

INTRODUCTION

Congratulations. You have taken the first step toward gaining a better understanding of the important role the staff meeting plays in today's organizations.

In a world of computers, word processors, instant charts and graphs, electronic mail, faxes, and cellular telephones, it's easy to overlook one of the oldest most effective means of business communication: the staff or group meeting. Even in this age of electronic communication, face to face conversation with words and gestures is still the most effective means of conveying ideas and concepts. Properly used, the staff meeting has no equal in discussing issues and solving problems.

Every manager of people is a manager of time and, as such, recognizes the importance and benefits of the staff meeting.

HOW TO USE THE PROGRAM

Most of the experience necessary to chair or lead a meeting has been gained as a participant or attendee of various meetings. All too often, the meetings attended were poorly planned and executed. In the words of one manager, meetings were "just a ridiculous waste of time". Unfortunately, "waste of time", "unnecessary", and "too long" were the comments used by most executives and managers we interviewed.

Is it possible that had we interviewed one of those who attended your meetings, the same descriptive phrases might have been used? Even if your own meetings are flawless, it is very likely that you have attended a meeting in the past sixty days that you considered a "waste of time".

The old adage that time is money was never truer than when used to describe meetings. Consider this: Average staff meetings requiring the attendance of a manager or executive and five department heads can cost thousands of dollars per meeting, even in the smallest organization. That amount can easily double or triple if the preparation and action time is added.

PROPER USE OF THE WORKSHEETS

FOR PREVIEW ONLY

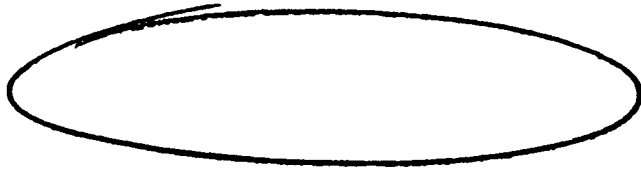
We believe that experience is the best teacher. We also believe that everyone can learn from their own past experiences and those of others. The purpose of worksheets 1 through 7 is to lead you through the learning process by using past meeting experience as a foundation for change.

Each worksheet has specific directions for use. Follow the instructions carefully. Avoid the temptation to jump ahead. Should the instructions say relax...then relax, take it easy, then return to the sheet.

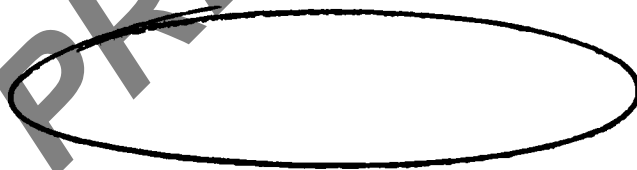
On the lower right hand corner on some sheets there is a place for cost analysis. Ball park estimates will do. These numbers will indicate trends. The real cost savings can be computed at a later date.

Begin by turning to Worksheet 1.

WORKSHEET 1



MEETINGS



FOR PREVIEW ONLY

INSTRUCTIONS: The word meeting has already been written in the center of the page. Without regard to their respective importance, jot down all the meetings that you will hold or be required to attend during the next thirty days. Use space on the page freely, that is, don't feel locked into making lists. And please, don't leave any meetings out; if necessary, use additional sheets.

EVALUATION: With a red pencil (marker), cross out those that are unnecessary, could be combined or don't require your attendance.

WORKSHEET 2

FOR PREVIEW ONLY



INSTRUCTIONS: Select one of the more important meetings from WORKSHEET 1. Write the title of the meeting in the center of the page. Ask yourself, Why? What is the reason for the meeting? Again, avoid lists. Jot down all the reasons around the meeting title.

EVALUATION: With your red marker, cross out all the unimportant reasons for the meeting.

WORKSHEET 3

WHAT

WHEN

WHO

WHERE

INSTRUCTIONS: Transfer the title of the meeting to the center of the page. Visualize the meeting. Remember it. Now jot down "who" was there, "what" did they add, "when," which means the frequency of the meeting, and "where" was the meeting held.

EVALUATION: Add up the approximate cost of this meeting. Don't forget the time of those behind the scenes, staff members, and travel time. Now multiply that amount by the number of meetings per year. With your marker, cross out those who are unnecessary to the meeting and subtract their segment of the cost from the total.

TOTAL

WORKSHEET 4



FOR PREVIEW ONLY

INSTRUCTIONS: Transfer "who" to the center of the sheet. Jot down all those attending the meeting.

EVALUATION: Are the best people there? Could anyone be eliminated? Does everyone contribute to the information input and decision making process? Mark out those who aren't necessary. It doesn't mean they aren't valuable, just unnecessary for this meeting. Add up the approximate cost of those whom you have crossed out and subtract that figure from the cost on Worksheet 3.

TOTAL _____

WORKSHEET 5



INSTRUCTIONS: Transfer "what" to the center of the sheet. Jot down the agenda. Refresh your memory if necessary. Don't forget anything. Include last minute additions.

EVALUATION: Were all of the items on the agenda necessary? Could some have been discussed without a meeting or rescheduled when those in attendance were better informed? Use a red marker.

WORKSHEET 6

FOR PREVIEW ONLY



INSTRUCTIONS: Transfer "when" to the center of the sheet. Jot down the frequency and the duration of the meeting.

EVALUATION: Is the meeting too long? Too short? Could the frequency be reduced? If so, correct the cost of the meeting and add or subtract from the figure on Worksheet 4.

TOTAL

WORKSHEET 7

FOR PREVIEW ONLY



INSTRUCTIONS: Transfer "where" to the center of the sheet. Jot down the location of the meeting.

EVALUATE: Could the location be changed to reduce interruptions, make it more convenient to get to, or inspire fresh ideas? If so, add or subtract the cost of your changes to the total on Worksheet 6.

NOTE: After completing worksheet #7, review each worksheet before proceeding to #8.

WORKSHEET 8

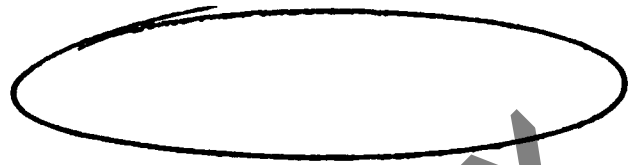
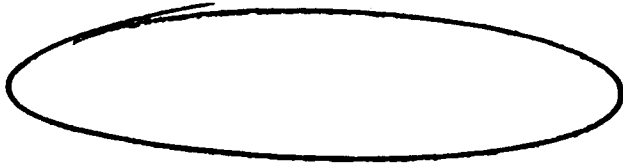
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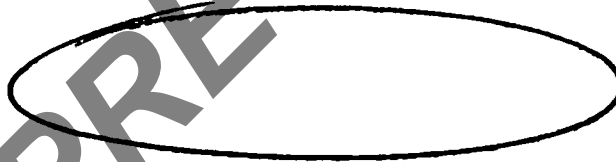
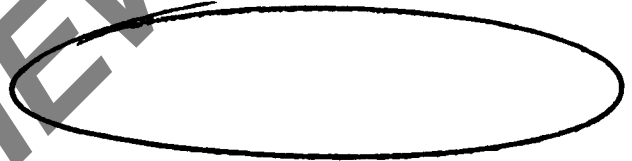
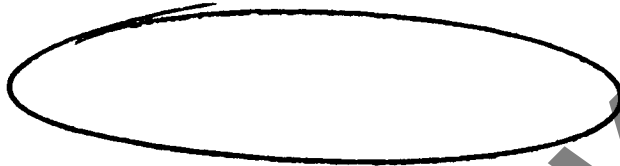
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**FEEL FREE TO
MAKE PHOTO
COPIES
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YOUR OTHER
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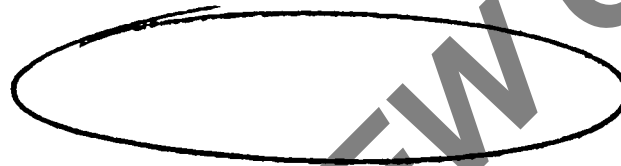
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DON'T FORGET

BEFORE THE MEETING

DO SCHEDULE MORNING meetings whenever possible. Everyone is fresh and ready to go.

DO VISUALIZE the meeting. You don't have all the answers. If you did, you wouldn't need a meeting. But you must have the goal of the meeting in mind.

DO KEEP THE PARTICIPANTS to a minimum. Only those who can discuss and/or decide should attend. A good rule of thumb is a minimum of five and a maximum of twelve.

DO PREPARE YOURSELF and others. If material is necessary, make certain it's there. If sales aids, overhead projectors, flip charts, or video are needed, arrange for them.

DO PROVIDE A COPY of the agenda to the participants prior to the meeting.

DO START ON TIME This means you need to arrive early. Time is money. Don't wait for the tardy one. If you start on time, people will be on time.

DON'T FORGET

DURING THE MEETING

DO STAY ON THE AGENDA. Frequent reminders will help keep the meeting on track and on time.

DO KEEP THE MEETING MOVING. Clarify, summarize, contribute, restate the objective.

DO ASSIGN RESPONSIBILITIES Appreciate everyone's contribution. What others think and say is important, or they shouldn't be in the meeting.

DO MAKE NOTES Take minutes of the meeting. If it's an important meeting, have someone experienced do it or tape it if necessary.

AFTER THE MEETING

DO KEEP IT SHORT No one benefits from a marathon meeting. Long meetings are unproductive and, in most cases, the result of poor planning.

DO FOLLOW UP The time and money invested in many well planned meetings is lost through lack of follow-up. Implement decisions and study discussions.

DO RECAP AND REVIEW Make certain the goal of the meeting has been achieved and that everyone clearly understands the decisions reached.