

*The Essential Series*

# Guide to a Great Meeting



Development Awards

Region 11 Training Ltd are approved to  
deliver ILM Development Awards

## **Introduction**

### **Purpose of this guide**

Very simple – this guide will support you to run a more productive and enjoyable meeting that will add value to your organisation and be remembered by those attending.

### **What we do**

We're a training company that know how to get the best from people. We've worked with people in this sort of setting for years and have experienced our fair share of good and really poor meetings, as you probably have.

Please make full use of this resource, pass on to colleagues or download further copies from our website.

Here's a taster of the type of professional training we deliver for our clients:

 **Coaching**

 **Management Development**

 **Sales Training**

 **Team Building**

 **Customer Service Training**

 **Training The Trainer**

 **Contact Centre Training**

 **Consultancy Projects**

### **How to contact us**

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## **Effective Meeting Checklist**

### **Preparation**

- Establish and define the purpose of the meeting
- Prepare an agenda and communicate to all attending highlighting time & location
- Brief any guests or speakers (timings, purpose etc)
- Arrive at the meeting before those attending

### **During the meeting**

- Create a positive and welcoming atmosphere
- Welcome guests and thank people for being on time
- Restate clearly the purpose or aim of the meeting
- Consider talking about the benefits of the meeting (What's in it for the people attending)
- Ensure you have a system for capturing any action points or notes from the meeting
- Encourage everyone to participate - direct questions around the room to give everyone an opportunity to contribute
- Be aware - listen and observe how people contribute & respond to what is being said
- Ensure action points are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Result orientated & Time bound)
- Take regular breaks, leg stretches
- Summarise and check understanding of the action points
- Thank people for their contributions
- Make it fun and enjoyable

### **After the meeting**

- Distribute notes and action points from the meeting, swiftly
- Again, thank people for their contribution
- Follow up on action points

## Meeting Top Tips



### **Ask for agenda items from attendees before issuing the agenda**

This allows you to pre-empt any contentious issues before hand, rather than someone springing it on you on the day. It will also allow you to build in sufficient time to cover the item in the depth required.



### **Plan your time**

When planning your agenda, write your best guess as to how much time you have allocated to each agenda item based upon a) length of time it will take to cover the item b) how much time the item actually warrants, in support of the meeting objective.



### **Attention spans**

Be aware that in today's business environment and the increase of more technology, peoples attention span will be limited.

Consider some of these methods to hold peoples attention, so you get maximum value;

- Arrange you meeting into ½ hour slots
- Brief your visitors/speakers thoroughly to ensure they don't waffle on
- Build some activity into longer sessions i.e. Q&A, brainstorm, group work, break out sessions
- Encourage people to sit in different seats next to different people through out the day
- Ask people to take responsibility for chairing relevant items on the agenda
- Ask for volunteers to keep time or take notes
- Use some of the short exercises within this guide to break the day up



### **Ask for feedback**

You don't have to wait until the end to ask, either. Why not ask part way through, that way you can act upon it quickly.

Some good questions to ask:

What's working well? / What's working less well? / What would you like to be done differently? / On a scale of 1 – 10 how would you rate the meeting (1 = low & 10 = excellent) / How would we have to change things to score 10/10?



### **Behaviour Breeds Behaviour**

Be aware of your own behaviour – Body Language, Voice Tone, Words that you say. These all influence everyone around you. You will set the tone for the meeting. So if you want a positive upbeat attitude from others first think about how you can model this behaviour. It's a bit like a mirror – what you see in others is usually a fairly accurate reflection. Make your behaviour infectious, in a good way.

## Icebreakers Bingo

An opportunity to identify something interesting about your colleagues

- First print off or photocopy this page - enough to give one to each person in the room
- Explain that this is a competition to see who can complete a line of signatures
- Ask everyone to walk around the room mingling with their colleagues. When they find someone who matches the description in a box i.e. Is left handed, ask them to sign in that box
- People carry on mingling (as fast as they can) until someone has completed a full line

**The first person to complete a single line (down, across or diagonal) should shout out BINGO!**

**(Each person can sign only ONE box on your card)**

Sings in the shower	Has been to America	Wants to write a book or a song	Has a Birthday in February	Has met a famous person
Read the financial press	Is left handed	Plays a musical instrument	Watches 'Big Brother'	Has a hobby
Same star sign as you	Knows a lotto winner	Has a 'most embarrassing moment' story	Drives a motor bike	Likes the same music as you
Can rub their stomach & pat their head at the same time	Has given up smoking	Has a name for their car	Has seen a ghost	Speaks another language
Is addicted to something!	Goes to the gym	Has children	Has a pet	Is a vegetarian

## Icebreakers

### **So you think you know each other?**

A great exercise to generate some energy in the room, get everyone laughing and learning something about each other.

#### **Instructions**

- Give each person a piece of blank paper
- Ask each person (in secret) to write answers to the following:
  - My favourite film is...
  - My favourite food is...
  - My favourite holiday destination is...
  - (You can of course replace these for your own questions)
- Ask everyone to fold their piece of paper, place in the middle of the table (or a box if you have one) and mix up
- Take it in turns to pick out a piece of paper and read out the answers to the questions
- Everyone else must guess who's favourites are being read out

It never fails to cause some amusement, as some are really obvious and others reveal a lot more about your colleagues than you first knew!

## Icebreakers Personal Shield

This activity certainly appeals to peoples creative side (whether they have one or not) and is useful to break the ice, get to know each other better and focuses people on something completely different so that they can approach your next agenda item with renewed vigour.

### Instructions

- Give out a piece of flip chart paper to each person in the room (self included)
- Make available coloured flip chart markers and blue tack
- Ask everyone to create their own personal shield that will describe to their hobbies, job/role, taste in music, personality.
- Without using any words – they must create their shield using only pictures! (expect everyone to gasp, even moan – assure them they can do it)
- Set a short time limit i.e. between 5 – 10 mins maximum
- Once people have finished stick their shields to the wall
- Ask people to circulate around the room to view the shields and find a little more out about each other.
- You could even award prizes for the best shields – up to you.

### Example



## Icebreakers

### Time to Boast

It seems natural for people in meetings to be critical of performance figures, other people or their ideas. This short and simple exercise asks people to focus on the positive side, particularly about themselves.

This is an exercise some people will find uncomfortable as a lot of people are not used to 'blowing their own trumpet'. Some people probably won't be very good at it, even playing their achievements down, despite being asked to boast! Others will probably enjoy the limelight!

It is especially relevant and important if a team is to play to the strengths of each member – how can you do this unless you understand what they are?

Try it out – have fun with it and watch a few people squirm at the thought of boasting!

#### Instructions

- Explain the purpose is to explore each others strengths in a positive way by asking everyone to boast a little
- Ask each person to write down answers to the following questions
- Dependant upon time ask people to share answers to some or all of the questions – allow them 30 seconds per answer
- At the end of 30 seconds lead a round of applause and move on to the next person
- Keep fast paced – to help you might want to keep the running order a secret and shout out the name of the next person after each person has had their 30 seconds

#### Questions

1. What is your greatest skill & why?
2. Over the last 5 years, what has been your greatest achievement (work related)?
3. What has been your greatest achievement (non work related)?
4. What have you done in your life that you are most proud of?
5. What two attributes explain the secret of your success?

## Brain Teasers Dingbats

<p><b>1.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">I                      Q FGH JKLMNO RST</p> <p><b>Answer</b></p>	<p><b>2.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>PLASMA</b> H<sub>2</sub>O</p> <p><b>Answer</b></p>
<p><b>3.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">B ILL ED</p> <p><b>Answer</b></p>	<p><b>4.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">P NOANO Y</p> <p><b>Answer</b></p>
<p><b>5.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">HAMLET WORDS</p> <p><b>Answer</b></p>	<p><b>6.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">venison</p> <p><b>Answer</b></p>
<p><b>7.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">P CIFIC A</p> <p><b>Answer</b></p>	<p><b>8.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">POLMUMICE</p> <p><b>Answer</b></p>

## Brain Teasers

### Sweet Tooth

#### Example

*Road through the stars*

*Milky Way*

#### Question

1. Wobbly infants
2. Fallen apples & pears
3. Where milk may fight
4. A kind of voodoo
5. A neighbouring planet
6. When to eat mints
7. Saville row
8. Sport of Princes
9. Wise guys
10. Musical melodies
11. Subject of conversation
12. Hint of eastern promise
13. The price on a mans head
14. A quiet word
15. Home perm
16. Ten pin bowling
17. A breed of dog
18. An American coin
19. An essential piece of equipment on a cart
20. Batman's arch enemy

#### Answer

## Brain Teasers **3 in 3 minutes**

- 1.** What are the next two letters and why?

s t n d r d . .

- 2.** Using only one extra line make the following represent 9.50am

I O I O I O

- 3.** Find the five letter word

H I J K L M N O

## Brain Teasers

### Partners

The theme of this quiz is 'Partners' – it could be singers, films, books, food and drink, TV characters, shops etc...

#### Examples

*S \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ & S \_ \_ Steptoe & Son*

*C \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ & W \_ \_ \_ Cheese & Wine*

1. B \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ & R \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
2. M \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ & S \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
3. B \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ & B \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
4. C \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ & The C \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ F \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
5. G \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ & R \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
6. S \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ & P \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
7. A \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ & E \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
8. P \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ & P \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
9. D \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ The M \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ & G \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
10. F \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ & C \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
11. D \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ & G \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
12. D \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ & R \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ T \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
13. G \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ & The T \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ B \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
14. F \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ & M \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
15. G \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ & T \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
16. S \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ & G \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
17. S \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ & S \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
18. S \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ & D \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
19. P \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ P \_ \_ \_ \_ & W \_ \_ \_ \_ \_
20. R \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ B \_ \_ \_ \_ of S \_ \_ \_ \_ \_

## Brain Teasers

### Answers

#### Dingbats

- |                      |                             |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. High IQ           | 2. Blood thicker than water |
| 3. Ill in bed        | 4. Pay through the nose     |
| 5. Play on Words     | 6. Big idea                 |
| 7. Drop in the ocean | 8. Mother in law            |

#### 3 in 3 minutes

- s t n d r d **t h** (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>)
- l o **I** o l o
- Five letter word = Water (H<sub>2</sub>O)

#### Sweet Tooth

- |                 |    |
|-----------------|----|
| Jelly Babies    | 1  |
| Fruit Drops     | 2  |
| Milky Bar       | 3  |
| Black Magic     | 4  |
| Mars            | 5  |
| After Eight     | 6  |
| Quality Street  | 7  |
| Polo            | 8  |
| Smarties        | 9  |
| Tunes           | 10 |
| Topic           | 11 |
| Turkish Delight | 12 |
| Bounty          | 13 |
| Whispa          | 14 |
| Curly Wurly     | 15 |
| Skittles        | 16 |
| Yorkie          | 17 |
| Dime            | 18 |
| Wagon Wheel     | 19 |
| Penguin         | 20 |

#### Partners

- |                                 |
|---------------------------------|
| Batman & Robin                  |
| Marks & Spencer                 |
| Bread & Butter                  |
| Charlie & The Chocolate Factory |
| Guns & Roses                    |
| Salt & Pepper                   |
| Adam & Eve                      |
| Pinky & Perky                   |
| Dennis The Menace & Gnasher     |
| Fish & Chips                    |
| David & Goliath                 |
| Del & Rodney Trotter            |
| Goldilocks & The Three Bears    |
| Fortnum & Mason                 |
| Gin & Tonic                     |
| Simon & Garfunkle               |
| Sugar & Spice                   |
| Samson & Delilah                |
| Peter Pan & Wendy               |
| Royal Bank of Scotland          |

## Team Communication Exercises

### Blow Your Mind

Ask everyone to pair up and number themselves **One** and **Two**

The **One's** have 5 minutes to learn the following numerical code

The **One's** will then have a further 5 minutes to teach their partner (the **Two's**) a way of remembering the system. They can use pen and paper

Once the 5 minutes are up, all communication stops and the paper should be taken in

The **Two's** will then be asked a series of questions in order to test their understanding

#### Numerical Code

1 =

2 =

3 =

4 =

5 =

6 =

7 =

8 =

9 =

## Team Communication Exercises

### Blow Your Mind

#### Expected Actions

- Clear explanations given
- Checking of partners understanding by testing throughout
- Breakdown the code into digestible chunks

#### Testing Exercise

Ask as many questions as necessary – answers provided

$12 + 4 = (16)$        

$79 + 10 = (89)$        

$31 + 11 = (42)$        

#### Debrief Prompts

- What worked well?
- How could you have improved your system for communication?
- Compare the styles & methods of communication between the pairs?

## Team Communication Exercises

### Picture Perfect

Working in pairs, one person must describe the picture (overleaf) to their partner, who must re-draw the picture as accurately as possible.

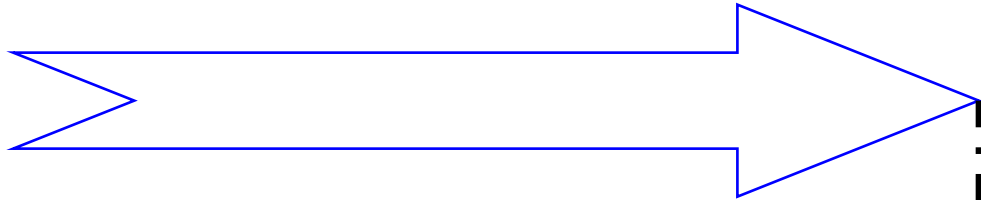
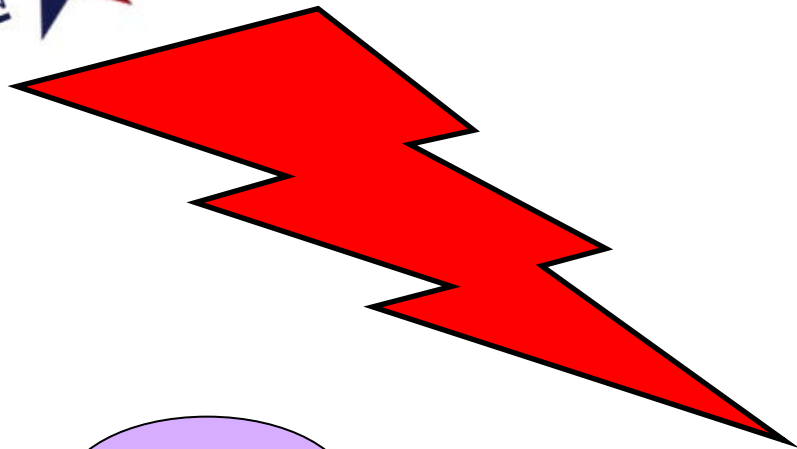
#### **Instructions**

- Explain that this tests communication and team working skills
- Split people into pairs and sit them back to back
- Provide one half of each pair (A's) with the original picture (overleaf) and the remaining people (B's) with a blank piece of paper and a pen
- A's now have 5 minutes to describe the picture to their partner
- B's must now draw what they are told

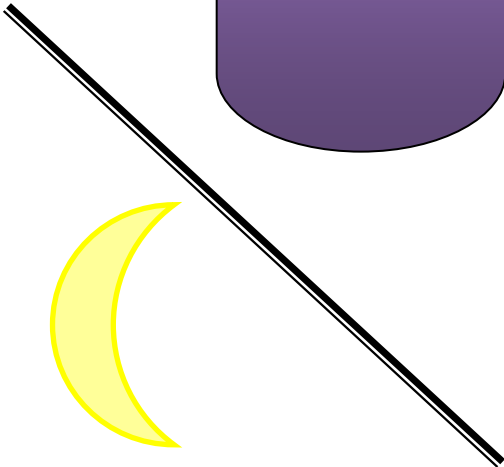
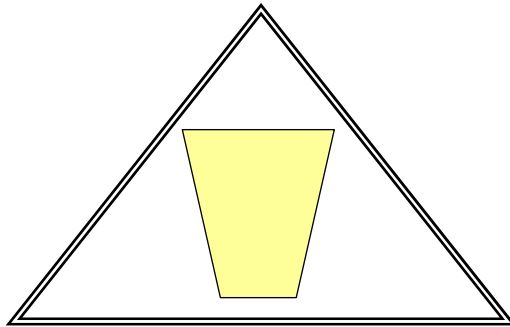
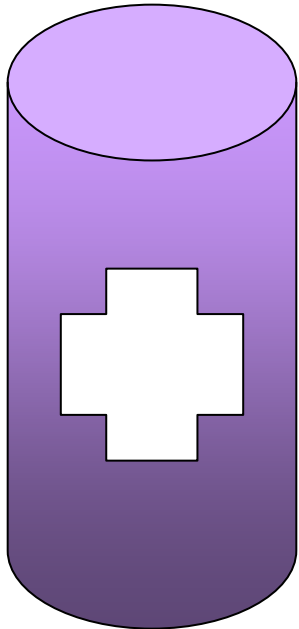
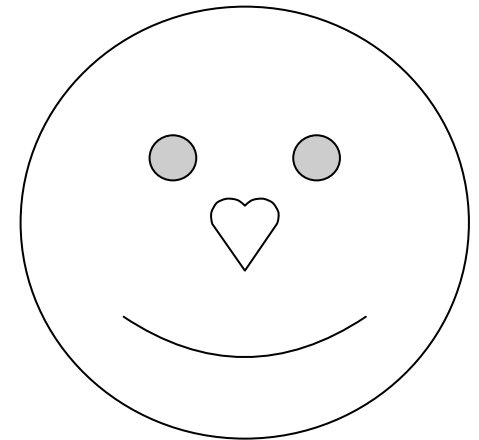
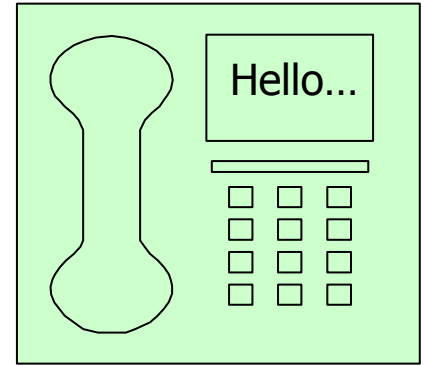
#### **Variations**

There are lots of variations to this fun exercise. Feel free to experiment with a few of your own rules e.g. The B's are unable to ask any questions – demonstrates the need for two way communication or just ask one person to describe and everyone else draws their interpretation of what they are told.

It is always a good idea to compare everyone's pictures at the end and discuss what went well, what didn't and why pictures differ.



**Success  
comes in  
cans not  
can'ts**



## Team Communication Exercises

### **A Powerful Vision**

Meetings, training programmes, conferences, seminars, workshops represent a large investment of both time and money from both an organisational and personal perspective.

Why not do a few rough sums and add up the investment that's being made in this meeting. Work out an average hourly rate for the people attending the meeting and multiply by the length of time you are meeting for and then again by the number of people attending. The amount usually surprises people.

Interesting though this may be, this alone is not usually enough to focus people's minds.

Why not try some of the ideas below which we've used to help run very productive sessions that ensure a great return on investment.

#### **Ideas...**

Questions to ask people before the meeting starts:-

- What would represent a favourable outcome today?
- What would represent an unfavourable outcome today?
- What would have to happen for you to leave today thinking this meeting was an indisputable success?
- Ask people to chair various and relevant sections of the meeting
  
- **Key question** - How would you like your contribution to be remembered today?
  
- Feedback
  - Pair people up for the duration (you could even do it secretly) and ask them to observe this person so that they can provide open, constructive feedback at the end.
  - At the end of the meeting, make time for the feedback to happen. Make sure people feedback on each others positive contribution as well as ways they could improve.
  - Try to position the feedback session so that people accept it well and don't take it personally.
  - It can work well if you ask people to answer the following questions:- What I liked about your contribution today was...because... and What I thought you could do differently was...because...

### Values

We hope that you have made the most of this 'Essential Series' resource and passed it on to your colleagues and friends so they too can run more effective meetings.

This is a small selection of ideas and practical and proven management tips that we've shared with you. To give you a better idea what it is like to work with us, we also share with you our values, below, which are evident from the moment you meet us.

They also help us ensure we add value to everyone we work with.

Thank you...

**Damian Palin**, Director  
Region 11 Training Ltd



#### Challenging

It's simple. People learn much more and much faster when stretched.

We challenge people to step outside of their comfort zone and encourage them to find better ways of doing things. It's all about improving and becoming better tomorrow than they were last week.



#### Engaging

We work hard with clients to ensure people are engaged and stimulated by their development. We use a blend of accelerated learning principles and focused activities to bring the training to life. With strong connections with the work place this encourages long lasting learning and real benefits.



#### Professional

We are serious about helping people and businesses improve. We adopt a professional approach to achieve this.

We are qualified professionals and bring our years of knowledge, practical experience and 110% energy and attention to each client relationship.



#### Fun

When people work with an enthusiastic, professional person and are engaged and stimulated by challenging activities, it's almost impossible not to have fun.

This is the vital ingredient that keeps us all healthy and ensures clients get value for money.