

Magnificent Meetings - 5 Tips for Success

By Peter Murphy

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It is already marked in your diary in red ink - MEETING. You wish you could skip it because you have so much work to do. Deep down though there is another reason you would like to avoid the meeting - what if a colleague puts you on the spot and you make a fool of yourself in front of everyone? Meetings make you nervous and you never seem to make the impression you would like to.

Your impact at meetings will determine in a big way how well you do in your career. In other words you will rise as high as your communication skills will let you. Ability and competence in your position is expected - how well you get your point across will make the difference between your opinion being valued and your input getting forgotten one more time.

Look at any business leader, politician or community spokesperson. What do they all have in common? The ability to speak in a way that really gets people to listen even when people may not agree with them. What success tips can you learn from effective communicators that is applicable to your occupation?

1 Prepare in advance for the meeting. Make sure you are up to date with the subject matter and that you have covered your area of responsibility. Your confidence will grow when you can anticipate what will be discussed. Walking into a meeting unprepared is an invitation for tense moments and anxiety in case someone catches you out. Thorough preparation is essential.

2 Rehearse what you will say. In your mind run through possible scenarios with the people attending the meeting. Picture yourself relaxed, confident and even enjoying yourself as you make your voice heard. See the others listening attentively to what you have to say and valuing your opinion. Make the pictures lifelike with rich color, sound and feelings. I recommend doing this the evening before the meeting, when you are relaxed, for at least 20 minutes

3 Speak with enthusiasm - lead and people will follow, if you speak with energy and enthusiasm everyone else will assume that they should be at least interested in what you have to say. If you are not enthusiastic about your work, at least speak with energy by sitting up and speaking with emphasis on key words. Watch politicians on T.V. to see how they stress their point.

4 Anticipate objections and be ready with your response. What are the questions you really do not want to be asked? Work out the best responses and rehearse how you will take charge of the situation. Then when the meeting takes place you will already know what to say and can instead focus on listening to everyone else.

5 Exude certainty. Nobody wants to hear that you are not sure whether you can do something. Be certain about what you can do, and be direct when you need more information or more resources to get something done. Whenever you hear someone agonising over whether something can be done, notice the negative effect it has on those listening, and remind yourself that you will not allow the same to happen to you.

Peter Murphy is a peak performance expert and published author. Subscribe FREE to his upbeat newsletter and get a FREE e-book, which reveals secret strategies for supercharging your communication skills. Join here:
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