

# How-To Create More Efficient Meetings



Meetings - we have to have them but they can be giant time consumers in our work day. For many companies, meetings are prolonged from chit chat and ramble. Others are poorly organized. This can be frustrating for employees that have piles of work.

As a Specialty Quality and Regulatory Recruiter, I have seen the processes of many different types of companies. Some works. Others ends in disaster. Meetings can be crucial to organize your team and make sure you are on the same page.

I have outlined tips that can create more efficient meetings. Start implementing these tips to save valuable time at work.

## Review Attendee List

It's frustrating for employees who are sitting at meetings that they know that they don't have to attend. A meeting could add an extra hour onto their work day. Before you ask for a meeting, consider who really needs to attend.

The employees that should be at meetings will contribute to the project. Unnecessary attendees will only waste valuable time at the company's expense.

## Distribute Written Agenda in Advance

Be prepared before the meeting. Create a written agenda and email it to your

attendees. That way, they will be prepared with the information that they need to bring. Your employees will not be pulling up information spontaneously on their lap top. You have already prepared them for what you need to discuss.

## **Manage the Meeting by the Clock**

It's easy to waste time chatting about weekend plans, family, or sporting event. However, meetings are not the time to have these discussions. Create a timeline to keep the meeting moving.

For example, 10 minutes for project status. 30 minutes for planning.

Determine the timeline that works best for the productivity of your team.

## **Take Notes**

We can't remember everything. As a business leader, it is essential to take notes. Record project status, updates, and plans. Type out your ideas and send the record to attendees after the meeting. This will prevent your team from forgetting details. You will not have to repeat information at the next meeting.

## **Start On-Time**

Along with following a time schedule is starting on-time. Tell your employees in advance the meeting will begin promptly at the arranged time. Start the meeting even if some of your attendees are absent.

Punctuality is professional and necessary in the workplace.

Tardiness is embarrassing for most professionals. Starting your meetings on time can help influence your team to arrive promptly.

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# When to Give a Raise



It's important to make your employees feel valuable. A large part of doing so is giving raises. The trick is knowing when and how much to provide. You need your employees to prove their worth but not feel over expended without proper compensation.

As a Specialty Quality and Regulatory Recruiter, I have seen successful companies follow the properties that I will outline in this article. Employees leave jobs for many reasons. Pay and lack of recognition are big ones.

## Acknowledge Value

To award raises, you must understand value within your company. This means, creating key performance indicators (KPI's) for each employee. That way, your employees will know what they are working toward. Make sure that your goals challenge them but are achievable.

## Keep Your Employees Informed

Communication is essential in any relationship - this includes business. Keep your employees informed throughout the year of whether they are meeting their KPI's. You could do this by quarterly reports. Most people want to do well. Taking the time to review job performance, write a report, and meet is an investment for your company. Growing the skills of your employees is cheaper than hiring.

But, of course, if you need to add to your team or upgrade the team you have, I can help you find the right employee to help you meet company goals.

# Don't Guess! Crunch the Numbers

If your employees reach their goals, it's essential that you provide them with the correct compensation. This is not only essential for them but the financial stability of your company. Employees receive more salary when they are providing more return to the company. Top performers should get a bigger raise, but be careful.

Giving too much of a raise can cause drama. Employees talk. If a colleague earns less of a raise than another a coworker could get upset. When you give your employee the raise, explain what goals they completed to justify the number.

It's also important to make sure what you are paying your employees is competitive. There are salary surveys that can help. And for Regulatory and Quality positions in the San Francisco Bay Area I can be a resource to let you know what the market is paying for these positions. Paying a competitive salary will help you keep your employees. If you don't want to pay the market rate for good talent, your competitors will.

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# How-To Manage Different Personalities in the Office



Managers have more responsibility than overseeing project scope and client delivery. People Management can be the hardest tasks on a manager's job description.

Every employee is different. Successful managers recognize employee strengths and different types of communication required. This is not an easy task. You must first understand the different personality types.

According to Gallup's State of the American Manager: Analytics and Advice for Leaders report, there are 6 types of personalities.

## **Personality Types**

### **Judging**

Judgers want work to be neat, orderly, and established. They want the workplace to be predictable.

### **Perceiving**

Perceivers are more openminded than judgers. They can change to your office's situation and respond well to unpredictable events.

### **Extraversion**

Extraverts are lively, energetic, and always looking for ways to interact with other coworkers. Extraverts are often involved in brainstorming sessions and work well with others.

### **Introversion**

Introverts are the opposite of extroverts. They would rather perform tasks by themselves. They are independent, reserved, and focused.

### **Thinking**

Thinkers are the analytical employees in the office. They will think of how to improve projects and are detail oriented. Thinkers are often experts in a single field.

### **Feeling**

Feelers are the opposite of Thinkers. A Thinker is compassionate, warm, and supportive. They often go out of their way for other employees. Their motivation

is often for people, rather than facts.

# How-To Manage Different Personality Types

The first step is to assess, not assume. View every new hire as a blank slate. After you discover their personality type, you will be better able to manage for each employee's strengths and talents.

Some simple way to gain some insights as to their personality type is to ask them to describe a job or project that they really enjoyed, and ask them what specifically made it such an enjoyable experience. You can also ask the opposite question of a job or project they enjoyed the least and what made it so terrible. Their answer will give you clues as to what is most important to them and how best to manage them.

The Meyer Brigg's Personality test can provide a more accurate depiction. Speak with Human Resources to discover if testing is available for your employees.

Managers are the backbone of the company. Make it clear that your employees are all working toward a common goal. You may need to reassign your employee's tasks for their strengths. Doing so, might be timely but will contribute to the success of the project.

By narrowing down your employee's strengths, they will feel more successful and appreciated. Everyone wants to feel appreciated. Your team could work harder for you which increases productivity. Do not punish your employees in public if they are not achieving their goals.

Learning to manage different personality types can be rewarding and improve employee happiness and the productivity of your company. If you are hiring, know what skills you require. As a recruiter, I can help create appropriate personality questions to find the best employee for the job position.

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# 4 Steps to Creating a Great Delegation System



Delegation can be difficult for many business leaders - even scary! When you delegate, you are handing over responsibilities. Often, these could be tasks that you performed well for years.

*Wouldn't it be better for the company to just continue the tasks yourself?*

Rarely.

Delegation can improve the productivity of a company. You can complete work faster and grow branches of the business. It can even help you keep your most valued employees by giving them new challenges. If delegation is a struggle then follow these five steps:

## **1. Trust Your Employees**

The first step to delegation is trusting your employees. If you cannot trust your employees you will never be able to delegate.

Ask your employees if they would like to take on more responsibility. Tell them if this could lead to a raise or promotion. You can even make this part of your employee development plan.

## **2. Establish Your Priorities**

Create a priority system for delegating tasks. You can divide tasks into categories - for example, urgent, important, and low tasks. Delegate the urgent tasks first.

### **3. Hire If Necessary**

No delegation systems work without a strong team. You may determine that you need to hire after you establish priorities and the status of your employee.

As a Specialized Quality and Regulatory Recruiter, I have helped business leaders hire productive employees to handle delegation, and to upgrade the caliber of their team.

### **4. Include Instructions**

It would be great if your employees could read your mind. Unfortunately, most businesses don't have that technology! Include detailed instructions to get your delegated tasks finished correctly and also set clear expectations. Eventually your employees will not require lengthy instructions which can save you hours, or even days of work.

What to Include in Your Instructions

- Detailed Milestones
- Deadlines
- Small Tasks

Delegating is a major step for any business leader. If you feel you need to add to your team, contact me to discuss your needs and we can create a solution plan for you. Contact me at [jking@rfocus.com](mailto:jking@rfocus.com) or (541) 639-3501.

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# **How To Discover a Candidates "True" Personality**



In the past two articles we took a look at interview questions that can help go beyond the standard interview questions. This time we take a look at breaking through a candidate's best behavior during the interview and "honeymoon" period of employment.

From early childhood we are taught to always act on our best behavior when meeting new people. As we get older we are taught to put our best foot forward whenever we are networking or interviewing. **How people act in an interview can be very artificial.**

The best-case scenario is that the interview is a well-rehearsed production with a candidate who has dressed in their best suit ready to give a prepared "pitch" on their attributes and abilities. This production generally continues through the "honeymoon" period of the first six to twelve months that the candidate is in the position.

The shiny veneer usually fades at the 18-month mark, just when the candidate is fully trained and integrated into the team. How can this be avoided? Luckily the resume and interview can shed all the insight needed.

**A candidate's true colors can be seen in a candidate's job history.** If the candidate who has been in the workforce for 5 years or more has had five different jobs or more, there could be an issue. While this is not a tried and true means of weeding out potential issues in the future, it is definitely a talking point for the interview.

By asking the candidate about the chronic job changes, much more insight can be gained. What attracted them to the position and/or company? Why did they leave? Do they regret leaving? How did their manager rate their performance? What aspects of the job did they like and dislike?

Digging deep into the candidate's past will not only take them away from the well rehearsed stock interview questions, but will also cause them to hopefully be candid about their job history. It could be revealed that they are a victim of layoffs, hence the frequent job changes. Perhaps they continually apply for and accept jobs that they are overqualified for, but feel that they can make the best of.

**The most competent person may not possess good judgment.** This is especially important in industries where confidentiality is important. Whether it is client/ patient information, trade secrets, or other sensitive information it is important to know that your staff is abiding by company policy and/ or the law.

Gauging a candidate 's values can be achieved through interviewing. **Real life scenarios that take place in the specific workplace can expose how that candidate may react when placed in that situation.** Do they follow a manager's instructions about honesty with a customer when it comes to a product delivery date? If a manager leaves sensitive documents accidentally out in plain sight would they read them?

**Once the interview process is complete- ideally with the candidate meeting with the hiring manager and another leader in the organization - it is time to check references.** Candidates should be asked to provide contact information for direct managers of previous employers. These are the individuals who can shed the most insight on the candidate's past performance. Speaking to the direct supervisor 's direct report can give even greater insight and unbiased information on the

candidate. The BEST question to ask a prior manager is "What is the best way to manage and/ or motivate (name)?" While previous managers may hedge on not recommending they will often answer that question candidly.

Employee attitude, not skill is usually the largest fact or in failure in the first 18 months of a position. Seeing through a candidate's best behavior during the interview process will help determine the long-term success of your new hire.

If you're losing exceptional candidates to your competition or finding that your pool of qualified candidates is drying up, then I invite you to a complimentary consultation on how to attract great talent AND keep from losing them during your interview process. Simply reply to this email to schedule a call. I promise that you will leave our call with 2-3 ideas to greatly impact your ability to find,

attract, and procure the top 10-15% of the candidate pool on a consistent basis.

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# How-To Improve Your Schedule



Have you ever jumped on Facebook, only to still be scanning a half hour later? We have all done it. At work, distractions can be a serious problem to our productivity.

A thorough schedule can be a lifesaver when we are struggling with distractions. You are able to break down your tasks into a manageable timeline that helps keep you on track. That's just one piece of the puzzle. Learn some of the best techniques to managing your schedule to save hours in your work week.

## Break It Down

Almost every task can be broken down. Instead of "write a report", schedule 20 minutes for researching, 20 minutes for an outline, 40 minutes for a rough draft, etc. Breaking up projects makes your day more manageable.

## Be Realistic

You can't do everything in a day. Be realistic with your work week. We may really want to complete a research project but with other deadlines, it's not always feasible. Instead, create a realistic schedule with push goals if you have extra time.

# Prioritize Items

Start your day with your two most important items. For many of us, that could be checking emails and meetings. Finishing your priorities prevents stress for the rest of the day.

# Time It

Create a timeline for each day. We often think optimistically that our report summary will only take an hour when in reality, it will take two. Be honest with yourself.

*How much time will the project really take?*

That way, you can comfortably fit the assignment into your schedule. Any extra time can be used for miscellaneous tasks or a head start on another project.

# Schedule Time to Schedule

As your week passes, you might need to reschedule your days. Give yourself a half an hour on Friday to create the schedule for the following week. Schedule at least ten minutes at the end of Monday through Thursday to make changes. As meetings and projects arise you will need to be flexible.

# Acknowledge What You Accomplished

Pat yourself on the back! You deserve it. Work can be stressful and managing your work schedule can be complicated. At the end of each day, reflect on what you accomplished. It can help boost morale and keep you motivated.

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# How-To Professionally Quit a Job



Quitting a job can be life changing. You probably spent 40 hours a week at the office, had coworkers that became friends, and relied on the job for your cash flow.

As a specialized Quality and Regulatory Recruiter for over 20 years, I see people leave jobs for many reasons. The following situations are most common;

- Higher Pay
- Career Advancement
- Escaping a Negative Work Environment
- More Interesting Work
- Lack of Recognition or Accomplishments
- Better Alignment Between Personal Values and Organizational Priorities

If you are seeking a new job, it is important to follow professional procedures. You will have a better chance of receiving a positive referral.

## Provide at Least Two Weeks of Notice

Always provide at least two weeks of notice when quitting your job. Your company needs time to prepare for your departure. They will need to disperse your responsibilities among other coworkers, and start the hiring process or promote an employee into your position.

# Make up your mind first

Before you submit your resignation, you must be clearly committed to leaving. Have you already pursued all avenues for advancement within your firm? If so and you didn't get the response you hoped for, it's time to leave. Since you may be immediately walked out of the building upon giving notice, make sure you have cleared all personal files from your computer and desk.

## Notify Your Boss in Person

Notify your boss first, in-person. I have seen many employees make the mistake of sending a resignation email. An email is unprofessional and you will still have to face your boss at some point before you leave.

First schedule a time to speak with your boss privately. Simply state that "I've so enjoyed working with you here, but another opportunity has presented itself and I've made a decision to move on." Your boss might propose a counter offer. Be prepared with whether you would accept the conditions and your bottom line.

## Give Your Notice in Writing

In business, it's important to get everything down in paper, including your resignation. Provide your boss with a resignation letter when you meet. The following is an example of a resignation letter.

### Resignation Letter Example

Your Name

Your Address

Your City, State, Zip Code

Your Phone Number

Your Email

Date

Name

Title

Organization

Address

City, State, Zip Code

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name:

I want to thank you for all you have done for me here at (company). It's been a pleasure working with you and representing the company as your (job title).

I have accepted an offer with another firm and have decided to tender my resignation as of today, with my last day being (date). This decision has nothing to do with the exceptional opportunity you have provided for me here. You and the company have been more than fair with me, and I genuinely appreciate all of your support.

I wish (company) continued success, and I want to thank you for allowing me to be a part of your team. I hope you will respect my decision. Please feel free to let me know how I can help to make this a smooth transition.”

Sincerely,

Your Signature (hard copy letter)

Your Typed Name

## **Be Prepared to Explain Why You Are Leaving**

Your boss will probably have questions of why you are leaving. Your answers can provide a perspective of where the company needs to improve.

### **Common Questions During an Exit Interview**

- *Why are you leaving your current position?*
- *Do you think you were adequately equipped to do your job well?*
- *What was the biggest factor that led you to accept this new job?*
- *What did you like most about your job?*
- *What did you like least about your job?*

# Return Company Property

Don't forget to give back keys, ID badges, computers, documents, and any other company property. Your company does not want to chase you down. Everything should be handed over on your last day of employment.

Quitting your job can be scary but it opens the door to a new opportunity. Email me your resume at [jking@rqfocus.com](mailto:jking@rqfocus.com) to get started in a new career.

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# How-To Be An Inspiring Leader



All business leaders know that it can be very frustrating when your employees are not engaged. Work quality decreases and the team operates less cohesively. Sometimes, the problem is that your employees are uninspired. Evaluate your leadership habits to determine if you can create an inspirational workplace.

## Reward Employees

Rewards aren't just for dogs and children! Make your employees feel important by rewarding them accordingly.

For example, create contests in the office for ideas on cost reductions or streamlining a process. Whoever wins gets a bonus. See more examples of company rewards in [20 Techniques for Acknowledging Your Employee's Good](#)

Work.

## **Focus on the “Why” Rather than the “What”**

Have you ever been handed off a task without knowing why? This can be frustrating when you have piles of work to finish.

Do not just send an email to your employee asking to complete a task by the following day. Explain to your employee why the task needs to be completed.

For example, there could be a productivity problem within the company. The task is the first step to a new system to increase productivity by 25%. When your employee understands why they are completing the task, they will feel happier about getting the job done.

## **Provide Training Opportunities**

Most people start new jobs with hope of a better career. However, employees can lose motivation and get stuck in the same position for years.

Keep your employees inspired by providing training opportunities. If you have the budget, industry specific conferences are held throughout the country. Sending employees is an educational opportunity to improve job skills and inspire creativity.

## **Be a Role Model**

Have you ever heard the phrase “practice what you preach”? In business leadership, this can refer to job performance. If you want your employees to show up on time and complete their work thoroughly than you must do the same.

## **Encourage Participation**

Lack of participation can be a major problem at work. Your company could lack valuable innovation that makes a business unique. Eventually, you need to replace employees that do not contribute to the team.

Firing your employees should never be the first step! Replacing an employee is time consuming and expensive. Make sure that you are giving your employees a reason to participate.

### **How-To Encourage Participation at Work**

- Offer Rewards
  - Keep Participation Sessions Brief
  - Inform Employees of the “Why”
  - Create a respectful environment where all ideas are welcome
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## **5 Tricks to Ask for Time-Off from Work**



Asking for time-off from work can be nerve-wracking.

*Is our boss going to be upset?*

*How do we ask?*

However, it's essential to take time-off from work to avoid burn out. When we have the vacation opportunity, it's important to know the best way to ask to make asking less nerve-wracking.

The first step is to know your company's vacation policy. For example, many companies have busy seasons that do not allow time off unless it is an emergency.

You are probably limited on time. Ask your Human Resources person before your supervisor.

## **Don't Ask at the Busy Season**

Many companies have busy seasons. It could be when you gain the most contracts, develop a strategic plan, or attend conferences.

Plan for a break before or after your busy season. Recovery from intense work can also help you avoid burnout.

## **Schedule Your Time in Advance**

The more notice you can give your boss, the better. Doing so, allows your team to prepare for your absence. You can also complete important projects. Check your vacation policy for the mandated amount of time that you must provide.

## **Ask in Writing**

Submit your request in writing to ensure that your boss receives the correct details. Include the dates of your vacation and availability during your trip.

## **Ask Rather than Tell**

Requesting time off should be a discussion. The essential technique to creating a discussion is to ask rather than tell. It brings a sense of cooperation, understanding, and compromise.

### **Avoid phrases such as;**

- "I am going..."
- "You need to..."

### **Instead, use phrases such as;**

- "Can I..."

- “Would it be possible...”

## **Plan the Best Time to Speak with Your Boss**

You don't want to catch your boss at a bad time when you are asking for time off. Email your boss a meeting request. The meeting will be more relaxed when it is convenient for both of your schedules.

## **Share How You Will Prepare for Your Time Off**

Your absence could mean that extra work for the team. Explain to the boss how you will prepare for your time off. Share the list of projects that need to be completed before the trip. Discuss your availability during the trip. Your boss might expect you to check emails and voicemails. Make sure you are on the same page.

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## **How-To Get Your Boss To Support Your Ideas**



Business owners want their companies to grow and eager employees move the company forward. If you want to advance your career, it is important that you

promote new ideas for business development.

If you have a new idea for your employer – great! However, any great idea can be dismissed if it's not presented well. Do your homework. Your boss will take your idea more seriously if you are prepared.

## **Align the Values of the Company**

The most imperative step is to ensure your idea aligns with the company's core values. For example, Patagonia clothing company is committed to using environmentally friendly methods to create their products. An accepted pitch probably aligns with sustainability. Before pursuing your project, make sure that it withholds the values of your company.

### **Examples of Core Values**

- A commitment to sustainability and acting in an environmentally friendly way
- A commitment to innovation and excellence
- A commitment to helping people less fortunate
- A commitment to building a strong community
- A commitment to immediate customer service

## **Get the Support of Your Co-Workers**

Enlist the support of your co-workers. This could be staff that would also work on the project and benefits from the results. To achieve your co-worker's support, try testing the concept on reliable team members.

Your boss could also be impressed with your ability to lead team members. Communication, management, and passion are necessary in leadership positions that could be a career goal.

# Have an Idea of Why the Project Will Benefit the Company

Every project requires company resources. The project might cost the company money, employee hours, or new software. You should be able to answer why your project is worth company resources. If you cannot answer this question, then it is almost certain that your idea will be dismissed.

Pursuing an efficiency solution or new source of revenue, could send you on the fast track to advancing your career.

## How the Project Will Benefit the Company

- Increase revenue
- Reduce expenses
- Improve efficiency
- Solution to problem that the manager has been trying to achieve
- Help your team become more successful

## Be Flexible with Feedback

Your boss will have questions and feedback to your idea. That is a good thing! If they did not like your idea than it would have been dismissed. Be prepared to make modifications to the project and take shared ownership.