

Below is a list of solutions the class proposed to common issues with meetings. When putting these into practice Ask:

1. What is the right solution for my group?
2. How will I get buy-in to implement the solution?
3. What ways will I get feedback to see if the solution is working as intended?

Issues With Virtual Meetings

1. People are easily distracted

- Technology problems - remind people to log on early. With agenda send out any reminders or instructions for certain applications.
- Work email alerts - turn alerts off, close outlook during the meeting
- Phone calls- send all calls to voicemail during the meeting
- Cell phone texts
 - Wait until the meeting is finished, or delegate the task to another.
 - Meeting facilitators can remind people to silence their phones.
 - Work a break into the meeting for people to check their phones
- Ensure people are contributing/expected to contribute
- Ask individual people questions
- Quiet space without interruptions
- Interactive meetings to keep people engaged
- Video on can help with engagement (but not required)
- Having an agenda
- Schedule a break into a meeting
- Ask people to silence their phones
- Use stories, visuals, to engage people -- not just all talking heads, text
- Ask for active participation
- Keeping videos turned on
- Moderator asks people to check-in
- Protocol and/or ground rules

2. Can't hear clearly because of background noise

- Use headphones
- Suggest for person to move to a quieter room in chat
- Little kids or pets make it especially difficult.
 - Ask people in advance to try to participate in a quiet space
- Mute all
 - Allow host to mute participants
 - Ask people to turn on mute
 - Ensure a host and co-host to mute
- One person speak at a time
- Meeting dashboard owner

3. Action items far less likely to be done

- Meeting minutes
 - Take good meeting minutes and disperse them at the end of the meeting (note clear assignments), schedule a follow up or check-in meeting.
 - POD class on meeting minutes
 - Send out notes/minutes by email after the meeting with action items, the person responsible, and the date due by highlighted in yellow
 - Post meeting notes w/action items clearly highlighted with who will complete
- Summary / to-do list
- End of meeting, go through the to do list with timeframe: Who, What, When
- Send friendly reminder emails before due date
- Following-up
- Break up larger projects across teams to ensure timely completion

4. The start of the meeting is often delayed

- With the agenda that you send out remind people to start the log-in process early, cover in the meeting ground rule. Schedule meetings for 50 minutes instead of 60 minutes (gives extra time)
 - End meetings at 10 minutes before the hour so that people can transition and arrive on time at the next meeting
- Enforce rules on starting on time, giving just one minute for people to log on, then start. Create a culture of starting on time.
 - Just start “to respect everyone’s time”
- Shift the meeting to start later
- Introduction activity
 - Ice breaker
 - Corny Jokes
- Shorten agenda to account for late attendees

5. Not knowing who else is in the meeting

- Clear attendee list,
 - Make sure everyone has a listed screen name
 - Picture on zoom profile
- Use zoom webinar
- Ice breakers
- Ask someone in the private chat to identify themselves
- Use zoom settings that allow people to change their zoom name if they are calling in
- Facilitator can frame the meeting by introducing the various groups that are present if there are too many people for individual intros
- Ask participants who are calling in to let the facilitator know who they are
- Begin with introductions
 - Ask for major players to introduce themselves
- Calendar invitations to ensure it’s clear who is supposed to attend
- Roll call if less than 10 people or so
- Have folks introduce themselves in small meetings or breakouts

6. Lack of preparation

- Send out meeting agenda with clear roles days ahead of time
- Agenda sent beforehand to attendees with specific actions/questions requested
- Planning meetings with leaders
- Tell people what's expected of them: Be prepared to contribute!
- Parking lot for things that can't be handled during the meeting

7. Not able to get a word in

- Utilize raise hand function in zoom
- Asks for help from a co-facilitator
- Use hand-raising feature in zoom
- Make meetings smaller, not so many people
- Raise hand feature
- Established ground rules
- Good moderator
- Ground rules should cover time limits if necessary
- Incremental interventions
 - Point to your watch :)
 - In some meetings, raising your hand may be appropriate

8. When you ask a question or volunteers, nobody answers

- Ask the question again after no reply
- Be OK with silence. Allow 25 seconds, then ask the question again.
- Wheel of Fortune wheel that will call on people at random
- Round Robin check-ins allow introvert to know when their time is coming.
- Make participation by everyone a ground rule at the beginning, or let people know that they will be call on. Tell people in advance why we are doing it this way, to create a more engaging meeting.
- Offer space for more time
- Ask for round robin discussion
- Poll feature to engage
- Call out people specifically if it's small enough

9. Last far too long

- Follow the agenda
- Use tools to keep the conversation moving and to get to a conclusion
- Give a break every 45-60 minutes
- Assign the work via email if anything remains
- Remind folks to be respectful of individual's time
- Add timelines to agendas
- Better time management / moderation

Issues With Standing Meetings

1. No end date

- Need to reconfirm in advance of each recurring meeting
- Ask if the meeting is still relevant. Should the meeting become something else?
- Reassess every 6 mo or so about need / duration / interval
- Clear goals for each meeting

2. Unclear Roles

- Ensure all attendees are necessary

3. No Agenda

- Request agenda if you're not the host
- Cancel meeting if nothing for the agenda
- Reassess the agenda

4. Real decisions not discussed

- Give people opportunity to give people anonymously
- Survey prior to the meeting

5. Too much on the agenda

- Scale back agenda items