

# TIPs to make the most of your meetings

Feeling overscheduled? Struggling to find time to prepare for client meetings? McKinsey & Company research reveals that spending too much time in internal meetings is one of the most common employee complaints.<sup>1</sup> We've organized ways to make the most of your meetings into three key areas: **T**houghtful preparation, **I**ntentional attendance, and **P**roactive participation. Use these TIPs to improve your internal meetings—and free up time to focus on your clients.

## T Thoughtful preparation | Host

### Hold fewer meetings.

- Skip the meeting if a phone call, email, or another forum can achieve your objective.

### Meet when the time is right.

- Avoid scheduling meetings on short notice; aim for two to three days in advance.
- Steer clear of Monday morning or Friday afternoon meetings. Employees are likely to be more focused during the week.

### Schedule shorter meetings.

- Consider scheduling 30- or 50-minute meetings.
- Begin 10 minutes after the hour to allow for a break between back-to-back meetings.

### Clarify participant expectations.

- Define which participants are mandatory and which are optional.
- If mandatory participants can't attend, reschedule.

### Consider meeting logistics.

- Book a space for participants to attend in person, and use video conferencing when possible.
- Include all logistical details, such as location and call number, in the meeting invitation. To avoid errors with Outlook, send attachments separately or provide a link—do not attach files.

### Send materials in advance.

- Email the agenda and prework early so that your meeting time can be used for discussion.

## I Intentional attendance | Participant

### Be thoughtful and responsive.

- Check with the host before inviting additional participants.
- Confirm that you need to attend a meeting before you accept. Otherwise, decline and provide a brief explanation.

### Commit to your attendance.

- Provide notice if you will be late, absent, or sending someone in your place.

### Prepare.

- Review the meeting agenda.
- Complete any prework before the meeting.

## P Proactive participation | Host and participant

### Watch the clock.

- Keep meetings on time and on topic.
- If off-topic issues arise, add them to a list to be discussed outside of the meeting.

### Be present.

- Attend in person whenever possible.
- Listen, collaborate, and stay focused—avoid multitasking.

### Keep remote participants engaged.

- Pause to solicit input from those on the phone.

### Capture action items and next steps.

- Delegate a note taker—so you can focus on meeting management.
- Close with a recap of outcomes, action items, and next steps.
- Send meeting notes within 48 hours after the meeting.
- Follow through on assigned action items.

### Provide feedback.

- Share feedback to improve future meetings.



Share this checklist with your colleagues to help everyone in your office hold more productive meetings.

1. Scott Keller and Mary Meaney, "High-Performing Teams: A Timeless Leadership Topic," *McKinsey Quarterly*, June 2017.

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