

Preparing for a first meeting
by Sara Helm**Leading meetings: functions suggestions**

Opening the meeting

- Welcoming / introducing participants
- Checking everyone has agenda / supporting documentation
- Stating meeting objectives
- Stating time limit(s)
- Appointing minutes taker
- Laying down the rules – e.g. speaking clearly / simple language
- Listing items on the agenda
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Managing the agenda

- Introducing agenda items
- Summarizing outcomes / decisions / action points
- Moving on to next item
-

Facilitating participation in the meeting

- Inviting participants to speak / present information
- Asking participants for ideas / opinions / reactions to information
- Keeping the discussion on track
- Ensuring participants have their turn / aren't interrupted
- Making sure everyone can understand
- Keeping time
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Closing the meeting

- Warning when the meeting is nearly at an end
- Stating that the discussion is now at a close
- Summarizing the agenda points / outcomes / decisions / action points
- Allocating responsibility for action points with time limits to participants
- Allocating time limit for minutes / documentation to be distributed to relevant parties
- Setting time for a future meeting
- Thanking participants for their attendance
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Leading meetings

Opening the meeting

- I'd like to welcome everyone to the meeting.
- Thank you all for being here today.
- Thank you all for making it at such short notice.

- Shall we make a start?
- Let's make a start.
- Let's get down to business.
- I think we should make a start now.

- Has everyone got a copy of the agenda?
- Has everyone read the agenda and supporting documentation in advance?
- Is everyone familiar with the agenda?

- I'd like to introduce you all to _____ from _____.
- _____ is responsible for _____.
- I'd like to introduce everyone briefly.
- Could we just go round the table introducing ourselves and our role in the company / this project for a couple of minutes?

- We're here to discuss...
- The objective of this meeting is to...
- The main subject of this meeting is...
- By the end of the meeting we need to have decided / agreed on...

- _____ has agreed to write up the minutes.
- Could _____ take the minutes?
- I'd be grateful if _____ would take responsibility for taking down and distributing the minutes by Friday.

- We've got an hour for this meeting.
- We've only got thirty minutes to reach a decision, so time is short.
- We need to keep to 15 minutes on each item.
- I'd be grateful if everyone could be as brief as possible.

- As there are a number of nationalities here, including several native speakers...
- I'd be very grateful if everyone would speak slowly and clearly.
- Could I ask you to keep your language as clear and simple as possible?
- Please don't hesitate to interrupt if there is anything you don't understand.
- Please check and clarify any point you don't understand.
- It's vital that we check that we are all on the same track from time to time.

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Introducing and rounding up items on the agenda

- The first item on the agenda is...
- The first thing we need to look at / decide on is...
- The first point to be discussed is...

- I'd just like to go back to the point about...
- Just briefly going back to those figures / the time frame you mentioned...
- Now I'd like us to turn to the next point on the agenda.
- Could we move on to the figures? Time is getting short, unfortunately.

- So are we all agreed on _____?
- So, to summarize that last point...
- So, to briefly summarize so far, _____ has agreed to _____ by Tuesday.

Facilitating participation in the meeting

- Could you give us a brief outline of _____?
- Could you bring us up to date on _____?
- Would you explain how _____?
- Could I ask the finance team to run us briefly through the figures for last month?

- Do you have any ideas / suggestions, Adrian?
- Could Rebecca just give us the background to this?
- I'd like to hear your views / thoughts / feelings on this, Renate.
- What are your ideas about that, Neville?
- I think we need to hear a bit more about _____ from Jacqueline.
- What do you think about that Frédérique?

- Thank you for your contribution, Massimo.
- Thanks for clarifying that, Emmanuel.
- I think that has cleared up the uncertainty, Philippe.
- Thank you for your succinct explanation, Arlindo.

- Sorry Rauli, would you mind just letting Trudy finish her point before we move on?
- I'm sorry Philip, could you just let Mark finish what he was saying? It's absolutely essential that we understand this properly.

- Could we possibly save that point for later?
- Could we come back to the subject in hand?
- I think that's a separate issue.
- I think we should save that discussion for a later date.
- Unfortunately, we don't have time for that today.

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Closing the meeting

- I think that pretty much brings us to the end of our discussions.
- So, I'd like to run briefly through all the points we've discussed.
- I'm going to summarize the outcome of today's meeting.
- Firstly we discussed the possibility of _____ and decided that it was a viable idea and should be put into effect immediately.
- The second point we considered was _____. We all agreed it was impossible to _____ due to the lack of market interest in _____.
- We've ironed out the problem of a conflict of dates.
- Finally, I think we were all of the same opinion that...
- Most of us came to the conclusion that _____. So, on that basis it will become standard procedure from now on.

- I'd like to allocate responsibility for the action points we've agreed.
- I'd like to assign follow-up tasks to be actioned by the end of the month / by the next meeting on Friday.
- Could you take responsibility for arranging the next sales meeting, Robin?

- Thank you all for your contribution to this meeting.
- Thank you all for attending today.
- I know some of you have come a long way / have missed other meetings to be here / are extremely busy with the imminent technical changes / didn't have time to say everything you wanted to.
- I think you'll all agree it's been a very successful meeting / we've made a good start on _____ / we've made great progress with _____ / we've done well to resolve the _____ problem / _____ issue / we'll be able to keep on target for _____ next year.