

## Top Tips for Meeting Success

**The following represent top tips for meeting success. They are tried, tested and proven to deliver significant results and confidence improvement at all levels and in all sorts of business environments.....**

**Which ones would improve your performance?**

**1. Before attending any meeting, make sure you are prepared.....**

Have you gone through a checklist of everything you will need in the meeting and done some research on the people and the business you are meeting with?

It is always difficult to rescue a meeting if your lack of preparation is evident. Winging it only works occasionally and should not become the standard for meeting preparation.

**2. If travelling to the meeting, have on some rousing music to increase your enthusiasm and alertness.....**

Whatever your musical tastes, loud and rousing is better than mellow ballads..... If meeting at your office, put on some music as you prepare....

**3. Don't provide the other participants with any initial negative impressions....**

Make sure you arrive on time (preferably a little early) and don't come armed with a lot of clutter – the key is to look as if you are there for a functional purpose, not as if you are set to stay all day.

**4. If you are going to use a laptop, have it powered and ready in “hibernate” or “standby” mode.....**

Watching a laptop warm up can be excruciatingly slow and many people focus on this, rather than on their hosts or guests, to the detriment of initial relationship building.

**5. Have an idea of what a successful outcome would be from your meeting?**

It may be obtaining a purchase order, but it may equally be getting to the next stage in the process, a request for a proposal, being added to a preferred supplier list or just not being shown the door.

This is your target, and without one, you have little to gauge success (or failure) against.



**6. However long or short the meeting, you must take initial control....**

You should “signpost” what you expect from the meeting such as its structure, anticipated timings, what outcomes you are seeking and then, most importantly, consult with the other participants to check they agree with the proposed format.

By “signposting” you will not have people unsure of what happens next, where they are in the meeting structure, or looking at their watches instead of listening and participating actively.

**7. Never assume that your agenda or even the reason for the meeting is the same for both parties.....**

Ask open questions after setting the format as they help clarify the position as all participants see it. Be prepared to change your initial plan to react to anything that the other party or parties contribute.

Despite some pre-research and possible call notes to accompany the appointment, when face to face, the agenda may well differ from expectations so a flexible approach needs to be adopted.

**8. The format of the meeting should ALWAYS be.....**

1 - The other participants go first, answering your open questions and outlining their position

2 – You now present your offering, focusing your presentation on the issues raised in their initial session

3 – Discuss your offering against their position

4 – Handle any objections (see Tip 9)

5 – Seek agreement

6 – Ask for an output, whether that is a sale or a call to action. (Many people fail to ask at this crucial time for fear of “spoiling” a good meeting)

7 – Agree next steps, responsibilities and timescales

**9. If there are any objections to your proposals or presentation, acknowledge them, but agree to handle them all in a block at the end of your presentation.....**

Then think about incorporating some content into your presentation that covers the objections and removes the sting from them. Objections are to be welcomed, but should not be handled like a tennis match



## **10. Never offer a proposal or a report as a standard follow up.....**

This will always receive a positive response but will create extra work in cases where there is no need or intent on the other side of the table.

Always ask 'What happens next'?

If the other participants need or want a proposal or report, that is very different from you simply offering one. Always agree a realistic timescale for the provision of such reports.

**Good Luck!**

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