

## How Do Your Meetings Rate?

By Ann Latham

This meeting effectiveness assessment will tell you how much money, time, and morale you and your company are wasting in ineffective meetings. Take the test yourself and also ask other participants to give their candid feedback.

1. Write down the most important outcomes of the last meeting you attended.
 

I listed two or more with great certainty	3 pts
I listed one or more, but not with confidence	2 pts
I listed topics, but not exactly outcomes	1 pt
Not sure there was a point at all	0 pts
  
2. Ask two other attendees to write down the most important outcomes of the same meeting.
 

We all listed the same ones	3 pts
We all agreed on at least one	2 pts
There was nothing we all agreed on	1 pt
There was no overlap between any two of us	0 pts
  
3. How efficient was the meeting?
 

Focused, fast, can't imagine doing it any faster	3 pts
A few detours in hindsight, but understandable at the time	2 pts
Frequent detours	1 pt
I was never sure where we were headed	0 pts
  
4. Did the importance of the outcomes justify the salaries, benefits, and lost opportunities devoted to the meeting?
 

Absolutely, we made huge strides on critical issues	3 pts
Important, yes, but when you add up the cost ...	2 pts
Cost clearly outweighed the value	1 pt
Are you kidding? What a waste!	0 pts
  
5. Did the meeting start and end on time?
 

Started and ended on time and achieved desired outcomes	3 pts
Started and/or ended late but least we achieved desired outcomes	2 pts
Started and ended on time; did not achieve all outcomes	1 pt
Started and/or ended late; did not achieve all outcomes	0 pts

6. Were all attendees necessary and able to contribute?
- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| All were active, valuable contributors                           | 3 pts |
| Most contributed but one or more had little to add               | 2 pts |
| Most of us had something to add but it wasn't easy to contribute | 1 pt  |
| Many of us had nothing to add or made no impact                  | 0 pts |
7. Did you and others come prepared?
- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| We all knew what to expect and came well prepared                  | 3 pts |
| Most were properly prepared, even if somewhat by luck              | 2 pts |
| A few were prepared  | 1 pt  |
| The lack of preparation was embarrassing or typically non-existent | 0 pts |
8. Was interaction important or would written communication have sufficed?
- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| Any info presented was critical to the interaction that followed  | 3 pts |
| One-way portion was too long but good interaction followed        | 2 pts |
| Mostly one-way, some important interaction                        | 1 pt  |
| I could have read what I needed to know in a fraction of the time | 0 pts |
9. What was the distraction quota?
- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| I never saw anyone consult a Blackberry, do other work, or leave   | 3 pts |
| Some fiddling, a few departures, but most were well engaged        | 2 pts |
| Lots of other work was underway                                    | 1 pt  |
| I was too busy with my iPhone to notice; I suspect others were too | 0 pt  |
10. What was the predominant emotion you felt during the meeting?
- |             |       |
|-------------|-------|
| Enthusiasm  | 3 pts |
| Frustration | 2 pts |
| Boredom     | 1 pt  |
| Anger       | 0 pts |

Total up your points now and use the chart below to see where you stand and how much you could benefit from making improvements in meeting effectiveness.

Your Total	Potential for Improvement
28 – 30 pts	Your meeting was masterful! Use the questions where you lost points to determine how you can improve. Strive for 10 – 25% time savings and continue to hone your process.
24 – 28	You are above average and can likely save 25 – 50% of total time while also getting better results and improving morale.
19 – 23	Your meetings are pretty dismal but typical. A target of 50% total time savings with significantly better results and improved morale is not an unreasonable goal for you with the right help.
11 – 18	You are bleeding hours. Dramatic action is called for. A 50 – 75% total time savings with significantly better results and huge improvements in morale are possible with a serious effort to improve.
0 – 10	You might as well cancel those meetings until you get help. You could save over 75% in total time and make unbelievable improvements in results and morale.

In every case, use the questions for which you scored the fewest points to get you started toward better meetings. Visit my website to obtain additional help. Whether you want direct help in the form of a [workshop](#) or [consulting](#) or are eager to go it alone with [books and CDs](#), we have what you need.

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