MEETINGS

"Meetings are indispensable when you don't want to do anything."

John Kenneth Galbraith (1908 – 2006), Canadian-American economist

1. Meetings Discussion

1. What is the purpose of a work meeting?
2. Do you like attending meetings? Why or why not?
3. Which meetings do you have to attend? Who do you meet with? What is discussed? What is achieved?
4. Do you feel confident speaking or presenting in meetings? Why or why not?
5. Are any of your meetings in English? If so, do you feel comfortable contributing?
6. Are any of your meetings by videoconference? Is this better or worse than face-to-face meetings? Do they save a lot of time?
7. Do meetings always start and finish on time at your work? If not, what are the reasons?
8. Do people often talk about unrelated topics in meetings? If so, what topics do they talk about? Why does this happen?

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2. Meetings Vocabulary

- **to get the ball rolling** (verb) – *to make a start with something.*
- **to wrap (something) up** (verb) – *to finish something.*
- **to brainstorm** (verb) – *to generate lots of ideas in a group.*
- **pre-meeting** (noun) – *a meeting to prepare for a subsequent meeting.*
- **chair** (noun) – *a person in charge of a meeting.*
- **minutes** (noun) – *written notes documenting what was said in a meeting.*

Using the vocabulary words above, complete the following sentences (remember to use the correct form of the word, e.g. verb conjugation or plural noun)

1. After the _____ have been typed up, we'll send a copy to all attendees.
2. I'm going to call a meeting for all the heads of department to _____ as many ideas as they can on how to fix this problem.
3. OK, we need to _____; we've got a lot to get through today.
4. The _____ of the meeting is responsible for sending the agenda to everyone.
5. The weekly sales meeting takes place every Friday and the _____ takes place on the Thursday before.
6. We're just about to run out of time so I guess we should _____ now.

Meetings vocabulary comprehension questions

1. How would you get the ball rolling in a meeting?
2. What would you say to wrap up the meeting?
3. Are meetings good for brainstorming? Why or why not?
4. Do you have a pre-meeting to prepare for any subsequent meeting?
5. Does someone always chair the meetings you attend? Does the chair always lead the meeting effectively?
6. Does somebody always take minutes in your meetings? If the minutes include the actions agreed upon, are these actions always completed before the next meeting?

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3. Video: Meetings Are Evil

You are going to watch a TEDx Talk by Ellen De Bruin called "Business Meetings are Evil".

Watch the video here: https://yourenglishpal.com/blog/business-english-conversation-lesson-plan-meetings/

Watch the video and after, discuss the following questions:

1. Is there ever a need for a meeting just to present information? Why or why not?
2. What proportion of the meetings you have to go to could have just been sent by email?
3. Do meetings kill creativity? Why or why not?
4. How hard is it for you to keep focussed in meetings? Do you always listen to what people are saying?
5. How could meetings be more efficient? How could they be more fun?
6. Are meetings really evil? Why or why not?

4. Meetings Conversation Questions

1. How long do you think you spend in meetings every week? Are these meetings always necessary or are they a waste of time? Why?
2. Does everyone contribute to the meetings you attend, or do they tend to be dominated by one or two people? If the latter, how could the meetings be changed so everyone has a chance to contribute?
3. Do you think people arrange meetings to make them feel like they have done something useful?
4. What do you do if you get bored in a meeting?
5. What would be considered rude to do in a meeting?
6. What kind of problems can people have in meetings?
7. How do you prepare for your meetings? Do you feel that the other people in your meetings have prepared well?
8. Have you ever seen people arguing in a meeting? If so, what was the reason?

5. Meetings Writing Task

Write a recommendation to your boss about how to improve work meetings. Try to use some of the vocabulary you learned earlier in this lesson. In your answer, include the following topics:

- Which meetings are unnecessary.
- What the purpose of a meeting should be.
- How the meetings can provide more value.

6. Meetings Answers

2. Vocabulary

1. minutes
2. brainstorm
3. get the ball rolling
4. chair
5. pre-meeting
6. wrap it up

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