

The Anatomy of a Great Meeting



How to maximize time spent in meetings, as well as the follow-up coming out of a meeting (where the real value lies).

According to Seth Godin, there are 3 types of meetings that take place:

1. **Information:** Where attendees are informed about what is happening.
2. **Discussion:** When the leader wants feedback and debate on a topic.
3. **Permission:** When attendee feedback and input is requested.

Every great meeting begins with an understanding of the purpose. With that you can achieve focus. Your job as a leader is to guide that focus and recognize if and when the meeting type is changing so you can guide it back to the original intent. As a leader of a meeting, you are responsible for the outcome.



Step 1

The Agenda



Voicea Pro Tip:

At the beginning of your meeting, say, "Okay EVA – the agenda for the meeting is _____" to capture the agenda in your recap highlights.

Every great meeting starts with an agenda. The agenda should be clear and include a description of the desired outcome (decision, actions, etc.). Try to have an agenda focused on one topic to avoid tangents and extemporaneous conversation.

The agenda should be shared with the team in advance of the meeting and restated at the beginning of the meeting.

When shared in advance, attendees can come prepared and with a POV that can inform how to approach the topic.

3 Types of Meeting Locations

Location can impact how a meeting is run. You need to be aware of the type of meeting you are leading and adjust accordingly.

1. In-person: these are more flexible in terms of sharing materials in advance and expectations on interaction. Try to avoid in-room distractions to ensure focus.
2. In-person + phone/conference line: share materials in advance and be aware of whiteboard use and on-site displays.
3. All via phone/conference line: share materials in advance and use collaboration tools to encourage real-time engagement.





Step 2 The Recap

Once you address the agenda, the next step in a great meeting is to recap what was agreed to and/or achieved as a result of the prior meeting on this topic. This reminds the attendees where they were and what direction they were supposed to be taking. Its an excellent way to guide the conversation, set expectations and ensure focus.

Being present is a key component of a great meeting and understanding where you were helps you know where you have to go.

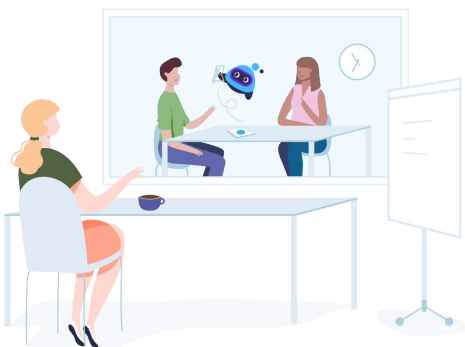
Voicea Pro Tip:

Before the meeting starts, check out the highlights from the previous session to ensure you know what the action items were to guide this conversation.

Why worry about the “greatness” of a meeting?

Why should you worry about whether your meeting is great?

Great meetings are indicative of great teams and great companies. How your team handles group interactions can indicate how they work together, how aligned they are and how unified they are on a path to creating a great company.



Step 3 The Position



Once all the expectations have been set, state the position where you and your team are currently.

What are the primary assumptions you and your team are operating from? What are the options for moving forward? What choice(s) do you have to make? What are the opportunities laid out in front of you?

Voicea Pro Tip:

Don't forget to add in "comments" by visiting the Live Meeting view for your meeting and typing in any specific comments to mark a moment in the conversation.





Step 5

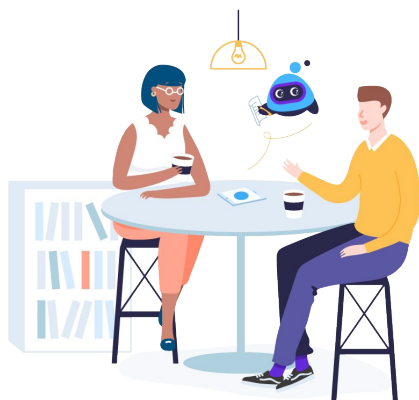
The Discussion

This is the “meat” of the conversation. This is where you should spend the majority of the conversation in your meeting.

The basic guidelines for this stage of the meeting are “there are no bad ideas – all ideas are welcome”. You should be open to any point of view, and all should be discussed and debated equally.

Voicea Pro Tip:

Use the “Okay EVA, take a note” voice command to mark key concepts and ideas discussed during this part of the conversation.



Don't Forget The “Progress Check”...

The folks at Lucid Meetings recommend you do a “progress check” in your meeting. Summarize where you are with your notes so far, remind the participants of why you are here and avoid tangents. Ensure you are on target to end the meeting on time, therefore being respectful of the attendees’ time and schedule.

Step 5 The Action



Voicea Pro Tip:

At the end, be sure to recap key next steps by saying, "Okay EVA, the action item is ", so everyone is clear on what has to happen next. You can also say "Okay EVA, create a task" to update Trello or other project management tools.

A meeting is pointless if nothing gets accomplished, but things are rarely accomplished in a meeting. It's the follow-up that truly matters.

You need to summarize the key takeaways and what was agreed to in the meeting. You also need to clearly assign the actions and next steps that have to take place after the meeting. There are to-do items and additional questions that need to be answered.

The notes and action items need to be disseminated to the right people with context quickly and expectations established for when and how they will be followed up and delivered.

The Key Is Accountability

The key to action items = individual accountability.

Make sure a single person has the "to do" for each item and a clear understanding of when this is due. It can help to have a record of the meeting for anyone to return to and gather context as well as a recap and summary of what was discussed (this is where Voicea comes in).





Find out
more about
how to have
a great
meeting

Reach out to the Customer Success team at Voicea and learn how you can transform your business productivity with an in-meeting AI.

www.voicea.com

greatmeeting@voicea.com