

THE ZOOM NEWS

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THE CURSE OF MEETINGS...



“I spend far too much time in meetings rather than focusing on my priorities. The meetings I attend range from chaotic to tedious and I never leave feeling more inspired, excited or clearer than when I walked in. Everything seems to take too long and

I often find myself not knowing the purpose of the meeting or what contribution is expected. Actions that are agreed and signed up to are never followed through. I have noticed people getting more and more cynical and disengaged.”

7 Reasons why meetings don't work:

- 1. Lack of Purpose:** Without a compelling reason for people to be there, then no one really cares and would rather be elsewhere.
- 2. Poor Example:** Meetings are a direct reflection of the leader's behaviour. Whatever they do or don't do reinforces what is acceptable by others. The leader has the responsibility to behave how they expect others to act.

3. Boredom: Meetings can be super-boring, without stimulating conversation, interesting questions to ponder, or big decisions to be made. The meeting itself becomes a pantomime, with everyone defaulting to their typecast roles.

4. No Preparation: Effectiveness and inspiration are being killed and blamed on 'busyness'. It is how we legitimise lack of preparation. With good preparation, half as many meetings would be needed.

5. Procrastination: Meetings should have a prerequisite that decisions will be made and people will be given/taking accountability, with everyone having their input into the decision. All decisions should be time bound and work bound, otherwise work becomes rushed and low quality downstream.

IS THERE AN ALTERNATIVE?

6. Fake Positive: People can be worried how they will be perceived and so may filter the truth. The outcome of this is that everyone feels relieved that they did not expose themselves or risk anything, but nothing real has been achieved.

7. Lack of Pace: Everybody knows that the world is changing fast. If the pace of the decision/action doesn't mirror the real world then everyone loses heart, motivation and interest.

SOLUTION = NO MORE MEETINGS

We are amazing, creative and problem solving creatures with infinite ingenuity and resilience. The purpose of getting people together is always to tap into this and to **CHANGE**

something, to transmute the status quo.

For this we need **S.P.A.C.E.:** Specific Purpose And Creative Energy
The outcome is always to get the most value out of every **S.P.A.C.E.**

For this: identify who is needed and wanting to contribute. Make sure it is never more than 10 people.

There are only 6 reasons for getting 10 or less people together (the purpose can be a variation or combination of the below):

1. Share ideas
2. Solve a problem
3. Make a decision
4. Set and clarify direction
5. Get to know people
6. Kick off a project, initiative or strategy

S.P.A.C.E. Principles

Engagement: Connect with people/stakeholders beforehand to maximise everyone's use of time and to understand everyone's perspective.

Purpose: Communicate the purpose and expectations with everyone and ensure you only have the necessary people in the space.

Impact: Open the meeting with impact to set the right tone immediately.

Contribute: Create a space that ensures everyone makes their full contribution and that thoughts and ideas are real and genuine. Think about the best environment given the context. Sitting around boardroom tables in windowless rooms is not going to stimulate energy and creativity.

Challenge: Encourage and manage positive conflict. **Diverse** opinions are able to create debates and discussions without damaging trust or relationships.

Clarify: Get under the skin of what is really going on. Differentiate between what people say and what they really mean.

Capture: Efficiently capture all of the input, ideas and actions in real time without breaking the flow of the conversations.

Focus: Maintain the pace and focus on the end result without losing spontaneity and emergent ideas. Set a time limit that is half the time of normal meetings. Go for 28 or 36 minutes, for example.

“We need Space to do the right things!”