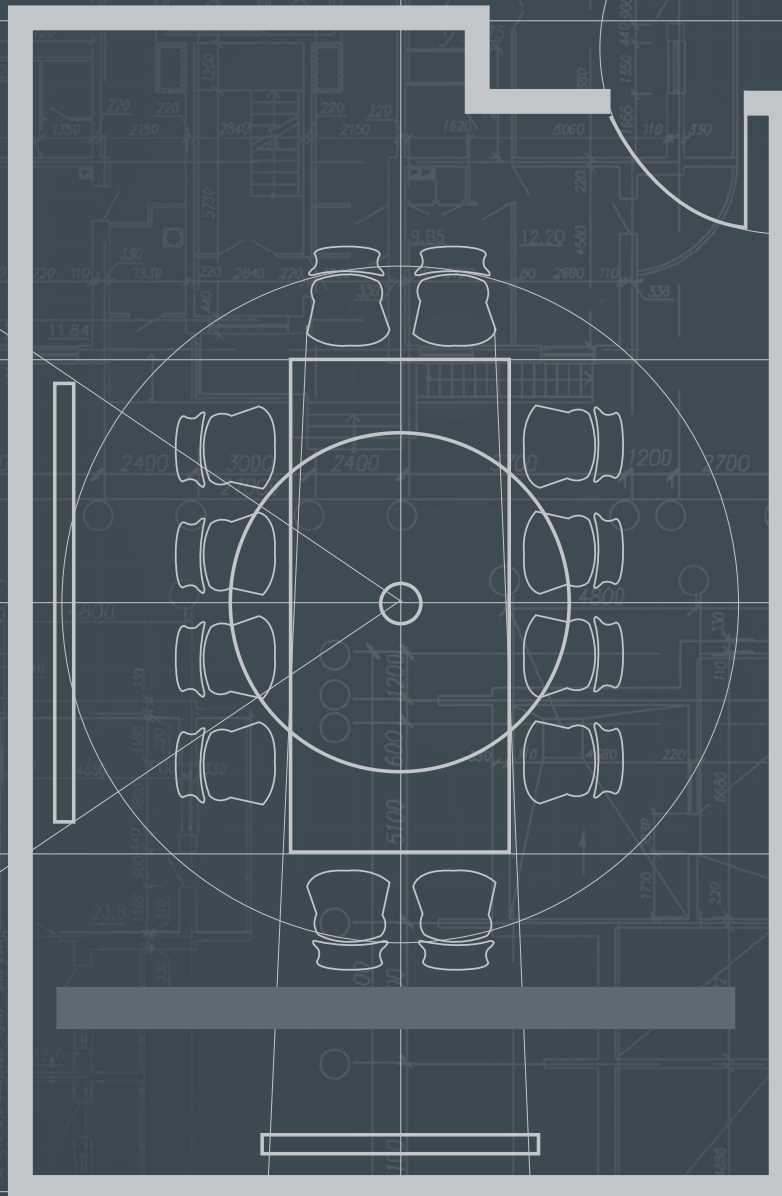


# The Better Meetings Blueprint

How to architect greater  
productivity and action  
in your organization

January 2016



plantronics.



# COLLABORATIONWARE

## WORK BETTER TOGETHER

This is a story about getting the job done. About integrating technology that can change how and where we work. About connecting with the right co-workers at the right moment. And communicating with anyone, from anywhere, at any time. It's a story about cherry-picking your people and trusting your team, about magnifying ideas across borders and cultures, and ultimately, about the value of working together, versus the difficulty and frustration of working alone. With the right tools and the right processes, collaboration drives innovation like no other enterprise initiative. Do you have what you need to make it happen?



# It's time to build a better meeting.

Chances are, you had a meeting at work today. Or you're about to have one. Or two. Or more. And it doesn't really matter where you're located. Collaboration made possible by mobile and cloud technologies means you never have to miss a meeting. It's all about working smarter, from wherever you happen to be.

But why do you need to meet so often?  
Why are meetings essential?

Meetings are where ideas are exchanged, tasks are assigned, commitments are made, and brains are stormed. Whether they're face-to-face, virtual, or a combination of both, meetings are an opportunity to connect with your colleagues, discuss critical tasks and issues, determine the important next steps to get work done, and collaborate to achieve more.

At their best, meetings are productive, stimulating, and worthwhile—making them powerful team builders, motivators, and taskmasters.

At worst, however, they can be distracting, boring, and pointless—making them big time wasters.

It was no different here at Plantronics. So we asked ourselves a simple question: "How can we make meetings better?"

For us, as an engineering company rooted in audio technology, meetings start with the human voice. And there's no better way to extend the power of the human voice than through technology. So we applied the same spirit of innovation we use in the development of our audio technologies to create this, "The Better Meetings Blueprint." In the following pages, we'll share with you some powerful ideas we believe can help your organization communicate more effectively through better meetings.

Our mission is to architect products that help remove the barriers to communication. Architecting a framework for better meetings is a natural outgrowth of that mission.

## Who should read "The Better Meetings Blueprint"?

**IT personnel** who are responsible for seeking ways to create greater efficiencies in their organization or for implementing and managing technologies that facilitate communications.

**Team leaders, managers, or individuals** looking for tools and techniques to help their teams work more effectively together in person or remotely.



## Table of Contents

- 1 THE BUSINESS OF MEETINGS**  
The economics that drive better meetings
- 2 THE PEOPLE IN MEETINGS**  
The human dynamics that drive successful meetings
- 3 THE TECHNOLOGY OF MEETINGS**  
The tools that drive communication, collaboration, and productivity
- 4 NEXT STEPS AND RESOURCES**  
Tactics and tools that can help create a culture of better meetings



# 1 THE BUSINESS OF MEETINGS

The economics that drive better meetings



# WORKBETTERWARE

# Meetings are notorious for being poorly organized and poorly run. At the same time, everyone agrees that meetings are an essential part of the workplace—even if they involve no actual work.

There's a saying: "If you want to kill time, a meeting is the best weapon." And when you look at the numbers, you can see how true it is. It is remarkable just how much time we spend in meetings.

Plantronics recently conducted a global survey where we found that over 40% of respondents spent between 11 and 30 or more hours a week in meetings. And less than 2% of the same respondents said they felt they should be spending more time in meetings.

Every meeting is different, but they all share a common currency: time. Every meeting takes the time of every employee that comes to the meeting.

But it's not just the meeting itself. There's the time to prepare, sometimes even with pre-meetings, as well as follow up afterwards. Add up all those hours, and you'll get a true sense of the amount of time that is spent on meetings.

The ripple effect can be immense.

*The Harvard Business Review*\* did a study of one corporation and calculated that a single weekly executive committee meeting actually resulted in a total of 300,000 hours of time spent each year. The executive committee meeting itself took 7,000 person-hours per year of the executives' time. However, there were 11 separate unit heads who spent a total of 20,000 hours a year meeting to prepare for the meeting. And to support the unit head meetings, 21 teams spent a total of 63,000 hours. Add to this the 210,000 hours a year of additional meeting time for the unit head meetings, and the total annual time commitment was 300,000 hours.

Even more alarming, that 300,000-hour figure does not include the massive amounts of preparatory time required for all those meetings.

\* Mankins, Michael C. "This Weekly Meeting Took Up 300,000 Hours a Year."  
*Harvard Business Review*, April 29, 2014.



"There's no such thing as a one-hour meeting—unless there's only one participant."

#### The real cost of time-consuming meetings

As much as 50% of meeting time is wasted, according to The 3M Meeting Network.\* If an organization were to recoup even a small percentage of that time, the gains in productivity would be enormous.

However, it goes beyond issues of productivity. It's also about personal motivation. Employees attending a meeting want to feel they are making a positive contribution, and that their participation is making a difference. But when they feel that their time could be better used elsewhere, it can be de-motivating, and raises questions about whether the next meeting will be yet another distraction.

\* Source: 3M Meeting Network, "Introduction to Great Meetings."

#### "So how much is this meeting costing us?"

There's no such thing as a one-hour meeting—unless there's only one participant. In other words, a one-hour meeting that includes eight employees is, in effect, an eight-hour meeting. When you think of meetings in this way, it becomes easier to understand their true cost.

In addition to the time cost, there are other costs to consider: the meeting space itself, travel, supplies, and possibly food.

In our recent survey, 40% said that, on average, three to five minutes are lost because of technical difficulties or connection issues. And 51% said more than six minutes are lost. In an eight-person meeting, that adds up to almost an hour of lost time.

Use these calculations to get a sense of how much your meetings—and delays—cost based on the average hourly rate of each meeting participant.



### Meeting cost

$$\left\{ \begin{array}{c} \text{Meeting} \\ \text{duration (hrs)} \end{array} + \begin{array}{c} \text{Travel} \\ \text{time (hrs)} \end{array} \right\} \times \begin{array}{c} \text{Number of} \\ \text{participants} \end{array} \times \begin{array}{c} \text{Average hourly} \\ \text{rate of participants} \end{array} = \begin{array}{c} ? \\ \text{Total cost} \end{array}$$

### Cost of delay

$$\begin{array}{c} \text{Average hourly rate} \\ \text{of participants} \end{array} \div 60 \times \begin{array}{c} \text{Number of} \\ \text{participants} \end{array} \times \begin{array}{c} \text{Minutes delayed} \end{array} = \begin{array}{c} ? \\ \text{Total cost} \\ \text{of delay} \end{array}$$

# Meetings in the United States—by the numbers

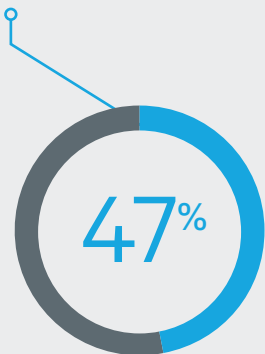
25  
MILLION

The number of formal business meetings held every day in the United States<sup>1</sup>

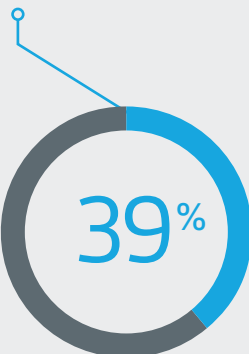
60

Number of meetings, on average, that managers attend each month<sup>2</sup>

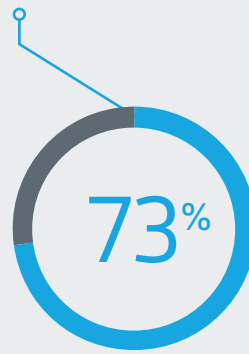
Percentage of people who think too many meetings are a waste of time<sup>3</sup>



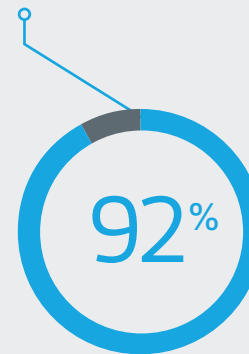
Percentage of meeting participants who admitted to dozing off during a meeting<sup>2</sup>



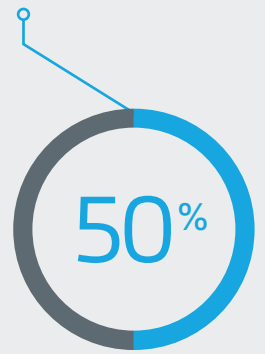
Percentage of people who believe a prepared agenda is very important<sup>2</sup>



Percentage of meeting attendees who see meetings as a way to contribute to the organization<sup>2</sup>



The maximum estimated amount of meeting time that's wasted<sup>4</sup>



\$37 BILLION

The amount of money spent on unnecessary meetings<sup>5</sup>

Sources:

<sup>1</sup> *Communicating in Groups and Teams: Sharing Leadership*, Gay Lumsden, Donald Lumsden, Carolyn Wiethoff, Wadsworth, Cengage Learning, 2010.

<sup>2</sup> <https://e-meetings.verizonbusiness.com/global/en/meetingsinamerica/uswhitepaper.php>

<sup>3</sup> <http://business.salary.com/why-how-your-employees-are-wasting-time-at-work/slide/9/>

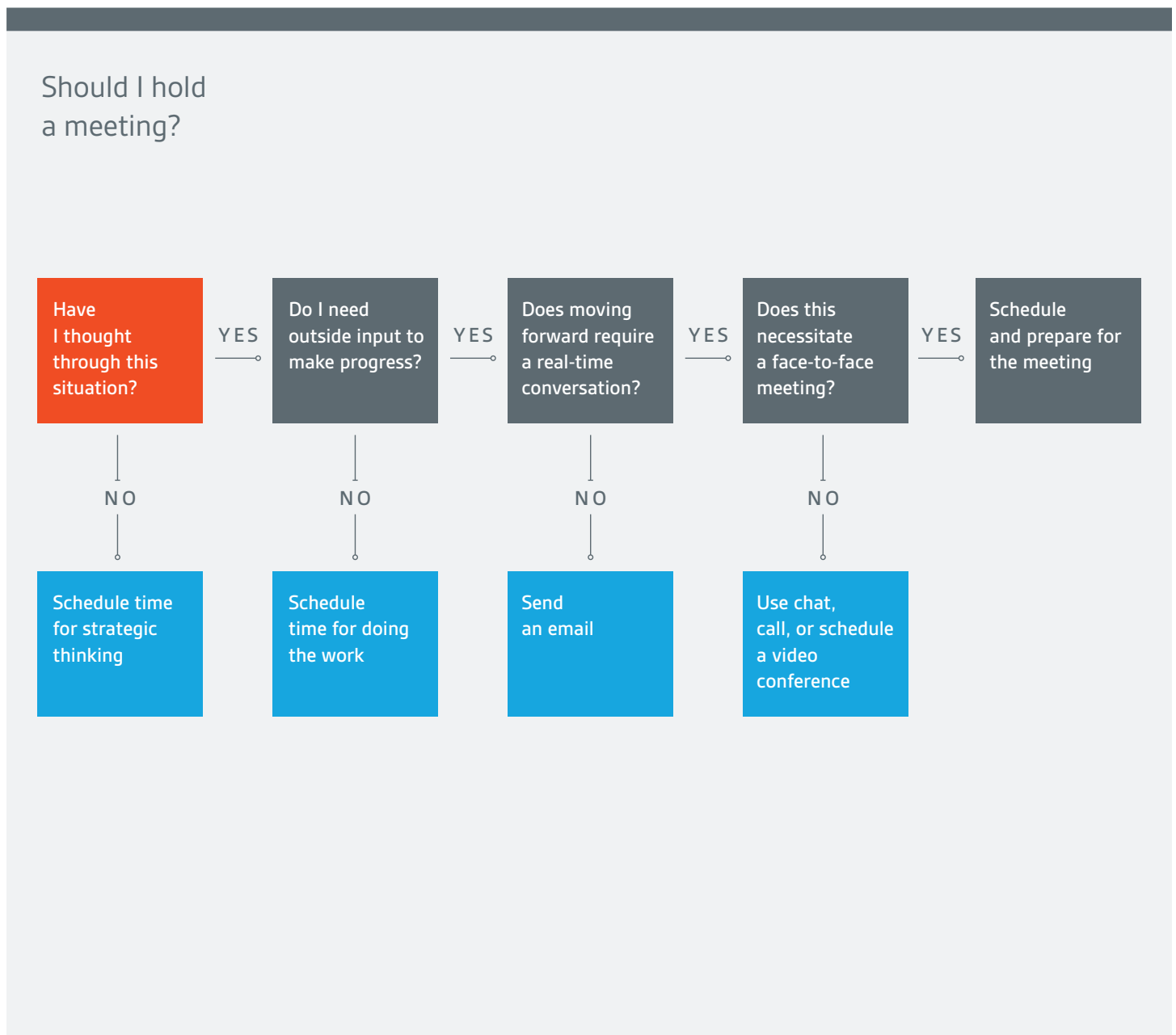
<sup>4</sup> [http://www.3rd-force.org/meetingnetwork/readingroom/meetingguide\\_make.html](http://www.3rd-force.org/meetingnetwork/readingroom/meetingguide_make.html)

<sup>5</sup> *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*, 2005.



## Is there a true business need for this meeting?

Because cost is so important to keep in mind, you should consider first whether a meeting is really necessary. The following decision tree can help you determine whether a meeting serves a true business purpose or whether you might achieve your goal with an alternative activity.



Source: <https://hbr.org/2015/03/do-you-really-need-to-hold-that-meeting>. Reprinted with permission.


## 2 THE PEOPLE IN MEETINGS

The human dynamics  
that drive successful meetings



# CONFIDENCEWARE

Meetings are about bringing people together to communicate with each other. Get the right mix of people in a meeting, and they can share a lot of valuable information or generate innovative ideas. For a successful outcome, it's essential to gather the right people and for all participants to understand their role.

	BEFORE THE MEETING	DURING THE MEETING	AFTER THE MEETING
<b>Meeting Organizer</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify clear objectives</li> <li>Set an agenda and share it ahead of time</li> <li>Provide pre-read materials</li> <li>Invite key stakeholders, subject matter experts, and decision makers</li> <li>For virtual meetings, provide correct links, call-in numbers, passcodes, and test out virtual collaboration tools in advance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Start the meeting on time</li> <li>Stick to the agenda and facilitate actively</li> <li>Keep the meeting as short as possible</li> <li>At the end, determine next steps and assign them to the appropriate parties with deadlines</li> <li>Recap key discussion points to ensure alignment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide meeting notes to all attendees summarizing key information covered, decisions, next steps, and those responsible for following through</li> <li>Consider asking participants to fill out a Meeting Assessment Form, so you can judge the value of your meeting and make improvements</li> </ul>
<b>Participants</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the purpose and your role in the meeting</li> <li>Prepare adequately; read the agenda and meeting materials</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be on time</li> <li>Be engaged: listen, think, and contribute, but be succinct</li> <li>Be focused: resist the temptation to multi-task</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Read the meeting notes</li> <li>Follow through on the actions for which you are responsible</li> <li>Fill out a Meeting Assessment Form if requested</li> </ul>

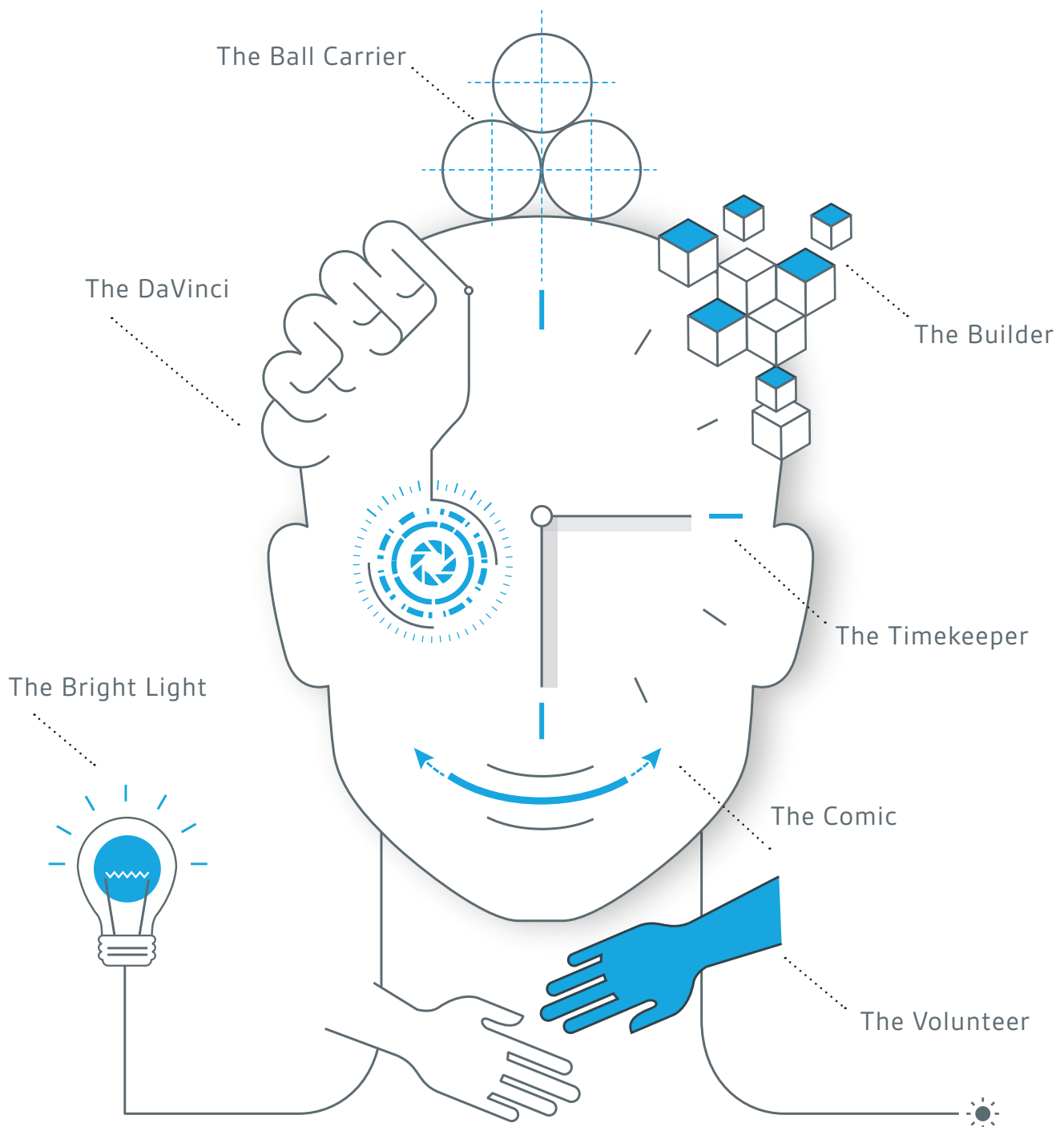


You know them,  
you like them  
(or dread them)

The **seven best**  
meeting participants...  
and the **seven worst**

Everyone brings certain strengths to a meeting—after all, that’s why you invite them in the first place. Unfortunately, some also bring certain weaknesses. Either way, a person’s behavior can influence the agenda, and the outcome, of the proceedings.

Here, just for fun, we give a brief rundown of the most common kinds of meeting participants—the good and the not-so-good—with some helpful advice on how to best handle the not-so-good.



## The seven **best** MEETING PARTICIPANTS



## The seven best

### MEETING PARTICIPANTS

1



#### The Builder

"That's a great idea. Now what if we were to take it and..."

Builders love to examine, think, and share. People enjoy working with them because "but" is not part of their vocabulary. They much prefer "and."

2



#### The Bright Light

"I have an interesting idea I'd like to share with the group."

Bright Lights *always* have interesting ideas. They do the necessary prep work (and then some) and always come to the table with practical contributions. And they inspire others to contribute, too.

3

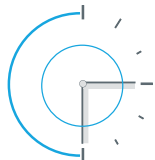


#### The Comic

"Hey, did you hear the one about...?"

Comics add humor to the proceedings at just the right moments, without ever dominating the conversation. They always help energize the meeting, often when it's most needed.

4



#### The Timekeeper

"I know we only have a limited time, and there's a lot to discuss..."

Timekeepers remind everyone that the time allotted is limited, and that it's important to keep to the agenda. And they do it in a way that's agreeable to everyone.

5



#### The Volunteer

"I'll take this action item."

This is the person who is always willing to step up and take action or speak up when no one else will.

6

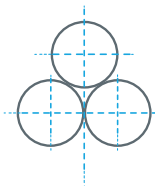


#### The DaVinci

"Let me see if I can show this on the whiteboard."

A DaVinci has an ingenious way of visualizing what has been said in a way that everyone can understand. Their whiteboard sketches can be invaluable to focusing the discussion and moving it forward. (In virtual meetings, of course, they need video support.)

7

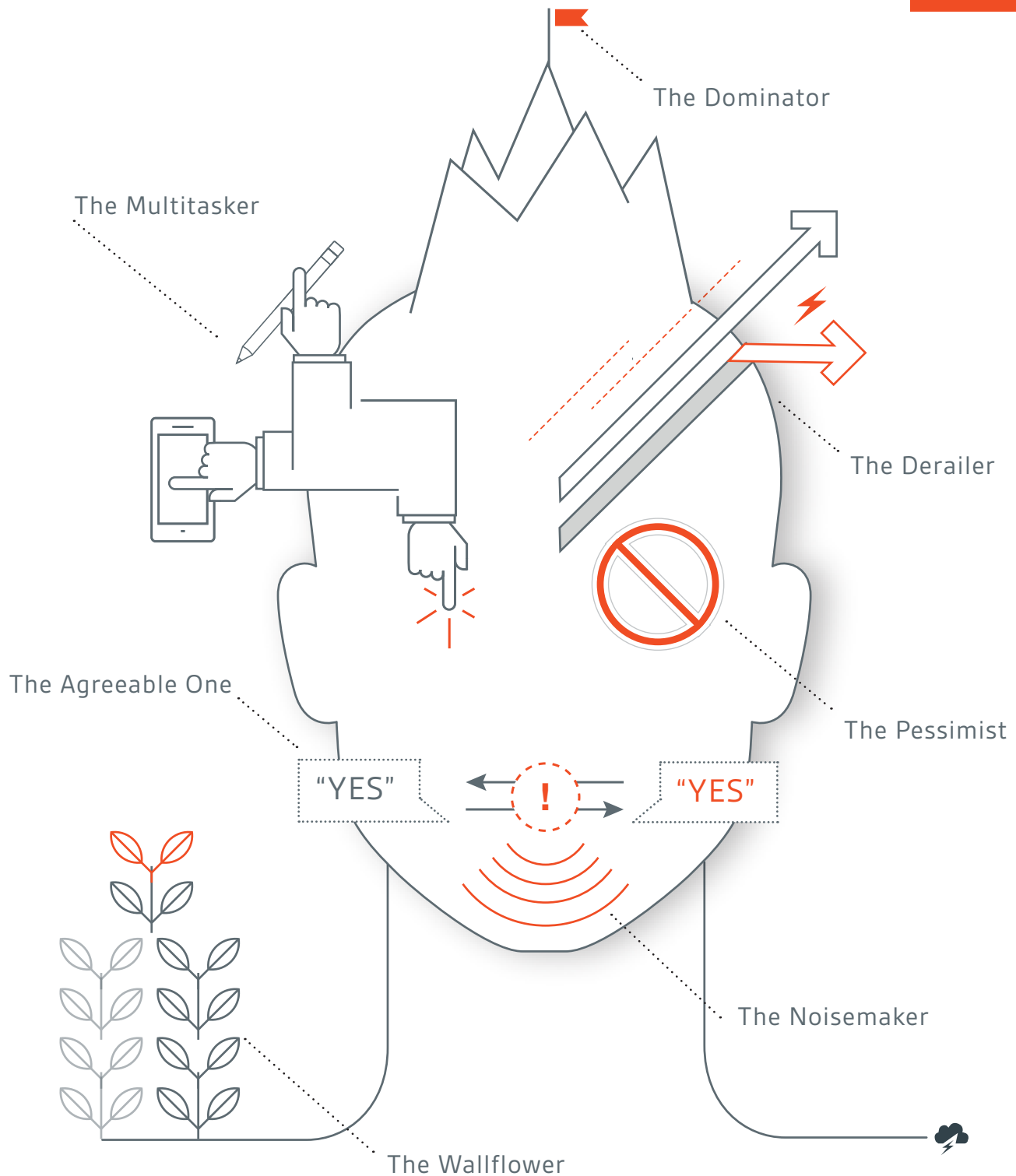


#### The Ball Carrier

"Here's where we take it..."

Ball Carriers know how to take the ball and run with it. Great team players, they keep a keen eye on what's happening throughout the meeting, and know exactly when to contribute, and keep the conversation moving toward the goal.





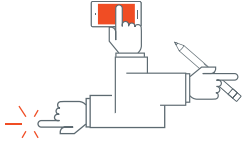
## The seven worst MEETING PARTICIPANTS



## The seven worst

### MEETING PARTICIPANTS

1



#### The Multitasker

"I'm pretending to listen while I finish these 22 emails."

Multitaskers may think they are getting lots of things done, but it's usually at the expense of contributing to the meeting itself. Often, they call in to meetings even if they're in the office to keep working at their desks.

**How to handle them:** Ask them jokingly, "Are you multitasking?" Then remind them the group could really use their input.

2



#### The Dominator

"My view is clearly the most important, so stand back while I show you how it's done."

Dominators feel they are best equipped to meet the goals of the meeting. They're often wordy, will speak over others, and use exaggerated language to make their point.

**How to handle them:** Let them speak, but keep the focus broader by asking the team for other views.

3



#### The Derailer

"I'm going to talk about something completely unrelated that's relevant only to me."

Derailers can steer a meeting off course in matter of seconds. They may think they're on the right track, but in fact, they're bringing people to a place they don't really need to go.

**How to handle them:** Thank them for their input, but suggest they stick to the actual agenda.

4



#### The Wallflower

"I'm just going to sit here quietly, and try to blend into the background..."

Wallflowers prefer to sit back and listen or comment by IM instead of speaking—and may wait to share their thinking after the meeting is over.

**How to handle them:** Assign a specific topic to them in advance, so that they can prepare to speak during the meeting.

5



#### The Pessimist

"No, no, no. That won't work, and here's why."

Pessimists like nothing better than to explain why something cannot be done. They may have the best of intentions, but they can quickly sap the positive energy from a room.

**How to handle them:** Validate their concerns, then ask them what they feel a better approach to solving the problem would be.

6



#### The Agreeable One

"I'm saying it's a good idea, even though I'm really not sure it is—I don't want to be difficult."

Agreeable Ones never like to challenge their colleagues for fear of offending them. The problem is, you never really know what they think—though sometimes they use backchannels to offer their real opinions.

**How to handle them:** Tell them there are no right and wrong answers, and that everyone is entitled to their opinion. Then, ask them to give theirs.

7



#### The Noisemaker

"I'm going to carry on doing things in the background ... loudly."

Cousin of the Multitasker, the Noisemaker avoids the "mute" button while performing activities loud enough to be picked up and disrupt the call.

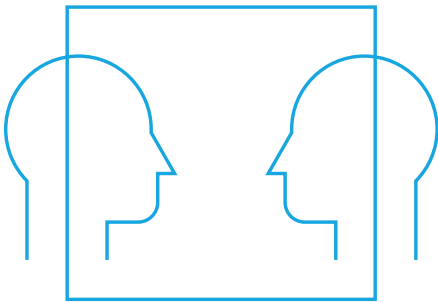
**How to handle them:** Remind people to mute their line; if they don't, feel free to drop them from the call.

## Meet everyone in their own space

You have the makings of a great meeting. You have the right agenda, the right people, and the right technology to make it a success. But what about having the right space? It can be equally important to having an effective and productive session.

Although it's important to have comfortable seating, the right lighting, and properly functioning audio-visual equipment, the right space is not only defined by the meeting room itself. Not everyone is likely to be in the same room during the meeting. Many will be calling in from a remote location. (In our survey, 93% of respondents said they have at least one virtual attendee in their meetings.)

For example, if they're using a mobile phone, they could be in any environment, from an airport lounge to a car to a coffee shop. Their challenge, and that of everyone else in the meeting, is to hear and be heard clearly, despite the noises that might be happening around them. Headsets with noise-canceling technology help to offset distracting background sounds, while enabling the user to be heard clearly by other meeting participants.



### Virtual participants' checklist

For virtual meetings, the following reminders will help ensure there are no interruptions that could cost you time and disrupt the flow of ideas:

---

Call in early to make sure your connection is functioning properly.

---

Choose a quiet space to minimize sounds and distractions around you while you're on the call.

---

Make sure you have enough battery power in your device to last through the meeting, even if it runs long.



# 3 THE TECHNOLOGY OF MEETINGS

The tools that drive communication, collaboration, and productivity



# PERFORMANCEWARE

# From four walls to no walls: meetings now happen anywhere, anytime.

Today's office can no longer be defined only by its physical space. Work environments can be virtually anywhere, and can be determined largely by the participating individuals. With access to high-speed internet, cloud-based collaboration services, mobile technology, and advanced audio equipment, people can connect to each other at any time.

Work, then, is more a state of mind than a place to go—but it is dependent on technology. When it comes to virtual meetings, robust and fail-safe connectivity is crucial. It's the only way that every meeting participant can be actively and productively engaged, and the only way that everyone can hear and be heard—or, in the case of video conferences, see and be seen.

The goal is to make any virtual meeting feel as natural as possible, as if everyone is sitting around the same table. Conversations should be fluid. Visuals should be clear. The technology being used should enable dynamic collaboration for every meeting participant. In other words, the technology should act as the framework that helps give shape to the meeting.

## **The sights and sounds of meeting technology**

Designing the optimal meeting environment involves a wide range of considerations concerning audio and visual technologies. **The main rule: technology should work for the people using it.**

Collaboration in a virtual space is easier with visual support. Access to screen sharing, two-way video, and a shared whiteboard to facilitate dynamic virtual interaction are all necessary tools that can help teams work more effectively across distances.

Sound quality is critical in virtual meetings. For those connecting from a remote location, HD audio enables them to sound natural and be heard clearly. At the same time, if they're calling from a noisy environment, mute and noise-canceling technology helps to minimize distracting background sounds.

## Choosing the right virtual meeting technology: some questions to ask

### Consider the number of participants and where they are located

Sometimes, bigger is not better. Having more people in a meeting, virtual or not, can become confusing—and there's a tendency for a select few to dominate the conversation. However, if a larger group is necessary and there will be remote participants, it's best served by an online meeting environment that enables users to share screens, see who's talking, and provide text-based commentary to specific individuals.

When there are multiple users joining from a variety of remote locations, the right infrastructure must be in place to enable effective usage of the required meeting tools. Potential considerations include bandwidth, firewalls that may require workarounds in advance, any special advance permissions, and the ability to download any needed apps.

### Know who's driving and who's participating

The most successful meetings have clearly defined roles: a leader, presenters, and participants. This becomes even more critical in a virtual environment. On larger calls, it's helpful to have technology that enables the leader to mute all those who are not talking while allowing typed questions and requests to speak from those who are listening.

Virtual meeting technology has quickly become an essential tool for distributed workgroups—and in many organizations, it is the primary means by which colleagues interact with each other. As a result, there are a number of considerations that will help ensure a virtual meeting environment is working effectively for its users. Here are a few...

If the same group meets regularly, a combined collaboration portal/meeting space that provides file sharing, instant messaging, and instant video conferencing is beneficial. This single destination can also serve as a knowledge exchange, where users can post comments, files, and updates for everyone in the group to see.

### Plan for all devices being used

Some users may be calling from their desktop, while others might be calling from a laptop, tablet, smartphone, speakerphone, or desk phone. It's important to test all potential scenarios. Noise-canceling headsets or earpieces can help ensure consistent sound quality across various devices under a variety of conditions.

### Identify specific tech requirements in advance

All users should be aware of any technical requirements well in advance of the conference call. For example, is a webcam required? High-speed internet? Speakers? A headset? This will allow them to do the requisite installations and tests to ensure the meeting tools are functioning properly.

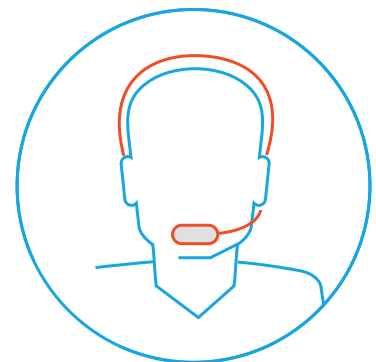
In addition, if all users belong to the same organization, it's helpful to use a web conferencing tool that integrates with the organization's directory. This makes it easy to send quick requests for impromptu meetings. For users outside the organization, check their firewall and proxy settings to help make the connections more readily.

### Know what needs to be seen and who needs to be heard

Do the meeting participants need to see one another? Do they need to share a whiteboard or desktop? Are they showing a video or running through a presentation? True collaboration comes from a combination of sight and sound matched with the appropriate tools. Do you have the technologies in place to ensure all these needs are covered?

### Have a back-up plan

Technical difficulties, unfortunately, do occur from time to time, so it's important to have contingencies set up. It's a good idea, for example, to test all passcodes in advance, and to make arrangements to have technical support standing by via IM, should the meeting organizer or participants experience any difficulties.



# Seven technology considerations for today's web-enabled meetings

## 1. MOBILITY

Mobile usage continues to grow, and with it, users demand to be able to use personal devices. And it's not just BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) anymore—it's also BYOA (Bring Your Own App). Users need to know they have the ability to communicate and collaborate remotely under almost any conditions, whatever the technology, the distance, or the environment may be.

### Considerations:

The ability to support multiple personal devices may require too many IT resources to be feasible. A mobile strategy helps address which mobile devices will be supported, which apps are needed, and how to provision security for each supported device.

## 2. SOUND

You cannot underestimate the importance of sound quality when it comes to virtual meetings. Large spaces tend to make speakerphone conversations all but impossible for virtual attendees to understand. And background noise introduced by virtual participants can quickly derail a meeting. If the meeting participants are not intelligible to each other, their level of frustration mounts as the level of productivity plummets.

### Considerations:

Poor acoustics in a conference room can often be offset by echo-canceling speakerphones. For those calling in, wideband supported headsets with noise-canceling microphones are essential. And the ability for those who are not speaking to mute their microphone helps make the conference call much more intelligible—and productive.

## 3. VIDEO

Videoconferencing is being increasingly adopted around the world, and seen as an indispensable tool for bringing people together. Successful implementations enable people to view and interact with each other seamlessly, with no apparent barriers.

### Considerations:

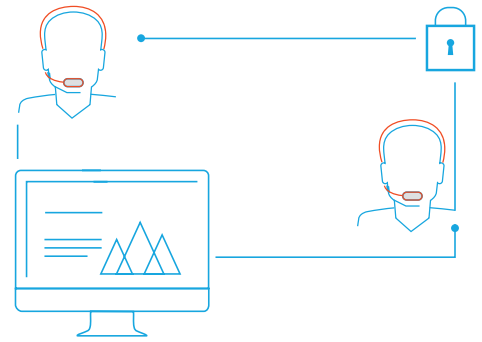
The ability to integrate videoconferencing with unified communications helps to provide greater flexibility for staff, giving them the ability to host, schedule, and join conferences while offsetting the need for additional hardware.

## 4. NETWORK CAPACITY

The goal is to make every virtual meeting look, sound, and feel as natural as possible—but to do it successfully requires the right network capacity. A bad connection can significantly affect meeting productivity.

### Considerations

To accommodate the demands for HD video and audio quality, dedicated high-speed bandwidth is required. Reliability with minimal latency is critical to maximize uptime across all video endpoints, conference bridges, and firewalls. At the same time, it's important to inform remote users about best practices in wi-fi, to help ensure, for example, that upload and download speeds are sufficient to accommodate the demands of a web conferencing tool.



## 5. SECURITY

To help ensure a secure environment, strict security protocols need to be in place for data transmission and data storage.

### Considerations:

Choose wireless products with security features built in, for example, encryption and the latest DECT security standards. Headsets with noise-canceling microphones help reduce the transmission of private side conversations.

## 6. INTEROPERABILITY

Unified communications by definition creates a need to implement multiple software, hardware, and networking technologies. Helping to ensure compatibility among these technologies can be a significant challenge.

### Considerations:

The International Multimedia Telecommunications Consortium provides the industry with implementation guidelines, such as interoperability best practices and pre-testing.

## 7. HOSTING, SERVICE, AND SUPPORT

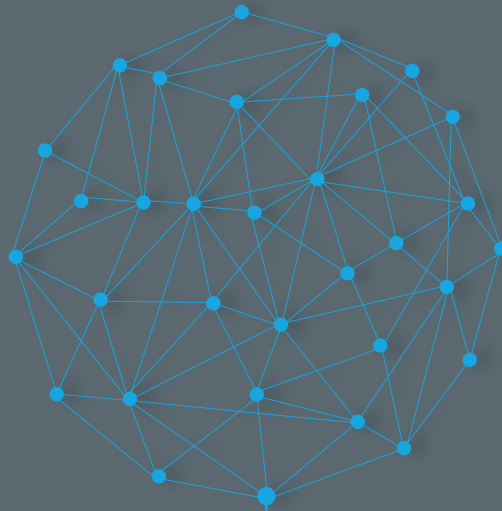
To help ensure maximum uptime, universal access, and ease of deployment, more companies are choosing managed services and hosting for greater flexibility and scalability.

### Considerations:

Outsourcing helps provide greater IT bench strength by offering services such as 24/7 global customer support, guaranteed uptime, and training when required. To explore best practices and key insights in planning, deploying, and adopting a UC solution, view the Plantronics UC Toolkit [here](#).



## The seven virtual virtues: etiquette for the online meeting world



### CLARITY

Speak deliberately and clearly to be heard and understood.



### TEMPERANCE

Tone of voice and energy are really important, especially in an audio-only meeting. Sometimes it's not what you say, but how you say it.



### FORTITUDE

Be active in the conversation, but don't dominate. It's all too easy when you're participating remotely to disengage, or talk without giving others a chance to interject.



### ENGAGEMENT

It's easy to get distracted when calling in to a meeting. Focus on what's being said, and engage in the dialogue whenever possible.



### PURITY

In a virtual environment, participants have enough distractions, so stick to the agenda. You'll help the group achieve more in the end.



### SILENCE

When you're not speaking, stay on mute. Background noise is distracting.



### PATIENCE

Be sensitive to those whose first language is not the one being spoken in the meeting. Listen carefully, and speak slowly.

## 4 NEXT STEPS AND RESOURCES

Tactics and tools that  
can help create a culture  
of better meetings

**YOURWAYWARE**

Three actions to  
take now to make  
meetings matter

1

GIVE GUIDANCE

Train your team to meet  
more effectively.

Refer to:  
**The Concise Better Meetings  
Blueprint** on p. 25.  
Plus, get inspiration from  
**How we're building better  
meetings at Plantronics**  
on p. 26.

2

EQUIP FOR SUCCESS

Provide the right tools to  
facilitate productive meetings  
with everyone in your  
organization, wherever  
they are.

Refer to:  
**Better meetings happen with  
Plantronics**, our guide to choosing  
headsets for mobile, office fixed-desk,  
hoteling stations, and virtual small/  
home offices on p. 27.

3


TRACK YOUR PROGRESS

Have everyone rate every  
meeting to enable continual  
improvement of your  
organization's meetings.

Refer to:  
**Meeting Assessment Form** on p. 28.

# The Concise Better Meetings Blueprint

EIGHT ESSENTIAL RULES FOR MEETING  
ORGANIZERS AND PARTICIPANTS TO BUILD  
A PRODUCTIVE, ACTIONABLE MEETING

 <b>1</b>	<b>Have a clear objective</b>	Clearly identify the purpose of the meeting. What is the desired outcome?
 <b>2</b>	<b>Establish clear roles</b>	Understand what each participant will be contributing to the meeting. Most important, how will you contribute?
 <b>3</b>	<b>Work from an established agenda</b>	Use the agenda as a tool to reach the desired outcome of the meeting. Are you keeping the goal in mind?
 <b>4</b>	<b>Stay engaged</b>	Think about why you are in the meeting. Listen, reflect, and contribute.
 <b>5</b>	<b>Stay on time</b>	Keep your eyes on the clock. Time is everyone's most valuable commodity.
 <b>6</b>	<b>Actions</b>	Work toward the objectives, and determine what the next steps will be to achieve them. How will you help?
 <b>7</b>	<b>Meeting notes</b>	Document the discussion and share notes after the meeting, inviting commentary or clarification from the participants.
 <b>8</b>	<b>Critique</b>	Use the <a href="#">Meeting Assessment Form</a> to evaluate the meeting. What was effective? What could be better?



# How we're building better meetings at Plantronics

## OUR NEW SMARTER MEETINGS PROGRAM IS HELPING US TO COLLABORATE AND COMMUNICATE MORE EFFECTIVELY ACROSS THE COMPANY

At Plantronics, we follow the philosophy of Smarter Working, giving our employees the flexibility to work in ways that are personally and professionally fulfilling.

In a Smarter Working environment, not everyone is going to be in the same place at the same time—but that doesn't matter. A person's location doesn't diminish their ability to meet with any colleague, at any time.

That's why part of our Smarter Working philosophy involves Smarter Meetings, our program to help improve the way we communicate and collaborate with one another. Smarter meetings means implementing the best practices we've outlined in this eBook. Plus, here are some areas we've looked at to ensure our meetings are as productive as possible.

### SPACE

We've re-designed our physical office spaces as open environments with multiple meeting areas to better enable team collaboration. For virtual meetings, we've adopted unified communications technologies and web-enabled meeting and collaborative workspace software.

### PREPARATION

We developed guidelines to help ensure all meetings have a clear purpose and are productive. For example, the first question to ask is what specific goal the meeting should achieve. From there, a clear agenda can be set.

### ETIQUETTE

Points of etiquette are especially important for those calling in from remote locations, and include recognizing and calling upon everyone in the meeting, sensitivity to cultural and language differences, elocution, and ensuring all agenda items are covered.

### TIME

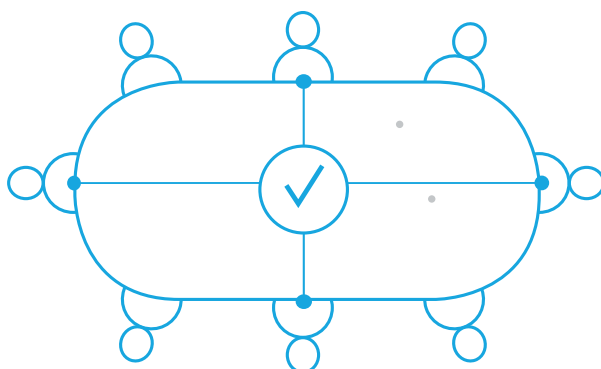
In our recent survey, almost 44% said they're in meetings from 11 to 30 hours a week. We know that significant amounts of time are being used, and we're looking to see by how much we can reduce the amount of time spent.

### PARTICIPANTS

Making sure the right people—and only the right people—are in the meeting is critical to its success. Making sure participants have a clear understanding of how they will contribute is equally important.

### OUTCOMES

An assessment of whether the objectives were achieved, next steps determined, and a written summary sent to all participants. Also important is to ask all participants to score the meeting, to determine where there are areas to improve.



### TRAINING

The Smarter Meetings program includes a number of five-minute online training sessions for employees to view on an internal portal. Additional resources, templates, and tools have also been posted to the portal.

# Better meetings happen with Plantronics

Meetings today are not defined by where you are, but how you're connected. With the right devices, you and your colleagues have the freedom to work with colleagues from wherever you are—with no barriers to communication.

## Office—hoteling desk

### CHALLENGES:

1. Block out sound for focus
2. Mobility to take calls to a quiet location
3. Ability to connect to multiple devices

### RECOMMENDATION:

**Voyager Focus UC**



## Office—huddle room

### CHALLENGES:

1. Impromptu group conferencing
2. Ability to join meetings from PC
3. Clear and intelligible audio

### RECOMMENDATION:

**Calisto 610**

## Mobile

### CHALLENGES:

1. Stay connected on-the-go
2. Block background sounds in a variety of loud environments
3. Manage connectivity to multiple devices

### RECOMMENDATION:

**Voyager Legend UC**



## Office—fixed desk

### CHALLENGES:

1. Seamless connection to all of your devices including your desk phone
2. Being untethered from your desk
3. Block sounds in your environment from being heard on your calls

### RECOMMENDATION:

**Savi 740**



## Mobile/Remote

### CHALLENGES:

1. Conferencing on-the-go; personal and group
2. Block background sounds in a variety of loud environments
3. Manage connectivity to multiple devices

### RECOMMENDATION:

**Calisto 620**

## Remote—home office

### CHALLENGES:

1. Ability to move throughout your home or home office on calls
2. Blocking out background noises in your environment
3. Block interference from appliances and Wi-Fi networks

### RECOMMENDATION:

**Savi 440**



Learn more about Plantronics technology solutions for productive meetings at [www.plantronics.com](http://www.plantronics.com).

# Meeting Assessment Form

Please evaluate the overall effectiveness of our recent meeting.

Meeting organizer

Date of meeting

Time of meeting

OBJECTIVE	YES	NO
1   The agenda was delivered in advance.		
2   I understood why I was invited and what my role was.		
3   Discussions followed the agenda.		
4   The sound quality was good, with minimal background noise and distractions.		
5   The objectives were accomplished.		
6   The meeting started on time.		
7   The meeting ended on time.		

Please provide further feedback here:

At Plantronics, we are in the business of helping people communicate and collaborate without barriers. For information on our technology solutions for better, more productive meetings, visit [plantronics.com/smartermeetings](https://plantronics.com/smartermeetings)