

TEAM EFFECTIVENESS

The Meetings We Don't Need



You can spend an entire day moving from one meeting to another, yet still have nothing done. Then, you work overtime to finish what could not be completed during the day. This is not uncommon for many teams, and over time, it can lead to tiredness, burnout, and a lack of motivation.

A meeting should help the team make progress, not create more work. The goal is not to have more meetings, but to make better decisions, clarify actions, and reduce unnecessary discussions.

The 4P Meeting Framework

1. PURPOSE

Why are we meeting? Before scheduling a meeting, clearly define its purpose. Is it a brainstorming session to generate ideas, an information-sharing meeting to align with the team, or a decision-making meeting to reach an outcome? Being clear about the purpose helps the team prepare properly and ensures everyone comes to the meeting with the right mindset and expectations.

- ▶ **Brainstorm:** Generate ideas and explore possibilities.
- ▶ **Information:** Share or align key information.
- ▶ **Decision:** Discuss key points and finalize decisions.

2. PREPARE

Come ready, not empty-handed. The host should share the agenda, objective, required materials, and expected outcome in advance. Participants should review the information and prepare their input before entering the meeting.

3. PRIORITIZE

Stay on the agenda. Focus the discussion on what needs to be solved or decided. Avoid turning the meeting into a progress-reporting session or discussing unrelated issues. If a topic is not relevant to the objective, park it for later.

4. PROGRESS

Leave with a result. Every meeting should end with:

- ▶ What was decided? _____
- ▶ What needs to be done? _____
- ▶ Who owns it? _____
- ▶ By when? _____

A Practical Meeting Checklist



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BEFORE

Make the meeting worth attending

- ☐ Set the purpose: What must this meeting achieve?
- ☐ Define the outcome: Are we here to create, align, or decide?
- ☐ Set the agenda: What 2–3 topics must we discuss? How much time does each need?
- ☐ Invite only the right people: Who needs to contribute or make the decision?
- ☐ Send pre-work: What information must participants read or prepare before the meeting?
- ☐ Set expectations: What do you need each participant to bring to the table?

DURING

Focus on solving, not just discussing

- ☐ Start with the outcome: Remind everyone what needs to be achieved.
- ☐ Stay on topic: Does this discussion directly support the meeting objective?
- ☐ Stop unnecessary updates: Can this update be shared by email or chat instead?
- ☐ Park distractions: Is this important but unrelated? Capture it and move on.
- ☐ Push toward a decision: What are the options? Which one are we choosing?

AFTER

Turn discussion into action

- ☐ Confirm the decision: What exactly did we agree?
- ☐ Assign the action: What needs to happen next?
- ☐ Name the owner: Who is accountable for getting it done?
- ☐ Set the deadline: By when?
- ☐ Close the loop: When and how will we follow up?



The 3 Questions Every Meeting Must Answer:



What did we decide?



What happens next?



Who owns it?



A productive meeting is not the one that lasts the longest – **it is the one that moves the team forward.**