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## **Running Team Meetings by Tony Atkins, Director of Advanced Training**

Running the team meeting is one of the most important jobs that a manager or leader does.

How well an organisation performs is in direct proportion to the motivation level of its people. The team meeting is a great opportunity to motivate. Correctly conducted, it is an outstandingly worthwhile management tool. Incorrectly conducted it can be a major de-motivator.

For team meetings to be successful there are five prerequisites:

### **1. Must be important**

There must be a real reason for holding the meeting.

### **2. Must be interesting**

How many of us have had to sit through a boring meeting? We must make sure our team do not do the same.

### **3. Have a formal agenda**

This helps to maintain focus and, if issued beforehand, helps people to prepare and so contribute fully at the meeting.

#### **4. Make them regular**

If you can plan your meetings ahead and/or stick to a particular day and time people will be better able to ensure that they can attend.

Make sure that there is always a real business reason for the meeting. Including team performance and results will ensure that there is a real reason for holding the meeting.

#### **5. End on a high note**

It is important to end on a high note that causes people to act and makes the team feel good about their opportunities to achieve.

### **Objectives of Team Meetings**

#### **1. To deal with administration**

This is not very interesting, but often necessary. People often dislike report writing, hate keeping records and try to ignore company rules.

#### **2. To train**

This is general training on the organisation, its service and its operating procedures.

#### **3. To inform**

Give any news about the organisation - performance, promotions, changes in the law, professional news etc.

#### **4. To set plans**

This gives the feeling of belonging.

#### **5. To motivate**

This is the most important of the five objectives.

## **Suggested Format for Team Meetings**

The format suggested below is not the only format, but it works very well. Many of the most successful companies use it.

### **1. Welcome**

Be genuinely pleased to see people. If we are not enthusiastic at the welcoming stage, the attendees will not be enthusiastic about the meeting.

### **2. Handle any obvious negatives**

We want negatives out of the way at the beginning of the meeting.

If we know that our people are troubled about something we need to ensure it is raised and properly dealt with, so that the meeting can move forward.

If we know that they are worried about their security - bring it up. If we have heard that they are criticising other departments - bring it up.

### **3. 'How to' training**

One of the best ways to tackle skills training is to develop a training cycle. One of the most effective training methods is repetition. Involve other people. Do not just pontificate meeting after meeting saying the same thing in the same way.

If one of your people is particularly good at something, use them to tell the meeting what they do. Apart from being very effective, it also has a motivational effect on the person selected. They are being recognised for something they do well.

### **4. Attitude reinforcement**

Enforce the feeling of belonging by:

- informing of new services
- informing of organisational policy plans or forthcoming changes
- asking for contributions and feedback on the news that we have.

Then cover some formal aspect of attitude development.

## **5. Recognition**

Thank the team as a whole. Praise top producers; new people who have had early success; the person or office that has exceeded their goals by the greatest percentage. Praise everyone who has achieved his or her goals, or have contributed additional effort.

Get the stars to say a few words to the group.

## **6. Sell impending events**

Always end the meeting on a high note. Sell the benefits of any change in organisational policy. Announce and sell any changes in responsibilities, or any other items of note. Sell the next meeting.

### **Note**

Tony Atkins will welcome the opportunity to discuss any views or comments prompted by this article. He can be contacted on his direct line number 0118 979 2533, or by email at [tony.atkins@a-t.co.uk](mailto:tony.atkins@a-t.co.uk). Advanced Training will be happy to discuss your specific business needs and help you to deliver the right development for your people.