

Tom's Top 5 Meeting Tips



1. 'No Agenda, No Attenda'

Your time is important, and so is everyone else's, so before sending out that meeting invite, let attendees know what to expect with a clear agenda. It doesn't have to be big or complex. Giving attendees the scope and content allows them to prepare too.

2. Broadcast, Discussion or Decision (BDD)?

Is your meeting a 'Broadcast' – sharing information mainly one way, a 'Discussion' – sharing knowledge between attendees and deepening experience and understanding, or is it a place for 'Decisions' to get made? If it's a Broadcast, it could have just been an email. To keep your meetings focused, keep them focused on either B, D or D. Two at the most, three never, and preferably not B.

3. What's the Outcome?

You hold a meeting to achieve an outcome, and attendees join to achieve that outcome too – so let them know what it is. At the top of your meeting invite, specify the Outcome – What will change by the end of the meeting? What decisions will be made? What will you know more about? What will be different? Set it and Sell it.

4. Share Questions and Points First

Meetings are not infinite, and time is always constrained. To make the best use of time, ask and confirm with attendees at the start of the meeting what they'd like to know, be clarified, or answered. Collect their points, list them confirm them, prioritise them, and use them to focus the meeting. Don't try to cover everything; just do valuable things well. If there are outstanding items, carry them into the next meeting. There you go, that's next week's Agenda.

5. 'Squeeze the Middle'

Actions and outcomes matter. A meeting without next steps leaves attendees unclear about whether an outcome was reached and what the next steps are. So, preserve time at the beginning to summarise and synchronise before you get going. Never squeeze or run out of time at the end; attendees want a clear conclusion. If you're constrained on time, squeeze the middle of the meeting and the content. If that's challenging, the meeting either needs to be extended or broken into additional sessions.



Still not getting what you need to work at your best? Give each other constructive, supportive feedback so we can improve together!