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Week 14 Focus: Better Meetings

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Focus Question: What's going to make your meetings more productive?

Description

In the remote space we may find ourselves buffeted by meetings at all times of the day. Are they the most effective? Get into the practice of asking yourselves the 8 Essential Meeting Questions in advance of each meeting.

Meetings may consume upwards of 40% of managers' days and they are needed, especially in the remote space. What can we do to make sure they are effective?

For many years now I've been sharing these five tips with those leaders, team members and facilitators I work with, who are looking to amp up their meeting muscles. These were originally published in Teams365 #960:

<https://www.potentialsrealized.com/teams-365-blog/teams365-960-five-tips-for-more-effective-meetings>

Five quick tips for making meetings more effective include:

1. Be clear on the purpose of the meeting. Is a meeting the best way to handle this?

2. Be clear on who needs to be at the table. Does everyone need to be there for the full meeting? Who might be needed in order to provide information? Decisions? Authority? Make sure you know who will need to be there or else it may mean another meeting. Having everyone there all the time may actually slow the meeting down. At this point, you will want to start considering who needs to be there, when.

3. What is the outcome you desire? What are the 3-5 tangible takeaways you want from the meeting? This question will help to reinforce what the purpose is, and who really should be at the table.

4. What decisions have been made? What outcomes are expected, and what are the timelines? Who is responsible for doing this? Tracking it? Reporting on it? What will follow up look like? Being granular in this stage is key to success. Many times, it is glossed over. Be sure to leave sufficient time to summarize key decisions made, and implications of this.

5. Keep to time. Time management is an art form with effective meetings. Being too lax with time can lead to frustration and disengagement. If timing tends to fall off, assign someone a timekeeper role, and put your stronger facilitator in the chair seat to keep the meeting moving. Tangents don't always benefit meetings.

The cost of NOT undertaking meetings is high. What's the right balance for your team in terms of sharing information and also making them most efficient?

For more on this topic check out:

Effective Virtual Conversations Chapter 9 – In Focus: Virtual Meetings of All Stripes

"The hard truth is, bad meetings almost always lead to bad decisions, which is the best recipe for mediocrity."

Patrick Lencioni

Did you know...

8 Essential Virtual Meeting Questions:

1. What's the purpose?
2. What takeaways do we want?
3. Who needs to be on the call?
4. What preparation is needed for us to be most effective in the meeting?
5. What pace do we want in order to keep it engaging?
6. What will help keep the focus?
7. What is absolutely essential (versus what will be nice to cover or where can people go for more information around topics)?
8. What follow-up might be required?

(Source: Britton, Effective Virtual Conversations, 2017, All Rights Reserved)