BANISH BORING MEETINGS

A Do you really need a meeting ..

There are lots of other options you can consider:

- Email or on line groups to **share information**
- Telephone conferences or on line voting for **quick decisions**
- Email or project planners for **update on progress**

Be clear about when meetings can help and what other mechanisms can be used to communicate information or make decisions.

Some managers attend 60 meetings a month, think 30% of their time in meetings is wasted.*

B Define your purpose

Meetings are good for dialogues and discussions on important decisions which affect future strategy or to solve a problem together. They are good for engaging everyone with the topic and getting ideas "

C Prepare an agenda

Be clear why an item is on the agenda and what you need the outcome to be:

- Make a decision
- Agree action plan
- Change a policy
- Increase the budget

Send this out in advance with a clearly defined time and purpose for each item. Agree the time allocated with the person who owns the item.

"A meeting moves at the speed of the slowest mind in the room … all but one participant will be bored, all but one mind under-used".

Business writer Dale Dauten

Chairing Meetings

The key to good chairing of meetings is preparation. You need to be totally clear why an agenda item is being presented and the time allocated to this item.

You will then introduce the item owner, ask them to present the issue and then agree actions that need to be taken.

Summarise the final decision so that this can easily be noted down by the minute taker.

Make sure all suggestions are converted into action by summarising back to the person who suggested it:

"*Your comment about the induction sounds as if we need to address this. Would you collect in views and send me an email next week with a proposal for how to improve this*"

Meetings are boring when there is no clear purpose to the items being discussed or for the people attending to be there. By having a clear purpose you will solve most of the behavioural problems in meetings.

Decision Making

The main reason for a face to face meeting is to make a decision.

- Make a clear proposal
- Check for clarification – time limit this part
- Take an initial view on consensus – finding out who has major concerns that need addressing.

Take a vote if necessary to move the business on, aim to reach to consensus with the whole team by addressing major concerns and seeking compromises.

Addressing Behaviour

Agree with your team behaviours they believe are unacceptable.

Deal with any early incidences of these behaviours consistently

"we agreed to keep our meetings short we would avoid adding in side agenda items"

"is that conversation better outside of the meeting today?"