



Workbook, CPD & Reflection Log

Episode 154: How to Fix Your Broken Meetings

with Carrie Goucher

Working in groups requires effective communication if you want to accomplish anything significant. You can send emails, share files, and talk over coffee. However, meetings are where critical decisions happen. They should create a space for you and your colleagues to share your thoughts and ideas and encourage discussion. Unfortunately, the never-ending need for meetings can often make them boring. Rather than moving forward, an unproductive meeting can discourage engagement and even worsen work relationships.

Meeting culture within the workplace can set the tone for your work environment. With facilitation and structure to your sessions, you can make better decisions with your colleagues.

Join us in this conversation to learn about different structures you can use and find the best questions to ask to make your work meetings a success!

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Quote to remember:

“Consider meetings as part of this whole web of communication and use them for what they're really good for which is humans talking about uncertainty and using judgment together.”

What You Will Learn

Meetings are a vital part of working together as a team. Unfortunately, it's also often viewed as one of the most boring part of work. Meetings can go wrong more often than they go right, but we can do them better. There are structures and factors that you can consider to make sure your meetings are smooth and productive.

Even before the meeting, preparation can help you facilitate a productive session. Sharing information and giving questions relevant to the meeting can create time for your colleagues to be prepared to give their answers. Stay on track and keep moving forward using your session plan or meeting agenda. Once the meeting happens, you might find that you and your colleagues are ready to bring their thoughts and ideas to the table.

Multiple studies have shown that ensuring basic meeting hygiene factors are an excellent place to start holding better meetings. These factors include respecting people's time and clarifying your meeting's purpose. It's also vital to ensure that everyone participating has a chance to speak and share their thoughts without being afraid of criticism and harsh judgment.

Meetings are also often a place of clashing ideas and conflicting opinions. However it's beneficial to any organisation to be able to disagree about a task without ruining your working relationships. Learn how to facilitate and structure your meetings to hear everybody's thoughts.

This workbook can help you learn more about meetings and discover fun practices that you can use to make meetings go from bad to good and productive.



Activity: Changing Your Meeting Culture

A good meeting can start with these hygiene factors. In the next meeting you go to, check whether these factors were present:

	Did it start and finish on time?
	Was a session plan or agenda shared?
	Has everybody had a chance to share their thoughts?

A session plan can bring focus to what you're trying to achieve with a meeting and help keep it moving forward. Write down the session plan for your next meeting. Use these questions to help you be clear on what you want to achieve.

What questions should the meeting answer?

What decisions need to be made?

What do you want the people you're meeting with to do?

Before the meeting, it's important to share relevant information to help them prepare.

Create a bite-size message that includes your session plan, meeting information, and questions they can consider in advance.

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What medium do you think is best for your team to spread this information?

Meetings should encourage discussion. Write down questions you can use to encourage participation. Make sure you add fun ones in there too!

- _____?
- _____?
- _____?
- _____?
- _____?
- _____?

Find out which structure can work best for your meetings. Apply them to your upcoming meetings and see which ones work best when meeting with your team.

Structure	How you applied it	Outcome
Rounds		
Alone Together		
Advance Questions		
"Yes, but..." critique		

Which structures do you think best worked for your meetings?

Separate task and relationship conflict. Pretend someone said something you don't agree with or someone was talking too much. Use the VAB framework to let people talk without making them feel criticised. What response can you give to that person? Remember to avoid the word "but."

Validate:
Appreciate:
Boundary:



You can capture your meeting outcomes using a shared canvas. In the space provided below, document what your meeting accomplished. You can also include this when you share information for your next meeting.

Decisions Made	What's Next
Who Needs to Know	Carpark

CPD time claimed:

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