



[HOME](#)

Effective meeting management skills are not only for the board room

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Effective meeting management skills are not just for the board room. Everyone could benefit from these useful tips.

Effective Meeting Management: Tips to use at any meeting

- Have a purpose and success criteria (understand what “done” means)
- Have an agenda with time tables that support the above meeting purpose/goal.
- Stick to the time table and ground rules
 - Use of parking lot for items not fitting the original agenda
 - Use parking lot for items taking longer than their original agenda time
 - Stick to the purpose of the meeting.
 - Be willing to schedule another meeting to complete agenda, gather the right information and/or get the right people in the meeting.
- Verify that you’ve met your meeting’s success criteria
 - Summary of your action items owners, deadlines
 - Include Reasonable Forcing Functions and accountability partners
 - If you haven’t met the meeting’s “success criteria”, identify the follow-up items to achieve.

Often times, meeting items take longer than originally allocated because:

- 1) We don’t have the right people in the meeting – people are just talking the topic but aren’t the right people to do anything about it.
 - a. Need to reschedule and invite the right people authorized to “do something”
- 2) We get side-tracked on other side issues
 - a. Acknowledge those important issues, and place them on the Parking Lot list.
 - b. Schedule a separate meeting to give those issues the right time to discuss
 - c. Make sure you understand the right people for that meeting
- 3) Don’t have the right data or information to make a decision
 - a. If you don’t have the right data, information or people to make progress....reschedule
 - b. Don’t waste the time in a meeting that can’t accomplish the goal of the meeting.
 - c. If you happen to have the right people and right data for “a different meeting” – change it to “the different meeting” and release the irrelevant folks. Take advantage of the “right people” for “the different meeting”.
- 4) Noise versus necessary
 - a. Sometimes people want to vent. Timebox the venting.
 - b. Then, assign the action item to the person making the most noise.

Let me know which tip you tried at your next conversation and meeting.

About the author

Laura is a certified business and efficiency coach. She is also the Time Management Advisor for National electronic magazine: eXaminer.com. Read more of her time management articles

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She has been in the software and testing industry for over 20 years. She's worked with such companies as IBM, Ericsson, Staples, Fidelity Investments and Sogeti in various client advocacy and project management roles. The techniques she uses in her business coaching and client advocacy work saved these companies both time and money, which resulted in on-time, quality product delivery with higher client satisfaction.

Laura now uses her client focus, project, quality and people management skills in her personal life coaching career. As a personal life coach, she helps people integrate their goals and dreams into their everyday lives. Laura uses creative and practical tools to help her clients realize what really matters to them. They then follow-through with project and time management techniques to create the reality they really want.

Laura authors many articles and workshops on time management and strategic scheduling. She is also the founder of the electronic magazine the Rose Garden: the Art of Becoming.

Laura offers one-on-one career and life coaching, small group coaching, seminars and workshops. You can learn more about her at www.RoseCoaching.info and contact her at LauraRose@RoseCoaching.info