

KICK-BUTT MEETINGS

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You want to be efficient in all areas of the business and because there is so much interdependency between departments, meetings seem to be a practical way to save that precious resource, time. In addition, effectively run meetings can be the best place for nurturing morale, building teams and modeling the attitudes and behaviors that you most want in your business environment.

Because they serve all of this and more it is critical to create meetings that are meaningful, well planned, well facilitated, timely and efficient, and have a clear purpose.

In general, any meeting is most often considered effective when **three criteria** are met.

1. Objectives of the meeting are achieved
2. A minimum amount of time is used
3. Meeting participants are satisfied

Meetings can be classified into **two major categories** each with two subsets:

1. **INFORMATION MEETINGS** - when decisions have already been made you save time by informing at a meeting where everyone hears the same information and can ask questions for clarity
 - a. Advise/Update
 - b. Sell/Motivate/Recommend
2. **DECISION MAKING MEETINGS** – An opportunity to include and tap into staff in the process of generating ideas and making decisions
 - a. Goal Setting/Strategizing
 - b. Problem Solving/Creating/Developing

When you are clear about the classification of the meeting, you will plan and facilitate it accordingly. Clearly, an informational meeting would look very different from a brainstorming creativity meeting. This clarity is important in assuring a successful outcome.

THE THREE ELEMENTS OF THE KICK-BUTT MEETING MODEL

This model outlines the elements needed in creating that successful outcome.

1. GOOD PLANNING
 - a. **A specific purpose or objective** – Take the time to get clear about what you want to accomplish in this meeting and be sure to let everyone know the purpose. This helps to circumvent personal agendas.
 - b. **Identifying the type of meeting needed** – Again, let the team know what their role is in this meeting. This can save time, energy and save face.
 - c. **Knowing who should attend** – A great de-motivator is to sit through an

hour long meeting that has nothing to do with you. Take care to invite the appropriate people to the table.

- d. **Having a pre-planned agenda (no surprises)** – How can your staff give their best if they don't have an opportunity to prepare ahead of time? Set them up for success, not failure. Also, a pre-planned agenda helps to prevent people feeling snubbed when not invited to a meeting. They can look at the agenda and see that it has little or nothing to do with them. Moral secured!

2. KNOWLEDGE

- a. **Knowing where your organization's strengths lie** – Being able to speak to strengths during times of stress can be a lifesaver. In addition, this knowledge helps you to bring the right departments and people together to get the job done.
- b. **Knowing what areas of improvement are needed** – Get the facts, observe and study, connect to current trends and changes in the industry. Keep the productive energy alive and kicking by avoiding assumptions and mistaken assessments. When people see the evidence and logic, they are much more likely to drop defenses and get on board with making changes.
- c. **Knowing how to lead through facilitation** – This is a skill set that can make the difference between creating a cohesive team environment and one full of conflict and unhealthy competition. Start by talking “with” and not “at” the people in the room.
- d. **Understanding your team(s)** – What is important to each team? What is the formal and informal structure? How do they communicate and solve problems? Who is the leader, gatekeeper, visionary, and doer and so on? When is the best time to meet and where? What do they want and need from you in order to be successful?

3. A RESPECTFUL WORKPLACE

- a. **Building a culture of respect** – Find guidelines or standards (or create your own together) for behaviors that support success in your meetings. An environment that allows bullying closes down the possibilities for interaction and creativity. Set standards that allow honest speaking, shared time, confidentiality, and any behaviors that members consider to be disrespectful.
- b. **Willingness to learn** – Stuff happens. Urgent situations arise and that may mean the plan you had in mind for today's meeting just won't work and needs to change. Accept it, honor it, name it, and work together to try something new. There is no where to go but forward.
- c. **Everyone facilitates** – Create success in the meeting by encouraging members to participate and show their talents and strengths. You are not the only one who can ask someone to hold a thought while you hear from others. Others can request a reframe for gaining clarity, be the time keeper, notice emerging agenda items and facilitate managing them and so on.

Imagine effective, efficient, energizing, team building, and moral boosting meetings. Do it and demonstrate the kind of leadership people recognize and appreciate. They will continue the day filled with inspiration, new challenges, feeling valued and respected. If

someone did this for you, what kind of employee would you be?

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