

# Meetings Matter

**The Issue:** For leaders, there is only one thing worse than being part of an inefficient and unproductive meeting - leading one.

As leaders, we are stewards of organizational resources and whether the return is social, spiritual or financial, we need to maximize the return on investment. Since meetings are a primary platform for moving ministries and organizations forward, the ability to run meetings is a core competency.

## 8 Tips to Maximize Group Meetings

**1. Agenda** – The purpose of an agenda is to help clearly state what your meeting is and why you are having it. Reinforce your vision and values of your team or organization by displaying them on every agenda using two columns. Create a left column on your agenda and display your vision and values there.

**2. Segment** – Distinguish between agenda items by labeling them by segment: for **information, discussion** and **decision**. Be sure to add how much time you would like to designate for each agenda item.

**Information:** what do you want to inform people about?

**Discussion:** what are we going to discuss?

**Decision:** what do we need to decide?

**3. Connect** – At the start of the meeting connect with your team to see how they are doing by asking them questions such as: what is one word that would describes your day or your world since we were last together? This helps to identify any common themes or issues that might need to be dealt with.

**4. Pray** – Prayer is valuable before, after or even during a meeting. If there is a decision or item that you feel that needs God's help don't be afraid to stop your meeting to pray about it. Simply taking a two-minute pause in silence can help your team listen to God and refocus their thoughts.

**5. Cast Vision** – Think through how you can creatively and regularly share and celebrate the bigger vision of why you are doing what you are doing. Whether it's inviting a customer/client to briefly visit, call or Skype into a meeting or sharing pictures and stories about a recent event/ministry or having each participant read a comment card/anecdote from a customer/client you can make deposits of life and energy into a meeting and group.



**About Steve:** Steve is husband to Lea and dad to three teens - Luke, Ainslea and Lauren. Based near Vancouver, BC, Steve develops Jesus-centered leaders as President of Arrow Leadership, an organization focused on developing Jesus-centered leaders. He's the author of "Leading Me - Eight Key Practices for a Christian Leader's Most Important Assignment", "Great Questions for Leading Well" and [www.sharpeningleaders.com](http://www.sharpeningleaders.com).

He loves communicating, coaching, and creating resources for leaders. Steve also teaches at Tyndale Seminary's Doctor of Ministry Program.



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**6. Celebration** – At the beginning of a meeting, to help stir a posture of thankfulness ask your team questions like: *what is one thing that we can celebrate what God is doing?* This helps to remind everyone that God is at work.

**7. Developing** – What are some of the things that you want to see your team develop themselves in? Make a list of 4 -10 most important things. At each meeting take a 10 minute development corner to provide some training.

**8. Breaks** – If you are meeting for an hour or more and you don't get people up and moving, you begin to lose effectiveness. Take a five minute break or have team members stand up when it is their turn to speak.

## Five Tips For Keeping On Track

**1. Clear Shared Focus/Topic/Goal** – Is everyone clear about focus/topic/goal?

**2. Clear Roles** – What role do you want each person to play? Let them know ahead of time.

**3. Clear Landings** – What has been decided, what is next step, and who is responsible?

**4. Use The Parking Lot** – Capture new or off topic ideas on a whiteboard "parking lot". Return to them later if desired.

**5. Facilitator** – Consider appointing a meeting facilitator.

## 3 Key Practices For Ending Well

**1. Confirm key decisions and next steps**

**2. Develop communication points**

**3. Gather feedback** – What could be improved?

What went well?

"Don't End a Meeting Without Doing These Three Things", Harvard Business Review, Bob Frisch and Cary Greene, August 26, 2016

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