

7 Business Meeting Etiquette Tips

By Lyndsay Swinton

Why take meeting minutes when meetings last hours? Usually poor business meeting etiquette is to blame, with poor planning and facilitation squandering valuable time and energy. Use these 7 business meeting etiquette tips to brush up your meeting skills and be more productive.

1. Dinner jacket or dinner on your jacket

First decide on how formal your meeting will be. Advance warn attendees about special requirements, for example dress code, to ensure people understand what's expected and can prepare accordingly.

2. Too many cooks ... and not enough bottle washers

There is a skill in inviting the right people to a meeting. Only invite bosses, and the work will never be done, so make sure you invite the right mix of decision makers, experts, implementers and stakeholders to enable post meeting action.

3. but too many cooks spoil the broth

The flip side to inviting the right mix of people is that you may end up with an overflowing meeting room. As long as you get about 80% of who you need, you're doing well.

4. The 37 minute meeting agenda

Prepare a meeting agenda in advance and circulate this to your attendees - remember that meetings can come in all different durations, so get people's attention by having weird duration meetings. Meetings that start and finish on time (or even early!), and achieve all objectives outlined in the agenda will be appreciated by all, and will increase your chance of a better meeting next time.

5. Empty barrels make the most noise

Good facilitation skills are important when you have people fond of their own voice. Use [meeting ground-rules](#) to help avoid speaking for the sake of speaking. Or maybe don't invite them in the first place! How about introducing stand-up meetings? Brilliant for daily catch-up or review meetings, as conversations shorten when legs tire.

6. Stop violent agreement

And here's another reason why this is a great idea..... and another... and another. Do you really need to waste time violently agreeing with each other? It might be fun, but get consensus and move on.

7. AOB

Let's be blunt - Any Other Business can also mean Any Old Bull unless you keep tight hold of the halter. Ask for AOB points at the start of the meeting and only give them airtime if there is time. Check if any points have already been covered, then get the group to prioritise each AOB point and put a time limit on them.

Use these 7 business meeting etiquette tips and have more productive meetings, lasting minutes and not hours.

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