

The Power of Staff Meetings

Abstract

In this article, we highlight Staff Meetings—the secret to engage your employees’ hearts and minds. *There is no better way to keep your staff connected, focused and motivated than a well-run staff meeting.* Most organizations, however, don’t hold company-wide, regularly scheduled staff meetings, and those that do—do it poorly.

Staff Meeting Focus Areas

Staff meetings typically focus on information sharing. Unfortunately there is woefully little sharing, since the boss often does most of the talking, with little input from staff. Staff meetings should focus on four fundamental areas. These are:

<u>Focus Area</u>	<u>% of Time</u>
Information Sharing	10
Goal Setting and Deployment	20
Work Climate Improvement	20
Process Improvement	50

Staff meetings should begin with information sharing. This includes, but should not be limited to, company-wide accomplishments, priorities, customer issues, and other department level relevant feedback. About 20% of the time spent in staff meetings should focus on either goal setting, or progress toward reaching goals and objectives. Employees lend their greatest support to objectives they help set. This is the ideal time to discuss roadblocks and other challenges, and to brainstorm ways to get back on track.

Work climate focuses on communication, leadership style, empowerment, team building, rewards and recognition, resources, and infrastructure. It is important to address work climate issues and explore continual improvement opportunities. About 50% of your meeting time should focus on process improvement. Processes are the fundamental building blocks for achieving business results, and streamlined processes are critical to building and maintaining a competitive edge.

Creative Problem Solving

It’s been said that “if you are not part of the solution—you are part of the problem.” Creative problem solving should be central to all staff meetings. Group discussion should foster reaching decisions by consensus. Many problems can be solved during the actual meeting. Where more time and analysis are needed, an “action team” should be formed. Once the team solves the problem, it could report results during the next scheduled staff meeting.

It's important to note that you don't need to address each of the four focus areas during every staff meeting. Over a series of meetings, the time spent on these areas should generally follow the suggested percentages. Creative problem solving, however, should be central to all staff meetings. It can be used to extinguish many brush fires, and to improve overall effectiveness and efficiency.

The Linking Pin Organization

There are many advantages to company-wide staff meetings. They are a golden opportunity to involve everyone in the business. Stress is lowered when employees realize that they have much more input into decisions that affect their jobs. And the "linking pin organization" that is created will help everyone realize they are part of a critical "customer service chain."

Since everyone will be part of a regularly scheduled staff meeting, each employee will have a greater sense of contribution in shaping his/her work climate and the ability to streamline cumbersome, error-prone processes. Moreover, staff meetings provide the opportunity to involve all employees in the cascade goal setting and deployment process. This "alignment" ensures that everyone is focused in a spirited drive to achieve business objectives.

About the Author



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Stan has more than three decades of business and consulting experience, in both the private and public sectors, in the United States and abroad. Stan specializes in building high-performance teams, and working closely with senior leaders to achieve breakthrough financial, organizational, and operating improvement. He has been quoted in many business publications, including Fortune, Business Week and the Wall Street Journal.

About Change Management Consulting, Inc. (CMC)

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