The One-Pager on Productive Meetings

Determine what type of meeting you need

Good reasons to have a meeting are to share information, to make decisions, or to solve a specific problem as a team. Avoid mixing meeting types within a single session. Chances are that each topic will require a different audience, and such meetings are harder to prepare and to run.

Set a clear purpose and a goal for the meeting.

Purpose = why do we have the meeting?
Goal = tangible output from the meeting, for example: a documented decision, a prioritized list of something, or a design document.

⚠️ Be careful with agendas. In themselves, they don't guarantee that the meeting will be productive.

Be prepared to facilitate the meeting yourself, or make sure to assign a facilitator

A facilitator:
- ❖ Plans, executes, and documents the meeting
- ❖ Makes sure that the group reaches the meeting goal
- ❖ Keeps discussions relevant
- ❖ Ensures that everyone is heard

Prepare the meeting

1 hour of meeting = 1 hour of preparation

2 hours of meeting = 2 hours of preparation

What techniques will you use for idea generation, data gathering and decision making? How will you combine them? How will you manage time?

Mind map   OPEN DISCUSSION
SWOT analysis   World café   Thumb voting
Dot voting   Small groups   *Human histogram*
Forcefield analysis
Timeline   **Brain storming**
Individual writing   Thinking hats

Invite the right people

Planned meetings with a purpose and a goal attended by people who care are more energized and require less time than the unplanned ones.

Establish ground rules before starting the meeting

Do you want open laptops and phones on the table when you want everyone to actively participate in the discussions?

Use an open protocol to document the results

It's hard to facilitate a meeting and take notes. Therefore, use the whiteboard or large paper sheets on the walls! Besides, chances are that your notes won't match the participants' perceptions of the meeting anyway.

Evaluate the meeting

This is optional, but some non-standard meetings may have many moving parts. Make sure that you receive feedback on their execution, so that you can improve.

Retain the meeting's results and reinforce its outcomes

Capture the results! When using an open protocol, taking a photo of the walls may be enough. Also, summarize any agreements and make sure that those who have been assigned actions are aware of it.

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