

Learning About . . .

Successful Meeting: Set Up

Gilliland & Jud

Here are the time-tested techniques for getting more out of your meetings.

- 1. Define the Purpose of the Meeting**
Do you know what you are after here? Can you state it in a sentence or two?
- 2. Explore Alternatives to Holding the Meeting at All**
Can you substitute a conference call? Can a responsible person make a simple decision?
- 3. Keep Participants to a Minimum**
If you double the number of people at a meeting, you quadruple the number of communication channels.
- 4. Choose a Good Time**
Pick one that fits most peoples' schedules and when attention will be highest.
- 5. Choose a Good Place**
One that's easy to get to and that fits the size of the group.
- 6. Pick the Right Participants**
Select people who can advance the purpose for calling the meeting or who can torpedo it if they are left out.
- 7. Prepare an Agenda**
List the major topics and issues to be discussed or decided in sufficient detail for people to prepare.
- 8. Distribute the Agenda in Advance**
In your cover email, make sure you identify time, place and other details, as well as any prep work not identified in the agenda itself.
- 9. Time-Limit the Meeting and Each Agenda Item**
Remember, there is a plethora of evidence to support the observation that attention spans plunge rapidly after a meeting has gone on for more than 90 minutes.

Successful Meeting: Set Up Checklist

- 1. Define the Purpose of the Meeting** — State the goal briefly
- 2. Explore Alternatives to Holding the Meeting at All** — Can you substitute a conference call? Can one person make a decision?
- 3. Keep Participants to a Minimum** — If you double the people at a meeting, you compound communication channels.
- 4. Choose a Good Time** — Pick one that fits most peoples' schedules and when attention will be highest.

- 5. Choose a Good Place** — Easy to get to, and the right size.
- 6. Pick the Right Participants** — Select people who can advance the purpose of the meeting or torpedo it if they are left out.
- 7. Prepare an Agenda** — List the topics so people can prepare.
- 8. Distribute the Agenda in Advance** — In your cover email, make sure you identify time, place, prep work and other details.
- 9. Time-Limit the Meeting and Each Agenda Item** — Attention spans at meetings plunge rapidly after 90 minutes.

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