y to prepare to deliver session described below; all to pre-read attached document.

**O** - Outcome. What will have been achieved by the end of the meeting. E.g. Agreement on X; Outline plan for Y; Shared understanding of Z. There’s no need to define the ‘purpose’ of the meeting - this will be implicit in the outcome and stating the outcome clarifies what actually needs to happen in the meeting.

**S** - Structure. Who is going to do what in the meeting in what order. E.g. 1) X to take us through the proposal, 2) Feedback from everyone chaired by Y, 3) Agreement on next steps chaired by Z.

**T** - Timing. Amount of time to be allocated to each section of the meeting. Often better to combine S & T into an agenda.
Assemble the Agenda & Meeting Materials

- PREPARED participants are MORE EFFECTIVE participants.
  - Whenever possible, meeting materials should be provided in advance.

The Agenda

Set the Stage

Conduct the Business

Wrap Things Up

Open the Meeting
- Welcome Everyone
- Introduce the Agenda
- Share the Ground rules

Carry out the Meeting
- Follow the Agenda
- Adapt as Needed
- Allow for Q & A

Close the Meeting
- Summarize the Results
- Review Next Steps
- Thank Everyone

Just insert "items" into an appropriate layer to simplify agenda development.
Execute the Agenda

Stick to the Schedule

Productive meetings are "time-bound", executed according to the planned schedule.

But, Be Prepared to Adapt if Needed

If you have prioritized your agenda items, you will be in a better position to adapt if time runs short. Table lower priority items if you need to make up some time.

Leave enough time for questions and comments.

Engage participants for the best meeting results.

And, don't forget to review results with a post meeting assessment!

Meeting Agenda
1/15/15 • Conference Room A

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<th>Time</th>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Materials</th>
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Please be on time. Turn cell phones to vibrate. Review all materials in advance.

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If your meeting runs late, you’re cutting into their time.

And let’s face it. That’s just rude.
Leaders can either inspire people in meetings or drain their energy.
Responsibilities of the Meeting Leader

Have you ever considered what the meeting leader is responsible for during a meeting? Here is just a brief overview:

- moving through agenda
- starting and ending on time
- showing respect
- generating discussion & encouraging contribution
- capturing & summarizing ideas, decisions, next steps, etc.
- unblocking the group

- dealing with conflict & difficult situations
- reaching agreements & gaining consensus
- maintaining a positive climate
- using facilitation tools
- demonstrating effective communication & interpersonal skills
Effective Meeting Series:
More Productive Meetings
With Robert's Rules
Unproductive meetings may occur if a meeting is not the best forum to accomplish the tasks.

Ensuring productive meetings means you need to plan the meeting carefully and conduct it with skilled facilitation.

Meeting problems and conflict need to be managed immediately and not allowed to linger.

To ensure needed actions occur following the meeting may require some micro-managing.
Have a clear well-defined agenda for the meeting
HERE'S THE AGENDA.
THE FIRST HOUR WILL BE U.B.R., AS USUAL.

THIS REMINDS ME OF MY FIRST JOB, BEFORE CRASH DUMMIES WERE POPULAR. MAN, I SPENT A FORTUNE ON ASPIRIN.

WHAT EXACTLY IS U.B.R.?

UNFOCUSED BOSS RAMBLING. ONLY 58 MINUTES TO GO.
Every meeting should have a final decision maker
Every participant should be there for a reason
Drive action items and assign responsibility using the approach below
Tips for Running Effective Meetings

- Email an agenda 24 hours in advance.
- Arrive 5 minutes early.
- Start and end on time.
- Bring paper and a pen.
- No smartphones.
- No interrupting.
- Silence = agreement.
- Be brief and concise.
- Disagree without being disagreeable.
- Everyone participates.
- No side conversations or comments.
- Follow-up by email within 24 hours.
Progress Updates

James - completed the sales team overhaul; he's focused on setting up new incentive structures.

Jane - done with the latest engineering build. Ready to move onto the next feature set.

Chris - moving forward with sales objectives. Will share the latest deck on Do.

Michael - should be at full speed by Q4.

Jason Shah will take care of marketing lead.
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<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Every productive meeting has a <strong>purpose</strong>. Participants should know what the meeting is for. The purpose should be worth pulling people away from other productive work. It should be something that can be best accomplished by a group of people working together at the same time.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td><strong>Preparation</strong> is one key to productive meetings. Every attendee should come prepared with the right data and be ready to share their perspectives in order to achieve the purpose.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Process</td>
<td>Productive meetings have a clear <strong>process</strong>, defined by the agenda. It should describe how participants will accomplish the purpose. I think you should have a standard agenda for every recurring meeting.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>Productive meetings are characterized by the <strong>participation</strong> of everyone present. People should be at the meeting because they have something to contribute, and participating is how they contribute.</td>
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<td>Progress</td>
<td>In a productive meeting, everyone should make <strong>progress</strong>. They should leave the meeting better off than when they entered and have more clarity around what everyone needs to do next.</td>
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11 GOLDEN RULES FOR PRODUCTIVE MEETINGS

1. E-mail the meeting agenda to your attendees 1 day in advance.
2. Arrive 5' early to the meeting room.
3. Participate fully.
4. Keep the meeting within the set time slot.
5. Pass on the details.
6. Leave your cell-phone outside the meeting room.
7. Take notes.
8. Make sure your speech is brief & clear.
9. Listen to the speaker, don’t interrupt!
10. Evaluate ideas, not the attendees.
11. Send a post-meeting follow up e-mail, in 24 hours.