



7 Ways to Host Effective Meetings

Did you know that remote meetings increased 60% per employee from 2020 to 2022?¹ Show you value your teams time by leading effective meetings and encouraging them to do the same. Start with the following seven tips that can help you keep such gatherings short and to the point.

01. Define the Meeting Objective, and Stick to It

Meetings focused on ideas or open-ended questions can easily get off topic.

Before starting, clearly state the objective. Consider writing the topic on a whiteboard, there are several tools that can be used to do this digitally these days You can then use this document to take notes on what participants say, showing them you are listening and value their responses.

If the discussion ever veers off-topic, draw everyone back to the objective so you all can make the most of the meeting time.

02. Think First Before Scheduling That Meeting

Before planning a meeting, ensure an in-person or virtual meeting is necessary. An added meeting may interrupt your teams' focus and pull them from their work for a meeting that could have easily been an email or chat message. Sometimes an effective meeting means no meeting at all.

If you need to relay information or make routine decisions, the best option is typically an email or save it for already scheduled check ins. You should only schedule meetings when you need two-way communication between you and the participants, like during brainstorming sessions or when requesting feedback about the latest project.

03. Keep It Brief

Traditionally, meetings lasted around an hour – or longer. Companies like Netflix are moving to shorter meetings with a strict agenda to increase employee collaboration, information sharing, and efficiencies without disrupting the workday. They have a strict 30-minute meeting time limit and share announcements via other communication methods.

According to insight from McKinsey, this switch has an 85% approval rate with Netflix employees.²

04. Agendas are Critical

Prior to hosting a meeting, share a working or ‘live’ agenda where the team members may review, comment and ask questions in advance. That way, the meeting will center around essential two-way communication, making the most out of everyone’s time. This process assists in keeping meetings succinct, increasing productivity and decreasing meeting burnout.

05. Dedicate Your Time to Listening and Idea-Sharing

As the meeting host, you might think you should talk the most. However, if that is the case, you are sharing one-way communication that could have been better communicated in an email, team communication channel (like Slack or Teams) or video update.

Make the meeting worth everyone’s time by opening up the floor to questions, ideas, concerns and feedback.

06. Be a Moderator, not a Speaker

Even if you aren't speaking during the whole meeting, you still have a critical job as the host: moderating the conversation. You should spend the meeting asking pointed questions, taking notes and guiding the discussion.

You want to hear ideas and thoughts from all team members, so make sure no one person dominates the conversations. If anyone remains quiet, ask if they have anything to add or for their opinion.

07. Send Follow-Up Notes & Materials

End the meeting how you started it — by sharing information. Send the document with your notes or a summary email with action items to participants so everyone can easily access the ideas, questions discussed and know what will happen next.

The formula for effective meetings is simple: Think carefully about the meeting's objective, limit the number of meetings you have and keep them short. Use the tips above to implement a productive meeting strategy, and your team will not only thank you but emulate that culture.

Hosting effective meetings is part of having strong project management and communication skills. If you're looking for tailored learning pathways to help your team sharpen those skills.

Connect with Us

1 5 'major ways' remote meetings have changed since the pandemic, Advisory Board (Dec 2022)

2 If we're all so busy, why isn't anything getting done? McKinsey & Company (Jan. 2022)