

ICOM 5047: Computer Engineering Design

Workshop: Effective Meetings
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Meetings

- Definition: People coming together for the purpose of resolving problems or making decisions
 - Essential element in business
 - Cost time and money
 - How many meetings really serve a useful purpose?
 - Hold them only when necessary

Know your aims

- Be clear about the purpose of a meeting
- If issue can be resolved without a meeting, cancel the meeting
- Consider what makes a meeting successful or not
- Consider what would happen if the meeting were not held

Purpose of a Meeting

- Dealing with information
 - Ex. Giving or receiving reports, issuing instructions, announcing or explaining procedural change
- Resolving problems
 - Ex. Handling grievances
- Making decisions
 - Ex. Choosing between options, committing to a course of action
- Encouraging ideas
 - Generate creative solutions

Four Disciplines of Execution

- Focus on the wildly important
 - WIG – Wildly Important Goals
- Create a compelling Scoreboard
 - How to measure success
- Translate lofty goals into specific actions
- Hold each other accountable all of the time

The power to focus

Number of Goals	2-3	4-10	11-20
Goals achieved with excellence	2-3	1-2	0

Execution Gap

- **Clarity** – not knowing clearly the goals and priorities of the team or organization
- **Commitment** – not buying into the goals
- **Translation** – not knowing what they need to do to help the team or organization achieve its goals
- **Enabling** – not having the proper structure, systems or freedom to do their jobs well
- **Synergy** – not getting along or work together
- **Accountability** – not holding each other accountable

Hold each other accountable

- All the time
- Knowing that others are counting on you raises your level of the commitment
- Maintaining commitment to the goal requires **frequent team engagement** and accountability

Getting commitment to the goal

- Scale of commitment

Are your staff meetings effective?

- Which is true?
 - Our meetings revolve around our wildly important goals
 - Meetings are held regularly and often
 - There is clear accountability and follow-through
 - Successes are celebrated
 - People report struggles and failures openly
 - There is robust brainstorming and problem solving
 - People commit to helping each other
 - People leave energized

Staff Meetings

Staff Meetings

Wildly Important Goals

- Focus intensively on WIGs
 - Not talk about everything under the sun
- Real work gets done
 - Can't wait for this meeting to end so you can get back to work
- For the team
 - Not for the manager

Wildly Important Goals

- Language
 - The purpose of this meeting is to move our top goals forward
 - Tell me how what we're talking about will help us move the goal forward
 - What are the few things we must accomplish in this meeting today to move our wildly important goals forward?

Staff Meetings

Triage Reporting

- Quick reporting of vital few issues
 - Not "Death March" around the room where people feel pressure to talk while everyone else checks out
- Reviewing your scoreboard
 - How if no measures of progress
- Follow-up
 - Don't do no follow-up
- Mutual accountability
 - No: Only managers hold people accountable
- People openly report struggles and failures
 - Vs People hide their struggles and failures
- Celebrations of successes
 - Focusing only on problems

Triage reporting

- Let's check out our scoreboard to see how we're doing
- Here are my key results for the week
- What were our successes?
- I ran into some problems, and here's what I am planning to do about them
- I don't have anything I need to share with the entire group
- Thank you. Next?

Staff Meetings

Finding Third Alternatives

- Energetic problem solving
 - Not all talk, no action
- New and better ideas are created (1+1=3, 1+1= 10, 1+1=100, 1+1 = more)
 - Not no time or environment for creative dialogue
- Wisdom of the group
 - No “the lone genius”

Finding the third alternative

- Let's generate as many ideas as possible and then narrow down our choices
- Can we schedule time over the next few days to get this solved?
- What do we need to get that done?
- I would like to take some time right now to focus on this one issue

Staff Meetings



Clear the path

- A stroke of the pen for me eliminates hours of work for you
 - Getting stuck because barriers you cannot get over by yourself
- We are in this together
 - Not you are on your own
- Admitting you need help and asking for it
 - Not being afraid to admit when you need help

Clearing the path

- How can I clear the path for you?
- I am struggling with this issue and need some help
- I know that person. I will give her a call.
- Who already knows something about this?
- What do you need to get that done?

Listening to Others

- Good listeners look attentive
- Annoying if participants are whispering
- Respecting others
 - Personal or professional prejudices
- Tailor your speech
 - Pay attention to your speech
- Avoid negative body language

Meetings

- With whom?
 - Full team
 - Subgroup
 - One on one
- How often?
 - Daily
 - Weekly
 - Monthly
- How and where?
 - Face to face
 - Conference call
 - Email?

Be prepared for a meeting

- Agenda
- Determine your purpose
- Set your goals
- Decide on your methods
- Allocate time
- Who should meet?
- When and where?
- Prepare materials

Conducting the meeting

- Follow the agenda
- Set and maintain appropriate pace
- Share information
- Conduct discussion
- Manage participation
- Get a decision
- Plan action and make assignments

Closing the meeting and follow up

- Summarize main points, decisions, actions, and assignments
- Sketch agenda for next meeting
- Evaluate meeting
- Write and distribute minutes
 - Minutes should contain date, people involved in the meeting, important points, decisions, who said what

Sample Meeting –Minutes

Follow-up action	Person	Date
Next meeting	All	Date, time, place (if it changes)
A description of any action that someone committed to work on or complete before the next meeting	The person or group who committed to the action	Date and time for completion or ASAP, soon, or next week.

Taken from Deane Gradous, Twin Cities consultant, <http://www.managementhelp.org/writing/minutes.htm>

Sample Meeting –Minutes

- Present
 - Arrive
 - Begin
 - Call (Chair)
 - Discuss
 - End
 - Absent
- Agenda
 - Item 1
 - Item 2
 - Item 3
- Discussion, decisions, assignments
 - First agenda item
 - Second agenda item
 - Additional items
- Tentative agenda for the next meeting
 - Item 1
 - Item 2
- Call (insert your name and number) or email with additions or corrections to these minutes.

Taken from Deane Gradous, Twin Cities consultant, <http://www.managementhelp.org/writing/minutes.htm>

Minutes

- Distribute minutes
- Approve minutes
- Verify accuracy
- Action items
 - What to do after meeting
 - Set up time for next meeting

Practicalities

- Check that locality is available
- Do we need visual aids? Board?
- Writing! Take notes.
- Breaks. Refreshments?
- Punctuality

References

- Stephen Covey, Jennifer Colosimo, 4 *Disciplines of Execution*, Franklin Covey, 2004.
- Tim Hindle, *Managing Meetings*, Essentialg DK Managers, Dk Publishing, 1998.

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- Questions?