



PUTTING MORE MEAT INTO YOUR MEETINGS

Are your meetings too long? Too short? Too often? Too short? Too often? Do they lack direction and purpose? Or are they simply just boring and repetitive?

Meetings must be purposeful, informative, structure, simulating, and have the total commitment and involvement of all participants.

The Websters Dictionary describes a meeting as 'an assembly for some common purpose' and here lies the key. The meeting must have a specific purpose. A poorly defined meeting is almost worthless, costly and time consuming.

In a real estate office there should be three distinct types of meeting:

- Information exchange;
- Training; and
- One to one counselling.

The average real estate 'sales' meeting often consists of regularly going through the listings, updating information and possibly going on a tour to see the latest listings. Chances are there will not be an agenda or a clearly defined objective.

Firstly, before you call a meeting, establish its primary purpose. The motivating force behind your meeting will depend on what you are trying to achieve. Are you going to share information, train and educate, persuade and sell a concept or counsel staff.

After the purpose is clearly defined, write a formal agenda compatible with your objective.

Here, the trainers creed of the five 'P's applies. 'Proper Preparation Prevents Poor Presentation'.

The venue is most important and in the case of a regular meeting should occasionally be varied. The choice of venue will be governed by the number of people attending, what equipment is required ie overhead projector, powerpoint, whiteboard, video/dvd player, etc and personal needs.

Consider lighting, heating, comfortable seating and ensure minimal distractions. Time of day, the day of the week and length of the meeting are very important considerations.

Perhaps information meetings in the morning (occasionally over breakfast) and training meetings in the afternoon followed by light refreshments and fellowship.

And speaking of time, start on time and stay on time. Create a positive environment from the start and recognise achievements at the start of the meeting. As well, it is vital to have one of the most important features of the meeting early.

Follow the agenda, [Free Downloads](#) explain the objectives of the meeting and openly encourage participation. Remember the saying "Tell me, I forget. Show me, I remember. Involve me "I understand".

Importantly never humiliate a person in a group meeting. Discuss these areas in private with the person concerned at a one to one meeting.

Use open ended questions, "How can we..." "What further information can we..." etc.

Try and avoid the use of "Why" questions as the "Why" often comes across as an implied accusation or criticism.

Keep control of the meeting by acting as a moderator and not taking all of the limelight.

Consider alternating the chairing of the meeting with members of your staff. You might be pleasantly surprised at some of the refreshing approaches other will bring to the meeting.

Keep accurate records of the meeting. Note taking is essential. Here a standard 'Action Sheet' [Free Downloads](#) is highly recommended. This should detail what action is to be taken, by when and by whom and will be a regular agenda item for future meetings.

Taking into consideration the hourly rate of all participants, the cost of a meeting can be enormous. So kept the meeting on track and on time.

Finally, sum up the meeting. Outline actions to be taken and briefly establish objectives, venue, date and time for your next meeting.

Your objective should be for participants to walk out informed, positive and enthusiastic and saying that it was "The best meeting we've been to for a long time!"

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Recreated from one of Geoff's regular articles appearing in REI Journals.*