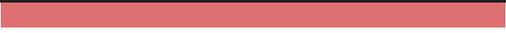enpact

MEETING CULTURE
BEST PRACTICE GUIDE

We at enpact are committed to use people's time efficiently. That is why we have created this Best Practice Guide for conducting our meetings. This ensures that everyone feels happy and satisfied about the value they are bringing to the work with all of the other enpactors.

Thanks to your candid input, we have derived **8 simple Best Practices** and an **8-item Checklist** to help you run more purposeful and efficient meetings. Under each Best Practice you will also find detailed guidelines.

It's in our common interest that every individual one of us always applies these. And it's our **collective responsibility** to kindly remind each other about them, if need should be. Let's be mindful that this is a process. We're all learning and growing together to make working with each other a **happier experience.**

BEST PRACTICES

1. Have meetings only when they are really necessary.

• **Before scheduling a meeting, ask yourself:** Does the type of information you want to communicate require a meeting or is there a simpler, less time-consuming way to relay the information (e.g. email for external communication, Asana for task-related things, Workplace for minor questions or requests, or a phone call to clarify a situation)?

• Is there another way to achieve your desired outcome?

• Can this issue wait or do I really need to set up a meeting right away?

2. Before scheduling a meeting, decide on the purpose & format of it.

• **Identify the purpose of your meeting and set an appropriate format:**

   ○ 1:1 Catch-up, Feedback or Clarifying Meeting

   ○ Brainstorm

   ○ Decision-making

   ○ Scrum Meeting (Standup, Review & Planning, Retrospective)

   ○ Project Kickoff (internal/external)

   ○ Debrief/Retrospective (internal or with Donors / Partners)

3. An efficient meeting is a meeting well prepared.

- **Set an agenda** (with the option to invite others to add agenda points).

- **Invite only those who really need to be there.** Ask yourself: How can they bring or gain value by attending this meeting?

- **Check the availability of your invitees** before you send them a calendar invitation.

- Include in the calendar invitation the purpose, goal and agenda of the meeting.

- **Share any documents you want to discuss** during the meeting as an attachment to the invitation.

- **Share any links to joint working platforms** (Miro, Jamboard, asana boards, etc.)

- Inform attendees if they have to prepare anything before the meeting.

- **Set a realistic time frame** and share how much time they should plan for this.

- Set up a timer bot with the meeting duration.

4. Assign specific roles for your meeting attendees, so everyone knows how to prepare.

- Assign yourself or somebody else as the moderator of the meeting.

- **The moderator keeps an eye on the time and the agenda,** ensures that the conversation stays on topic, intervenes when monologues take place and thus secures that both the meeting output is achieved and that next steps are defined.

- The moderator can ask for somebody to support with keeping an eye on the time.

- **Assign a note-taker** that documents relevant decisions made during the meeting and documents next steps as tasks in asana.

- Assign **specific talking points** if applicable.

- **Let your attendees know before the meeting which role they will have during the meeting,** so they can prepare (on the meeting invite, asana or shared document for external meetings).

5. Use people's time respectfully by setting appropriate timing and duration for a meeting.

- **Don't schedule meetings outside of business hours (9am-6pm),** especially for those in other time zones.

- Don't schedule meetings during people's time off or lunch breaks.

- Do not book back-to-back or overlapping meetings.

- **To allow others to see your availability,** use the respective function in the google calendar to indicate your working hours.

- **Start meetings on time and finish on time.**

- Consider at least **5 minutes** at the end of every meeting to take feedback.

- Set the meeting duration according to the purpose & format of the meeting. **Meetings shouldn't be longer than 45 minutes.** Some meetings might require some more time, in this case schedule a break after 50 minutes the latest (especially for online meetings). Here are some time indications for certain types of meetings:

  - **1:1** (max. 15 minutes)

  - **Brainstorm** (max. 45 minutes, but you can split it in multiple sessions, and after each session you should allow for a minimum of 10 minutes break).

- **Decision-Making** (max. 45 minutes)

- **Monthly Review & Planning** (max. 2 x 45 minutes, with a minimum 10 minute break in between)

- **Weekly Standup** (max. 25 minutes)

- **Project Kickoff** (max. 45 minutes, but you can split it in multiple sessions, and after each session you should allow for a minimum of 10 minutes break).

- **Debrief/Retrospective** with Donors / Partners (max. 45 minutes)

6. Give yourself and others the chance to plan for meeting-free time.

- **Set up a meeting-free Friday** (this aligns with the weekend of our colleagues in the Middle East and North Africa).

- Give yourself and others at least 15 minutes break time between meetings.

- **Try scheduling slots for breaks** (walks, stretching, you name it!).

- Have scheduled **(do not disturb)** time slots for focus work.

- **Allow yourself to say NO** if a meeting is scheduled outside of your working hours.

7. Collect feedback to know how the meeting went and always thank participants for their time!

- **Set up a quick feedback** using the polling function of the web conferencing tool (google meet/zoom) before the meeting.

- **Use the following scale, which you can copy-paste into the polling function:**

[5] The meeting met my expectations, was well prepared, and I could take value from it.

[4] The meeting was well prepared; it met the meeting objective but there is room for improvement.

[3] The meeting met its objective but could have been better prepared.

[2] The meeting was unclear and did not meet its objective.

[1] The meeting was not well prepared, the objective was unclear, and there was no meeting outcome.

- **Collect votes by using the polling function**
  (you will obtain the results automatically via gmail)

- **Thank participants for their time**
  (thanking is a zero-sum game!)

- **Ask how people feel after each meeting.** Your goal is to make people feel like they have used their time wisely and that they contributed and gained some value from attending the meeting.

8. Clarify with the attendees how you will follow-up the meeting.

- **Clarify next steps:** Discuss who's responsible for which tasks in which time frame. (transfer tasks to Asana, if that hasn't already been done during the meeting, as for example during Scrum Meetings).

- **Clarify if a follow-up meeting is required,** if so, briefly discuss an appropriate time frame.

- **Share the outcome of the meeting with all attendees** (the format of the output will differ depending on the purpose of the meeting).

MEETING CHECKLIST

- [ ] Have I asked myself if this meeting is really necessary? Can I achieve my desired meeting outcome via email, workplace or asana?

- [ ] Have I defined the objective and desired outcome of the meeting? Have I decided the format?

- [ ] Have I set an agenda and shared it beforehand with any relevant documents?

- [ ] Have I selected a moderator/timekeeper, note-taker to document memo/notes?

- [ ] Have I identified who needs to attend the meeting? Who can just be informed of its outcomes with an asana update, for example?

- [ ] Have I set up a timer bot for the meeting duration?

- [ ] Have I set up the feedback option on the web conferencing tool and collect feedback?

- [ ] Have I clarified the next steps (set as asana tasks)? Have I sent the meeting outcomes/memo/notes shortly after (the following day the latest)?