

# **“TEAM MANAGEMENT SKILL”**

## **Lecture9.**

**PREPARE EFFECTIVELY A MEETING WITH REGARD TO  
MEETING PREPARATION TIPS.**

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## **3.1. Prepare a meeting**

### **3.1.1. Key terms**

#### **✓ Meeting**

A meeting is an assembly of people for a particular purpose, especially for formal discussion.

A meeting is a gathering of two or more people that has been convened for the purpose of achieving a common goal through verbal interaction, such as sharing information or reaching agreement.

#### **✓ Conference**

A conference is a large and formal meeting that aims at discussion, problem-solving, and consultation. It is a platform where people ‘confer’ about a topic. Conferences have specific objectives and can last for several days. There are various types of conferences, such as academic conferences, business conferences, media conferences, trade conferences, religious conference, etc. An academic conference is a place for academicians and researchers to present and discuss their work.

#### **✓ Workshop**

We can describe a workshop as a meeting where a group of people learn about something through intensive discussions and activities related to it. Workshops may involve small or large group discussions, exercises and activities, and practical application of concepts learned. In workshops, participants, usually, involve fully in the learning process. Therefore, they include working, thinking, processing, doing, creating, and interacting.

### **3.1.2. Types of meetings**

#### **1) Status Update Meetings**

Also known as progress checks, these meetings are intended to bring all parties involved up to date with the pertinent information surrounding a project. You may discuss progress made, challenges you’ve encountered and next steps that will guide further action.

You’ll want to ensure that three major questions get answered during a status update:

- What has been accomplished since our last meeting?
- What remains to be done?
- What should we focus on next?

The intention with these sorts of meetings is to keep the project moving ahead and to ensure all parties are held accountable for their responsibilities. Under these circumstances, it's appropriate to pose straightforward questions to other team members, like "Is anything impeding your progress on this project?" or "What do you need from me/us to complete your responsibilities?"

## **2) Information Sharing Meetings.**

Information is shared at all meetings, but info-sharing meetings are a chance to educate the team in-depth on pertinent topics. This could be in the form of a presentation, training, a debate or even a lecture, and group sizes can vary from 1:1 to the entire team.

The priority here will be keeping attendees focused, which you can achieve that through several means:

- Use visual aids (pictures, video, etc.)
- Engage the audience with questions
- Weave personal stories into the information
- Implement polls and surveys to capture attention
- Use multiple speakers or guest speakers

Keep the format light and be sure to build rapport between the presenter and audience. At the end, your team should have benefitted by learning key pieces of information that will improve their efficacy in their roles and help them better serve the team.

## **3) Decision Making Meetings.**

You'll need to call a decision-making meeting in situations where the team needs to come together to agree on a course of action or present options to a leader who will make the final call. Examples include making a hiring decision or approving/disapproving a design.

The main thrust of a decision meeting should be twofold:

- Which option should you choose and why should you choose it above all others?
- Who bears the responsibility of implementing your decision?

At the end of your decision-making meeting, you should arrive at a decision and clearly denote who will handle the next steps. Additionally, your team should feel confident that:

- All points of view and opinions were accurately represented
- The team reached a thorough understanding of the options before making that decision
- Next steps will be carried out with a suitable level of commitment

#### **4) Problem Solving Meetings.**

Like your decision-making meetings, you should call a problem-solving meeting with a singular goal in mind. This time, you're figuring out what caused and how you will correct a specific issue. This could be an "incident response," where your team is convened to tackle an immediate problem, or it could be a strategy session, where you're looking ahead at potential issues and possible solutions. Be sure to answer these four questions:

- What is (and what caused) the problem?
- How can we address the problem immediately?
- How can we prevent the problem from recurring?
- What course of action will we take and why?

In all problem-solving scenarios, you should arrive at the following conclusions:

- A definite solution you will enact or a series of plausible solutions to choose from
- Assignments of responsibility — who will handle which part of the solution, etc.
- A timetable for the implementation of your solution(s)
- Safeguards to prevent the problem from happening again

#### **5) Innovation Meetings.**

You might also call these brainstorming meetings. These will often occur between team members who have a close relationship and will usually possess a creative element.

Examples include thinking up designs, brainstorming content for an ad campaign and generating ideas about potential new products. To achieve success, you'll want to create a welcoming atmosphere while observing these key pieces of advice:

- The quantity of ideas beats quality at this stage
- Refrain from overanalyzing ideas

- Encourage “out there” thinking

When all is said and done, your team should feel inspired and will have reached these goals:

- Generated a ton of ideas for the project
- Pushed the limits of the group’s creativity
- Gained excitement about the project that will spur further efforts

## **6) Team Building Meetings**

Every meeting has team-building potential, but a dedicated team-building meeting will center around the team gaining a better understanding of one another and furthering cohesion among the group. Team-building meetings may include structured activities, they might be freeform, allowing the team to interact at their leisure, or they might be some combination of both.

Regardless, dedicated team-building meetings should focus on creating a fun atmosphere to further the core goal of uniting your group. Popular team-building exercises include games, talent showcases, group creative classes and even team happy hours.

Each team-building session should help you accomplish the following goals:

- Improving trust among teammates
- Helping the group feel valued and welcomed
- Bolstering faith in the group’s mission
- Increasing dedication to getting the job done

### **3.1.3. 7 critical ways to prepare meetings**

Productive People Prepare for Meetings People hate meetings that waste time. Use these tips to be a time saver, not a time stealer.

#### **1) Research the attendees.**

There is no real excuse today for not knowing the people with whom you are meeting. Whether it's a one on one or a conference table of 10, you should have some idea of who is at the table. Get a list of attendees and Google each one. Check out their LinkedIn profile and perhaps even look at them on Facebook to understand who they are and what they bring to the conversation. The time spent up front will not only save time on introductions, but it will give you powerful insights should conflict occur.

## **2) Determine clear objectives**

Most meetings ramble because people wait until the last minute to determine what they want from the time spent. Even if you are the only one clear on what is to be accomplished, you can drive the results to meet your needs and declare completion when the objectives are met. That leaves the pressure on the others to justify hanging around.

## **3) Plan a suggested agenda.**

Some expert suggests leaving the agenda open until the beginning of the meeting. That doesn't mean you shouldn't consider what it looks like until the last minute. Have your preferred agenda prepared and share in the meeting at the beginning. Most likely people will accept your plan or at least voice any necessary alterations that can quickly be agreed upon.

## **4) Consider any obstacles.**

Rather than waiting for the explosions to happen, be prepared for the drama that may come your way. Think about which battles are worth your energy and which ones you are willing to concede. If you are mentally prepared for the emotion and conflict, you can keep your cool and will be ready to move toward resolution quickly.

## **5) Remove any roadblocks.**

You don't have to wait to solve every problem in a meeting. If you identify potential issues and can remove them before the meeting you will save time for the attendees. With enough careful forethought you might even remove the need for the meeting altogether.

## **6) Decide on desirable outcomes.**

Make sure everyone is clear on why the meeting is important and what the greater impact for the involved parties will be. Different than the meeting objectives, which are tactical, this is about understanding how this meeting fits into the big picture strategy. If people aren't clear on this then the effort and results will likely be disconnected at best and useless at worse.

## **7) Think about follow-up activities**

Before you get in the meeting, budget time to take action that capitalizes on the conversation. Doing a follow-up and follow-through are critical for successful meetings and yet most people don't think about it until after the meeting is over. If you budget time that becomes unnecessary, you can easily reapportion that time to other important efforts.

### **3.1.4. Tips for choosing the venue**

#### **1. Location**

Location is one of the most important factors when choosing a meeting venue. Choose somewhere that's convenient for all your attendees, with easy transport links or free parking. Dedicated meeting venues specialise in running meetings day in and day out and are more likely to be focussed on delivering to your needs. Don't underestimate the importance of outdoor space as well.

At Green Labyrinth our offices are based in central Swindon within a short walking distance of both the bus and mainline train station. We also have two large multiple storey car parks only one street away.

#### **2. Budget**

Before you start your search, agree a budget and stick to it to avoid being tempted by more expensive venues that are out of your remit. On the same note, take care about opting for cheaper venues as you may compromise on service or be stung with hidden costs after the meeting has taken place.

Choose a venue that is good value, with great facilities, food and service and take time to read customer testimonials and check their credentials. A good indication of quality is if the venue has recently won industry awards.

#### **3. Facilities and Services**

Good venues offer great facilities and services as standard. Benefits you can expect as part of your package include: your main meeting room, syndicate rooms, meeting equipment, technological

support, stationary, refreshments and free wi-fi. If your delegates are travelling some distance, you may need accommodation too. Can the venue provide it or recommend somewhere local?

Green Labyrinth offers our customers a range of great facilities including:

- free wi-fi
- kitchen facilities with tea and coffee facilities
- full catering with buffet lunches can be order by prior arrangement – ask to see menus
- training facilities
- air conditioning
- natural daylight
- Large plasma screen with links for laptops, bluetooth and iPads
- Practical space allowing for flexible room layout

#### **4. Space**

Ensure the venue you choose is appropriate for your needs. For smaller meetings, a more intimate venue may be best suited for your needs. For larger events, a venue that can offer ample meeting space with breakout rooms, restaurants, accommodation, outside space and leisure facilities, will be better suited.

Directly opposite Green Labyrinth is the Hydro Health Sports Centre with a swimming pool, gym, steam rooms and more. You are close to a range of restaurants from Noodle Bars to Italian restaurants and more. Being based in central Swindon close by and within walking distance we have hotels at a range of budgets to suit all needs

#### **5. Response Times**

When you've found a conference centre you like, pay attention to how quickly the venue's sales team responds to your enquiry. This may well be indicative of what the venue's service will be like throughout your booking. You may also want to consider carrying out a site visit before you book the venue to see it in person and judge whether it will fit your requirements.

## **Reference**

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