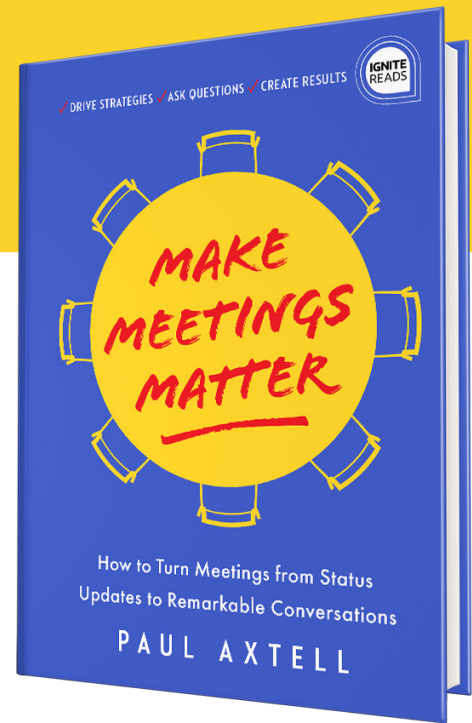


## Spark Impact in Just One Hour

Value-Building Experiences  
by SimpleTruths.com



# A Guide for Better Meetings:

*Make Meetings Matter*

By Paul Axtell

Includes printable worksheet for meeting participants

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**Meetings should be efficient and productive, open and communicative, and useful and important.**

## How?

**Prior to your meeting, provide a copy of *Make Meetings Matter* to each meeting participant and request the participants read the book and come prepared for discussion. The book will also serve as a learning tool and a future resource to reinforce training ideas.**

**Ask these thought-provoking questions prior to discussing the book:**

1. What do you do to prepare for a meeting you are leading?
2. How would you describe meetings you have led?
3. How do you follow-up after a meeting you have led?

## BOOK DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### 1. CHOOSE THE PERSPECTIVE: THIS MATTERS

- How do you feel about meetings you have within your organization in general?
- What would you like meetings to be like?
- When you're in a meeting, do you give your full attention to what is going on? If so, how do you do this? If not, what can you do to pay better attention?

### 2. MASTER EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

- How would you describe yourself as a listener?
  - Do you lean toward speaking first or listening?
  - Do people feel that you are truly interested in them?
  - How would you describe yourself when you're part of a conversation?
  - Do you make every conversation about you?
  - Do you speak more often or longer than people can tolerate?
  - Do you introduce negative conversations or make negative comments about someone who is not there?
- When explaining something, do you make sure to ask if anyone needs clarification?
- When asking for action items in a meeting, do you ask for them to be due by a certain date?

### 3. CREATE SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS

- Do you try to get to know the people you work with? If so, how do you do this? If not, what could you do to change that?

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- Are you comfortable meeting people and engaging with them? If so, why? If not, what could you do to change that?
- Do you ever start a conversation with someone you don't know? If yes, what do you do? If no, brainstorm some ideas.

## 4. DECIDE WHAT MATTERS AND WHO CARES

- How do you determine what topics go on the meeting agenda?
  - Do you review whether or not enough time was spent on each topic? Why or why not?
- How do you determine who should be invited to a meeting?
- As a participant, do you ever question whether or not you should attend a meeting? Why or why not?
- For those people who cannot attend a meeting, how do you keep them informed?

## 5. DESIGN EACH CONVERSATION

- Think about an upcoming meeting and the topics you would like to cover:
  - Why is each topic on the agenda?
  - Where do you want to be at the end of each discussion?
  - What input are you seeking from participants?

## 6. LEAD MEETINGS LIKE A PRO

- Meetings can often go off track. Think about these four scenarios and brainstorm how you could bring the meeting back on track:
  - Lack of clarity about the process steps.
  - People who speak too often or too long.
  - Problem solving and tangents that don't add value.
  - Person leading doesn't make it a priority to manage the conversation in a deliberate way.

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- After each meeting, do you:
  - Send out a meeting summary? Why or why not?
  - Ask someone to track and follow-up on all actions? Why or why not?

## 7. PARTICIPATE TO HAVE IMPACT

- What is your mindset when you walk into a meeting as a participant?
- Do you prepare what you're going to say when you are a participant in a meeting? Why or why not?
  - How do you handle it when someone disagrees with you? When you disagree with something someone says?
- Think about how you speak and listen in meetings:
  - What do you do that probably doesn't work for others?
  - What don't you do that might be helpful to others if you did?

## 8. DEALING WITH INEFFECTIVE BEHAVIOR IN MEETINGS

- How do you deal with the following:
  - People who constantly interrupt during a meeting?
  - People who speak more often than they should during a meeting?
  - People who don't keep their commitment after the meeting?

Whether you are the manager who calls meetings, a project leader who runs team meetings, or someone who attends meetings as a participant, *Make Meetings Matter* will help you make your meetings more effective.

**Turn meetings from status updates to remarkable conversations!**

**Contact us to learn more or tell us about how this Discussion Guide sparked impact for you and your team!**

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