# SECTION FOUR:

## Getting Results: How to Work a Meeting When You Are An Invited Guest and Dealing with Opposition

Presented by Mark Grimm

Ever been stuck in meetings that don't seem to have any value? Part of good outreach is getting strong results from meetings you attend, especially when working as part of a coalition. This section provides clear tips on how to make the most of these opportunities to further your cause.  The approach includes:

✔ **Good Preparation – Doing your homework ahead of time**
What is the meeting goal? Or agenda? What do you know about the attendees? Call or email ahead to get the needed answers.

✔ **Know Your Story...In A Nutshell**
Based on what you've learned about the attendees, how do you tell your story in a way that interests them? Focus on what value you can deliver to them.

✔ **Points for Style**
Arriving late, whispering too much, shabby appearance, cell phone distractions — they all reflect poorly on you. These negative effects say, "Not Ready for Prime Time." We'll discuss how to make a strong impression by listening well and identifying ways to proceed where everybody wins. We will stress the importance of attitude. Don't be the person who says, "I hope we can wrap this up soon, I'm really busy today."

✔ **Be the Closer if Needed**
When and how to take charge if the meeting facilitator drops the ball. Make sure the question is asked and answered, "Who's Doing What?

# Dealing with Opposition

Different agendas often produce opposing views. How do you deal with opposition in a meeting? We'll explore how to present yourself as a meeting leader and how to manage the environment when you have a disagreement. There is a discipline to maintaining civility but also to not get rolled over. Winning the debate requires conviction, preparation and straight talk.

In this section we will examine the "types" of difficult and disruptive people at meetings and solutions for dealing with each.

# ARTICLE:
## 15 Ways to Increase Your Influence in Meetings

Posted By Todd Smith On February 22, 2011 @ 03:45
Little Things Matter - *http://www.littlethingsmatter.com/blog/2011/02/22/15-ways-to-increase-your-influence-in-meetings/*

Meeting with groups of people is something we all experience. Whether it's board meetings, business meetings, office meetings, church meetings, or small group meetings, you can do some simple things to build your personal brand and have your words carry more weight.

1. **Learn about the participants.** If you are attending an important meeting where people will be present whom you have not yet met, learn about them in advance. Google their names, read their websites, review their LinkedIn profiles, or whatever options are available to you. How would you view someone who took the time to learn about you in advance?

2. **Dress appropriately.** The way you appear in meetings will impact how you are viewed—both at the subconscious and conscious level. When you take pride in your appearance, people will regard you more seriously and will place more value in what you say.

3. **Come prepared.** Before attending a meeting, review the agenda and come prepared for the discussion. Very few things reflect as negatively on meeting participants as when they are unprepared. If you are part of the presentation, come organized and ready to deliver your message with excellence.

4. **Arrive early.** When you show up to meetings early, you will likely feel relaxed, comfortable, and in control. Rushing into a meeting at the last minute never feels good. Being there as people arrive allows you to greet and connect with each person individually. Showing an interest in people before the meeting makes them more receptive to what you share during the meeting.

5. **Pick a good seat.** If appropriate, ask the meeting's organizer where he or she would prefer you to sit. If the seating is open, put some thought into where you would want to sit. As an example, if you will be sitting at a rectangular table, sit at the end of the table. Not only will this allow you to easily see each person at the table, but the end seat is often associated with authority.

6. **Conceal your phone.** Put your phone on the silent mode when entering any meeting and put it out of sight. Looking at your phone during a meeting is not only disrespectful, but it is also an indication that the meeting is not your priority.

7. **Listen with your whole body.** One of the most effective ways to demonstrate your respect for others is to listen with interest. Give your full attention to the person speaking. Make 100 percent eye contact with each person as they speak, lean forward, and listen carefully to what they say.

8. **Never interrupt.** When people are talking, give them the courtesy of finishing before sharing your thoughts. As you listen, don't give any indication that you have something to say. If you do want to contribute something, wait for the speaker to finish. If everyone is jumping into the conversation, just signal to the person in charge that you have something to share, and then wait until you are called upon.

9. **Think before you speak.** One of the fastest ways to lose people's respect in meetings is to waste their time with rambling thoughts. Ask yourself, *"What is the best way for my point to be easily understood using the fewest number of words possible?"* People who aren't constantly running their mouths and who are thoughtful in what they say are those who earn people's respect.

10. **Participate.** If you are part of a meeting, it's important to be an active participant. You can't gain influence if you aren't contributing value. It could be asking a question, volunteering to take the lead on one of the points discussed, clarifying a point, or simply supporting an idea.

11. **Take notes.** If a topic is being discussed that falls under your area of responsibility, make notes. Don't rely on your memory. Taking notes also indicates that you understand what's being said and are taking your responsibility seriously.

12. **Don't be a distraction.** Whispering to the person next to you, sending notes around the table, or leaving the room to use the restroom can cause

a disruption of concentration for the speaker as well as the audience. It indicates to everyone that the subject being discussed is not important to you.

13. **Include everyone when talking.** When you speak, make it a point to share eye contact with each member of the group. This does not mean scanning the group. It means being intentional to make sure each person feels included.

14. **Disagree respectfully.** If you have a concern about something being discussed, start by asking questions to better understand the opposing point of view. If you are still concerned, share your position in a humble and respectful manner. If things don't go your way, control your emotions and body language.

15. **Don't check out.** If you are part of a meeting and a specific agenda item doesn't impact you, stay attentive and involved. I can scan a room and tell who's interested in the discussion and who's not and so can every other intelligent person in the room.

If you will follow these 15 tips at your next meeting, people's respect and admiration for you will grow, your influence among the participants will be felt, your self-confidence will grow, and your value to the market will increase.

What tips can you share on this subject? What are the things people do that bug you at meetings? What are the characteristics of the people you respect at meetings? Please share your thoughts in the comment section below this post.

**How you conduct yourself in meetings plays an important role in the influence you build within an organization.**

*About the Author: Todd Smith is a successful entrepreneur of 30 years and founder of Little Things Matter. To receive Todd's lessons, subscribe here. All Todd's lessons are also available on iTunes as downloadable podcasts. (Todd's podcasts are ranked #20 in America's top 100 podcasts and #1 in the personal and development field.)*

*Article From: Posted By Todd Smith http://www.littlethingsmatter.com/blog/2011/02/22/15-ways-to-increase-your-influence-in-meetings/*

# ARTICLE:
# Run Your Meetings with Influence

Posted by Elaina on Apr 25, 2012 in Blog, Influence in Meetings

*http://www.ezinfluence.com/2012/04/25/run-your-meetings-with-influence/*

ANOTHER MEETING? If you're a manager, a team leader, or an executive, your day is probably full of meetings. This article will teach you not only how to make your meetings more productive, but also how to exert more influence while you're at it. As a meeting leader, you have a great opportunity to use your influence skills to your advantage and achieve the results you want.

There's nothing more frustrating than sitting through a meeting that's pointless- and seems endless. Not only can unproductive meetings waste everyone's time (consuming up to 50 percent of the average manager's work week), but, considering the salaries of the participants, they can get pretty expensive, too. Here are some guidelines to get your meeting back on track- so you can get back to work!

## Influence the Outcome by Setting a Specific Agenda

Do you want to make an announcement, get people to discuss some new development, request their input, or mediate some conflict within the department? Let others know ahead of time what you expect of them to bring to a meeting (background information, reports, etc.) and what, specifically, you expect to accomplish (a workable budget for next year's campaign, for example).

Ask members beforehand what items they think should be included in the meeting's agenda. This will encourage them to feel more involved and committed, and they will be more likely to work collaboratively. Then, before you finalize the agenda, ask yourself some key questions: What is the current situation? What result is needed? What decisions could come out of this meeting? If you can agree upon goals before the meeting, sidetracking peripheral discussions will be kept to a minimum, the group will have an easier time staying focused, and you will be better able to control and influence the flow of the discussion.

## Using your Influence to Manage the Meeting

It's important to create a climate in which all opinions are valid and valued.  One common problem is that certain people are too shy or insecure to speak up at meetings, even though they may have valuable contributions to make.  A variation on this problem is the "silent treatment" -a person vents hostility by withholding important information from others in the group.

A good way to create a receptive climate is to poll all members present, especially the quiet ones, to find out what's on their minds.  You might try something like "Does everyone think what Ann has proposed is a feasible idea? Can anyone think of anything that might go wrong in terms of production, quality control, durability, sales?  Has anyone had any experience with something like this that has worked well?  Any experience with something not working well?" By encouraging all opinions, especially dissenting ones, you'll get what people are thinking out in the open.

## Leading Influential Meetings

While the idea is to establish a policy of openness for free exchange at meetings, watch out for the group member who takes advantage of the occasion to vent his personal distrust and disapproval.  When members dominate a meeting by being aggressive or violating other people's rights, they're probably suffering from insecurity and a need for attention.  The best way to handle them is by demonstrating control and assertiveness-don't ignore them or give them negative attention; instead, confront the problem directly.  Show that you're listening by such nonverbal messages as making direct eye contact and turning your body towards the speaker.  If the person feels confident that you're listening, he or she won't have to resort to such antics to get attention.

Once you get the meeting rolling,  bounce ideas off different people.  For example: "George is making an interesting suggestion here about the processing center's time log.  Ellen, how does that fit with your experience when they tried that in the western region?

Set a climate of precise, clear, open communication.  If a member makes a vague or fuzzy statement, ask questions until you're clear about what the speaker means.

Fuzzy speaking is often an indicator of fuzzy thinking; by forcing people to be more specific, you are helping them get their thoughts straight. An added benefit of this approach is that people on your staff soon may begin to speak with more precision and clarity.

During the meeting, focus on desired outcomes rather than problems. Too often, attempts at identifying problems deteriorate into long-winded gripe session about unrelated issues. Also, when groups start discussing problems, it's all too easy to attribute cause or blame to other departments or other people. A focus on desired outcomes will put people in a positive frame of mind and get them to think about the ideal situation or goal. Here is where your gentle but positive influence can guide the tone and focus of the meeting.

To keep track of what's going on, keep a flip chart, a notebook, or a chalkboard near you to record information as it's given. Ask for a volunteer to be responsible for the meeting record so that you won't be distracted from your job as a leader.

## Closure

Make sure everyone leaves the meeting with the same idea of what is to be done-and how it is to be done. Be precise and clear when giving assignments, and ask people to be specific when they volunteer some service.This is called "Precision Listening Skills", described in "Seven Secrets of Influence" Use an easygoing tone of voice so you do not come off as a cross-examiner. You simply want to put everyone on the same wavelength. For example, if someone says, "I'll do a report," ask, "What will the report include? How long will it be, what will it accomplish, and what form will it be in?" Ask questions until you're satisfied that both you and the writer have a clear idea of what this report will be like when you see it.

Another way to determine whether people are clear on their duties is to go around the room at the end of the meeting and ask, "What is your understanding of what's expected of you?" You may feel that it is impolite or unfair to challenge people in this way. On the contrary, you are doing them a service by helping them clarify what they mean and what they're promising to deliver. This is what truly influential leaders do.

When people understand exactly what you want, they feel much more comfortable about producing it. They don't waste time or put off a project because they're not sure they are doing it right.

Once the group has arrived at some tentative, workable solutions, restate the main points and decisions made at the meeting. (If someone is taking minutes, this will help too.) As the meeting breaks up, you should already be thinking ahead to the next one, so get people to publicly volunteer to take specific action before the next meeting.

## How to Deal with Problem People at Meetings

| PROBLEM | SOLUTION |
|---|---|
| **Latecomer** | Start meetings on time-don't wait for stragglers. |
| **Early Leaver** | Get a commitment from all members at the beginning of the meeting to stay until the end. |
| **Broken Record** | (Brings up the same point over and over.) Use "group memory" or the minutes of the meeting to remind Broken Record that the point is noted. |
| **Doubting Thomas** | As facilitator, get the group to agree not to evaluate any ideas for a period of time, and then use this agreement to correct violators. |
| **Dropout** | (Nonparticipant.) Try asking the person's opinion during the meeting or at a break. |
| **Whisperer** | As Facilitator, walk up close (low-key intervention). Or ask for focus on a single topic. |
| **Loudmouth** | Move closer and closer, maintain eye contact. Ask person to be group recorder. |
| **Attacker** | Thank the attacker for observation; ask the group what it thinks. |
| **Interpreter** | (Often says "In other words" or "what she really means.") Check this in public with original speaker. |
| **Gossip** | Ask the group to verify the information. |
| **Know-It-All** | Remind the group that all members have expertise; that's the reason for meeting. |
| **Busybody** | Before the meeting, ask other members to get Busybody to stop. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Teacher's Pet** | Be encouraging, but break eye contact. Get group members to talk to one another. Lessen your omnipotence by asking Teacher's Pet, "What do you think?" |

By using all these techniques, you will be running an efficient and productive meeting. And most important, you will also be seen as a leader with Influence Skills. Running a Meeting With Influence can be a most important way to become a Successful Leader.

*Article From: Posted by Elaina http://www.ezinfluence.com/2012/04/25/run-your-meetings-with-influence/*

# ARTICLE:
# How to Influence Others and Sell Your Ideas

UNC Kenan-Flagler Insights
MAY 8, 2012 BY HEATHER HARRELD
Article From: Blog Post By: Heather Harrold http://blogs.kenan-flagler.unc.edu/2012/05/08/how-to-infleunce-others-and-sell-your-ideas/

*(Editor's Note: In today's post, UNC Kenan-Flagler professor Dave Roberts shares his insight on identifying influence in the workplace and pushing forward new ideas with those who matter.)*

**Ditch the formal org chart and find the real influencers in your own company so that you can successfully sell your ideas**

If you have a great idea but you can't persuade and influence the right people about its merits, your idea is very likely to languish.

Knowing how to sell your ideas can help you persuade others at your company to implement initiatives that you create, or better guarantee a successful outcome with an external customer.

You can take several concrete steps to improve your skills of persuasion and communicate in a way that drives the action you want:

- Identify the influencers
- Know what makes the influencer tick
- Ask questions to get the influencer to sell themselves on your idea

## Identify the Influencers

The first step to selling your idea is to understand whom you have to influence to be effective. This is regularly not done well because people often fail to recognize the difference between formal and informal power in an organization. To effectively influence, you need to find who has informal power: i.e. those who are always able to get things done inside an organization, often irrespective of their title or where they fall within the organizational chart. A good time to identify those who have informal power is during a time of organizational change. Follow the money, follow the programs and follow the allocation of good people when change occurs. Now, with the dip in the economy, changes likely will occur more often, making it easier to pinpoint the influencers.

Ask yourself these questions:

- Who gets involved in decisions – especially decisions that don't appear to concern that person directly?
- Whom do people within the organization "always" go to for advice?
- Who regularly breaks the rules?
- Who are the trusted lieutenants of those at the helm of the company?

One of the most common misperceptions among organizational workers is the concept of peers within their company. There is actually no such thing as a true peer. If an organizational chart shows four or five people at the same formal level (the traditional notion of a "peer"), there is always somebody who is more influential than others.

## Know what makes the influencer tick

After you identify the person to target to sell your idea, start planning for the meeting as if it were an external sales call where you are promoting a product or a service. Before you meet with the person, identify what drives them, and what is important to them from both a personal and a functional perspective:

- Do they make decisions because it makes them look good or because it positions them for a promotion?
- Do they make decisions based on the easiest option for them?
- Do they make decisions because they think their job is to be seen as a leader?
- What external pressures are they under?
- What are they trying to achieve for their business?
- How do they view change?

This allows you to adeptly steer the conversation and also allows you to anticipate resistance the person may have to your idea.

Interestingly, the best predictor of a successful outcome in selling an idea is that you – as the seller – are optimistic about the outcome. Learning all you can about  your target will fuel that optimism.

## Ask questions to get the influencer to sell themselves on your idea

Carefully plan the beginning of the meeting. The first 60 to 90 seconds of the interaction are crucial to the success of the meeting. Very few people can open a meeting naturally well without preparation. The last thing that you want is a weak introduction of the meeting to set the tone for the conversation.

During the meeting, keep in mind that the best way to persuade someone is not to tell them, but to ask them *insightful* questions. Through questioning, you get the person you are trying to influence to develop answers that will support your idea. Most people believe their own conclusions. A good way to achieve a successful outcome to an influence meeting is to prepare three or four very deep, insightful questions that get the other person to tell themselves the messages you are trying to convey.

Even after identifying those with informal power in an organization, exhaustively preparing for your dialogue and executing a successful meeting, you still might struggle to close the sale. Keep in mind that the problem might rest with the person you are influencing and not you. Style matters. One of the possible barriers is the other person's personality style. There will always be times when the combination of your and their styles hampers you from easily influencing them.

You can't change yourself, but you can change your behavior in response to the clues and cues the other person gives you about their personality style. Understand what type of person they are, what behaviors they need from you, and move toward meeting them halfway.

**About the author:**

Dave Roberts is an Assistant Professor of Marketing at UNC Kenan-Flagler and brings more than 25 years of experience of helping organizations improve their performance in sales, sales consulting and sales management.

Professor Roberts, a native of England, has worked with leading organizations in Europe, Asia-Pacific and North America to help his clients optimize their sales effectiveness and achieve business results. His clients include Avaya, EDS, IBM, Microsoft, Nortel, Sun Microsystems and United Health Group.

Professor Roberts received his degree in electronic engineering from the University of Hull and holds a U.S. commercial pilot license.