



IOL (UK) Limited & Northgate Training

EXERCISES, GAMES & SIMULATIONS FOR MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT



Meetings! Meetings

“More than half the meetings held are a waste of time.”

We've all attended meetings that frustrate and irritate us. They may be badly chaired, rambling, irrelevant, lacking an agenda, running over time, dominated by one person – and lots more!

Meetings! Meetings!

Focusing on:

- ✚ Planning for a meeting
- ✚ Setting the agenda –and keeping to it!
- ✚ Participating at a meeting
- ✚ Avoiding mini-meetings
- ✚ Having an overall objective
- ✚ Keeping to time

Meetings Meetings provides a practical opportunity to drive home some basic rules and techniques to ensure participants know what makes a really effective meeting.

Meetings! Meetings!

Trainers' Comments

A stimulating activity which made all participants think again about their behaviour at meetings.

G. Skeens, Solomon Hare.

A useful and enjoyable exercise allowing trainees to practise communication, assertiveness and leadership skills but also emphasising the importance of planned, structured and co-ordinated meetings.

K. Bertin, Dickins & Jones.

Meetings! Meetings!

Duration 1 hour

Numbers 1, 2, 3 or 4 teams (of five or six participants per team, of any level)

Cost £350 plus delivery and VAT

Meetings! Meetings!

How It Works

In this activity participants prepare for, and hold, a meeting. There is enough material for up to 24 participants but you can use it with as few as five.

First, divide participants into meeting groups and issue each individual with a **Manager Card**.

This tells them which manager they represent at *Turners Hotel*. The six managers at the meeting are:

- General Manager
- Finance Manager
- Food & Beverage Manager
- Personnel & Training Manager
- Sales Manager
- Front of House Manager

Meetings! Meetings!

How It Works (cont'd)

Issues at the Meeting

Each Manager Card lists the main issues that managers need to discuss at the forthcoming Monday morning meeting. Issues include:

- the installation of a new marquee
- problems with boxes left in corridors
- a number of staff issues
- installation of some new equipment
- a potential problem with mobiles.

Participants spend 10 minutes familiarising themselves with their specific issues and prioritising them to ensure they deal with what they see as the most important ones first.

Meeting Skills

When ready, the six participants sit around their meeting table. If you have less than six people then there will be apologies for absence! The meeting begins and is scheduled to last 45 minutes. Often the General Manager takes charge; more often no-one does!

Occasionally teams draw up a rough agenda before they start. It is up to them what they do and as Trainer your role is merely to set the meeting up and observe - do *not* give advice and do *not* get involved!

The Manager Cards are cleverly designed so that there is a great deal of interlinking. As soon as a manager at the meeting mentions an issue, at least two other managers (and maybe all of them) have some fresh information to put forward. Within minutes there is total interaction! So the simulated meeting becomes very real - both for those taking part and those observing.

Meetings! Meetings!

What to Do

1 Put participants in 'meeting groups', introduce the exercise (PowerPoint optional), hand out **Team Brief** and allow groups the time to study and share the information.

2 Issue each participant at a meeting table with a different **Manager Card** and allow 10 minutes for reading and prioritising their issues. Give each manager a **Memo Sheet** and start the meetings, reminding groups that they have 45 minutes.

3 After 45 minutes, stop the meeting and discuss the individual action points on 'Managers' Memo Sheets and identify key decisions reached (on flipchart). The **Trainer's Notes** identify the main points. Broaden discussion into how the meetings were run. Were they effective? What lessons can be drawn to improve performance at future meetings? Issue each person with the two **Checklist Handouts**.

Ideally each meeting table will have their own flipchart and each individual manager is issued at the start with a memo sheet.

Key Objectives

The objectives for the teams are two-fold:

1. to list on the flipchart, major decisions reached
2. to list on their individual memo sheet, those issues that individual managers should follow up after the meeting.

Because of a poor chairperson or mini-meetings or too long a discussion on one topic it may be that the flipchart and many of the memo sheets remain blank! Whatever the case the Debrief at the end of the meeting is extremely useful. Participants not only critique their own meeting and their good and bad behaviours but they also draw up an Action Plan for future meetings in the workplace.

Two **Checklist Handouts** are included in the pack for participants to use:

- Arranging a Meeting
- Participating at a Meeting.

Meetings! Meetings!

Typical Discussion Points

- ✚ The importance of planning
- ✚ Preparing your own agenda
- ✚ Agreeing a group agenda
- ✚ Sticking to the agenda
- ✚ Avoiding mini-meetings
- ✚ The role of the chairperson
- ✚ Handling dominant speakers
- ✚ Keeping to time
- ✚ Summarising the decisions reached

TO ORDER
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Please contact

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