TEETCH

How to run a Meeting

Every meeting should have a POST!

P is for PURPOSE

Who is being invited and why? 'Why' should be one sentence describing why there is a need for a meeting. 'Who' breaks down further into three roles: Decision Makers (DM), Subject Matter Experts (SME) and Stakeholders (SH). Where possible, everyone invited should be advised of which role they're expected to play.

O is for OUTCOMES

Outcomes are deliverables from the meeting. You could also use 'Objectives' if the purpose of the meeting is the meeting itself (relationship building, social or perhaps a workshop where real work gets done - in this case the outcome is the completion of the work as defined beforehand, and the objective is the work itself). Use Outcome as a default as it is more results oriented than Objectives. 'Outcomes' breaks down further into three motives:

1. what do you want people to **think**,
2. **feel** or
3. **do** as a result of the meeting.

We capture outcomes by having three flipcharts on the wall: Decisions Made, Actions Agreed and Issues Outstanding.

- **Decisions Made**: this is what we agreed in the meeting that goes on to become the minutes for those that could not attend.
- **Actions Agreed**: for each action we note what it is, who will be taking it away and when we'll hear from them about progress. We DO NOT expect estimates for completion of a task inside a meeting, only an estimate of when we'll hear about progress, complete or not.
- **Issues Outstanding**: these are the items yet to be handled as we ran out of time, people or data on the day. They form part of the agenda for the next meeting.

S is for STRUCTURE; the big one!

Structure defines how the meeting is organized. At larger meetings it can be more granular or vice versa:

1. Meetings should have an Opening section, Topic section and a Closing Section:
    a. The opening section should take about 10-15% of the meeting time: there are three ingredients to a successful opening to a meeting:
        i. It should break preoccupation – get their heads in the room and on task
        ii. It should facilitate networking – get them talking to each other and
        iii. It should be relevant to the content – get them focused on the meeting
    b. The topic section should take 75% of the time. Presenters should use the TPA 20 rule:
        i. Introduce the Topic (what and why)
        ii. Get the attendees Participating in the topic in some way to help them 'uncover' the action for themselves
        iii. Finish by having the attendees note down any topic-related Action.
    c. TPA must change every 20 minutes (maximum) as it is difficult for people to focus on the same topic for longer than that.
    d. The closing section should take about 10% and should summarise what has been written in the three columns of notes or on the three flipcharts.
2. Effective meetings have a Timekeeper. The Timekeeper says the word 'Rolex' to let the current speaker know that they've got 30 seconds left to finish their section of the meeting.

T is for TIMING

When does the meeting start and finish? Meetings start at 5 past the hour and end at 5 to the hour (or 25 past if a 30 min meeting). Most meetings can achieve the same amount in 50 or 20 mins as they could in 60 or 30 mins. Starting them 5 mins late allows time for people to travel from their last meeting that ended on the hour or half hour. It also gives them time if they're early for a few minutes extra preparation.