



PETRA PROCESS

**WANT MORE PRODUCTIVE MEETINGS? CUT THESE 7
TIME-WASTERS**



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LIFE LESSONS for BUSINESS OWNERS

I recently was working with a new team who shared that their management meetings last five-plus hours each week, and they still leave without clear results or outcomes. In fact, this practice has infiltrated the entire company culture, with people complaining about the frequency and inefficiency of meetings, leaving them frustrated, confused and with little time to execute.

Meetings are necessary in business, so how can you make the most of them and keep them from wasting your valuable time? Try eliminating these seven time wasters and improve the efficiency of your next meeting.

1. CUT OUT UNNECESSARY MEETINGS AND NUMBER OF ATTENDEES

Is a meeting the right place to talk about a certain agenda item? Are the right people at the table? Lay out all your company's or department's meetings in a spreadsheet and then decide if each meeting is worth your time. Meetings take time and time equals money. One weekly meeting that lasts five hours with five employees means those team members are spending 25 hours each week in meetings. If you multiply 25 hours by the average salary hour rate of the employees in the room, you can see why it's essential to only have the right people in the room for the right amount of time.

2. CUT OUT NON-OUTCOME-FOCUSED AGENDA ITEMS

Make sure agendas are outcome-focused and put time constraints on each item. Be very clear about the main topic of discussion and the expected outcome you are looking for. This will allow you to stay on task and within time limits. If there are any topics in the agenda that don't require everyone's input, take that item offline and come back with a solution or with a better identified outcome. If a topic is on the agenda and it isn't the right time or place for that conversation, move that item to another time or remove it completely.

3. CUT OUT THE ASSUMPTIONS

The problem with most meetings is people walk away with action items, but without clarity on when the items need to be completed. If you have a conversation about "who" the item is assigned to, "what" exactly is assigned, and "when" the action should be completed, you will maximize communication and outcomes. Create a "Who/What/When" worksheet and review it at the end of each meeting.

4. CUT OUT THE DOMINATING PERSONALITIES

Appoint a facilitator and a notetaker. The facilitator will keep the team on topic and make sure everyone can be heard by drawing out insights from the group. The facilitator can also ask clarifying questions and keep the conversation moving and on time. The notetaker will capture any action items to review at the end of the meeting and can follow up with notes from the meeting as a resource and record.

5. CUT OUT THE PIGGYBACKING AND REPETITIVENESS

Always add value or new information to build upon other's ideas. This will keep the conversation from spiraling out of control and keep people from talking just to hear themselves talk. Avoid repetitiveness by using simple visual cues like a thumbs-up or holding up a card that says, "I agree." Before you speak, always ask yourself these four questions:

- Is it important?
- Does it need to be shared with the whole group?
- Are you the one that should share it?
- Has anyone else already shared something similar?

6. CUT OUT THE ADVICE

Ask questions that allow others to participate and contribute their own ideas. When you ask for clarity and push for engagement, it promotes the personal growth and development of your team. Sharing your own experiences and asking questions of others allows team members to feel more comfortable speaking up and sharing their own experiences. Avoid simply stating something as a fact; instead, turn a statement into a question to draw knowledge from the team.

7. CUT OUT INEFFECTIVENESS

At the end of a meeting, go around the room and ask your team to rate the effectiveness of the meeting from zero to 10. If scores are low, ask for feedback on why and how to be more effective next time and look for where to improve.

Meetings are a tried and true way to exchange information, assign tasks, and share ideas, but they lose their core purpose when you fall victim to various distractions. Take the initiative and implement one or all of these meeting improvements in order to make your next meeting your best one yet.

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THE PETRA EXPERIENCE

The Petra Experience is like a Mental Marathon of focused effort to create a specific set of priorities and a planned process to achieve them... as a team.

Looking to change your business life - forever?

The daily grind of growing a business is tough... it doesn't have to be that way. We work from our own business experiences while focusing on your business – as coach and an accountability partner. We implement the Petra Process in a way that ensures it “sticks” then we stay engaged to keep you on your path to success and less frustration. We don't want this to be just another thing you start – then it gets ignored and finally dies... let's stop that cycle in your business. The Petra Program 'clarifies' what is most important to be done – by whom, by when – **AND** creates an accountability structure to ensure **IT GETS DONE.**

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