The 3 Things You Must Avoid Saying in a Meeting by Jimmie Flores

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Arenâ€™t you tired of meetings? Why do most people attending meetings look like they would rather be somewhere else? Why do Mondays have to begin with a meeting? Isnâ€™t it best to schedule them on Tuesday morning, after weâ€™ve had a chance to review our calendar?

When possible, I avoid meetings. I understand that some get-togethers are important but, for the most part, many meetings can be ignored or shortened. I have yet to understand why people default to one-hour meetings. Whatâ€™s wrong with meetings lasting a quarter- or half-hour? If we are prepared, we can get the same results with quick meetings, and waste less time from our valuable resources.

To make meetings successful, we must be prepared. Over the years, I learned strategies from professional meeting attendees. These individuals have a proactive approach to meeting management. They focus on getting to the main points, discussing them, and assigning action items. Staying on point makes a difference.

#1: Avoid saying you are unprepared for the meeting.

Meetings have agendas. If you are assigned a topic, make sure to be prepared. Stay up late, or get up early to be ready for your part. If you are not prepared, it might be best to reschedule the meeting.

You should refrain from making excuses regarding why you failed to do the pre-work. The fact is that everyone else is just as busy as you, if not busier. You didnâ€™t get it done, and thatâ€™s the bottom line. Get ready for the next meeting, and hit it out of the ballpark.

#2: Avoid participating in a discussion where you lack knowledge.

I recently attended a meeting that lasted about 30 minutes longer than expected. There were two attendees who consistently commented about topics outside their domain. Most of us walked out of that meeting even more confused than when we entered.

The lesson here: be quiet! Wait until your time to participate. You will get your chance to share your remarkable words of wisdom.

#3: Avoid embarrassing anyone, for any reason.

When in a public setting, be careful about what you say, and how you say it. You want to refrain from these types of comments:

â€¢ â€œYou know â€¦ Julie was tasked with that requirement. I guess we can ask her now why she has delivered.â€•

â€¢ â€œThe sales team is doing its part. We are opening new accounts left and right. Itâ€™s now time our admin staff to follow-through with the paperwork. Letâ€™s see how that goes!â€•

â€¢ â€œThe problem here is leadership. We need people who can take us in the right direction. We have done all humanely possible to make this company a success. Itâ€™s out of our hands!â€•

While these comments might have merit, a meeting is an inappropriate time to point fingers. The

purpose of a meeting is to identify a problem, review alternatives, and find the right resource to resolve it. Of course, these activities should be done in a professional and cordial manner.

Make sure that meetings have a purpose. If you are calling the get-together, send an agenda with discussion points assigned to particular people. As an attendee, itâ€™s your responsibility to be a meaningful participant. Finally, at no time should we use a meeting to make others look bad. We must focus on creating a positive discussion environment, which allows the expedient resolution of agenda items. By taking that approach, the meetings are productive and â€¦ shorter!

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