

# OPENING

**TITLE: PLANNING AND MANAGING MEETINGS**

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## **FOOD FOR THOUGHTS**

- I. “Good fortune is what happens when opportunity meets with planning”  
Thomas Edison
- II. “Always plan ahead!”  
It was not raining when  
Noah built the ark!  
Richard Cushing  
Who are we as personal assistants?  
How can we achieve excellent performance at work?

## **YOUR VITAL SKILLS**

Your skills are vital to your success and effectiveness as Personal Assistants.

What are the skills require of you as a Personal Assistant?

### **1.Ethics**

Ethics are moral beliefs and rules about right and wrong.

A Personal Assistant skill is respecting work ethics by maintaining privacy and integrity in the discharge of administrative duties. Personal Assistants have access to their Bosses personal details such as usernames and passwords, security and employees' information. All of these should be treated in confidentiality.

### **i. Effective Communication**

Communication skills, that is verbal is an essential requirement for every Personal Assistant.

A Personal Assistant is sometimes a point of contact between the client and the organisation.

### **ii. Good Writing Skills**

Writing skills are also important as they deal with formal documentation.

This is needed for emails, write up.

Summary writing capability is essential for Personal Assistants.

### **iii. Computer Operative Skills**

Word Processing

Preparation of documents for presentations

Basic spreadsheet commands.

### **iv. Decision – Making and Organization**

Management and Organization Skills.

They should be able to handle managerial duties

They have to arrange meetings and conferences on behalf of Executives.

They should be familiar with scheduling tasks, responsible, give attention to details.

### **What is planning?**

Planning is the process of setting goals, defining actions to achieve these goals and organizing the resources and efforts to carry out these actions.

### **Therefore, you must**

1. Anticipate future needs and circumstances
2. Make decisions about the best course of action.
3. Prepare for potential challenges or opportunities.

## **What is the difference between plan and planning?**

Planning is a method of actively discussing the goals, objectives, methods and activities that must be completed.

The documentation of planning is called a plan.

A plan is often a document or concept.

Planning refers to the process or activity of creating a plan.

Planning is the vital management process that starts with a plan, tracks results, and reviews and revises often.

A plan is a plan but the real value is in the planning process.

- Planning is a continuous activity, whereas plans are the documentation of that conversation at a certain moment in time.
- Planning strives to reduce difficulties and changes but it should be noted importantly that change is the only constant in life.
- Planning may not ensure success. It is an important must do

## **Important of Planning**

- Planning provides direction and a sense of purpose for organizations.
- It helps organizations decide what to do and when to do it.
- It reduces aimless activity and makes action more meaningful.

- Planning provides a unifying framework in the course of planning, roles are defined and resources are deployed to achieve goals, therefore organization would not be pulled in different directions, confusion and misunderstanding minimized at various levels.

- Planning is economical

Effective plans coordinate organisation work and eliminate unproductive effort and guess work is banished.

Plan helps an organisation to economically utilise the physical and financial resources.

- Planning reduces the risk of uncertainty and helps an organization cope with an uncertain future. It helps management to anticipate the future and prepare for the risks by making necessary provisions to meet the turn of events.

Planning minimizes the chances of mistakes and unpleasant surprises.

- Planning facilitates decision making which involves searching of various alternative courses of action, evaluating them and selecting the best one.

- Planning encourages innovation and creativity planning which involves looking ahead and preparing for the future.

Planning helps managers to visualize problems early and take settable remedial steps.

Planning improves morale

Once member know what is expected of them, they can contribute better.

When goals are properly defined, work assignments can be fixed and everyone can begin to contribute to the achievement of these goals.

Planning permits employees to participate in the thinking process.

### **Limitations/Criticisms of Planning**

- **Rigidity**

Plans put the activities of an enterprise in a rigid framework.

Everything is spelt out in details and deviations are not permitted. Now opportunities are often ignored or rejected because of commitment to existing plans.

- **Costly and Time Consuming**

Planning is costly and expensive in terms of time spent to formulate the plans.

- **Employee Resistance**

For any plans to succeed, you need people to understand it, embrace it and make it happen.

People who are not involved in planning tend to resist the planning process.

## **Ten Commandments of a Good Plan**

1. Should have a clear objective.
2. Should be simple and easy to understand.
3. Should provide for proper analysis and clarification of actions.
4. Should be flexible enough to move in sync with changing trends.
5. Should have a balanced focus.
6. Should be practicable and capable of delivering results.
7. Should allow people - especially those who look after its implementation to participate actively and enthusiastically.
8. Should provide for optimum use of resources.
9. Should be sold to everyone and communicated well before its being implemented.
10. Should allow integration of effort of every level smoothly.

Source: L. F. Vrwick,  
Koontz, Storier

## **Managing Meetings**

Meetings are the fuel for productivity.

Every organization holds meetings vigorously to stay updated, discuss ideas, solve problems, make collective decisions and ultimately reach its goal.

## **Why Do We Need to Manage Meetings**

- 1) According to Harvard Business Review 71% of Senior Managers said meetings are unproductive and inefficient.
- 2) The inefficiency in conducting meetings and spending many hours working on unnecessary meetings call for a know how in organizing and managing meetings for effectiveness.

## **TYPES OF MEETINGS EVERY ORGANIZATION SHOULD HAVE**

### **1) TOWN HALL MEETING**

Examples in the University

Congregational Meeting.

Town hall meetings are where each organization member gathers in a town hall to discuss ideas, give feedback and share views with management and vice versa.



## **2. Team Building Meeting**

Team building meetings help your team work better together. It helps improve team culture and builds a collaborative workforce that thrives together.

It is essential only to invite people who work on a common goal or department to such meetings.

## **3. Innovation Meeting**

Conducting innovation meetings is a great way to transform and discuss/share new ideas.

Hold a meeting with the creative team or the people whose insights you trust.

## **4. One – on – one Meetings**

It is the keep track of your employees' happiness.

## **5. Decision - Making Meeting**

A vast majority of business decisions are made in meetings.

- Increases trust among the members of the organization and assists in the overall growth of organizations.

## **The changing mode of meetings.**

Not too long ago, face – to – face meetings were the norms, while remote and hybrid meetings were less common.

Today, virtual meetings are an integral part of daily life.

Organizations regularly hold meetings virtually.

In fact, relying solely on face – to – face meetings is now seen as highly unproductive.

## **TOWARDS A WELL MANAGED MEETING: THROUGH PLANNING**

### **1. Have a Meeting Agenda**

Agenda are more than just an outline for discussion.

They can make all the difference between pointless meetings and the ones that are truly engaging and productive.

A good agenda helps your team stay on top of your meeting goals and gets results faster than ever.

#### **Agenda**

The agenda is the most important item in a meeting. Properly drawn up, it has the power of speeding and clarifying issues about the meeting.

For Example

“Development Budget” tells nobody very much whereas the longer explanation.

To discuss: The reduction in the 2024 / 2025 Budget allocation due to the postponement of the new programmes.

## **Organizing the Agenda**

The early part of a meeting tends to be more likely and creative than the end of it, so if an item needs mental energy, bright ideas and clear heads, it may be better to put it high up on the list.

Equally, if there is one item of great interest and concern to everyone, it may be a good idea to hold it back for a while and get some other useful work done first.

### **2. Start on Time & Keep it Short**

Meetings will be more productive if you give everyone a set time to work with. As a leader, punctuality is a must for you want which will inspire others to be mindful of everyone's time.

The shorter your meetings the more likely it is that people will show up and pay attention.

Long meetings can overwhelm, particularly when they are frequent.

### **3. Have the Right People at the Table**

For example, a committee meeting requires attendees to be selected by the Management /Board.

This ensures that those who attend can meaningfully contribute and have their voices heard.

### **4. Executive Summary**

The practice of circulating background or proposal papers along with the minutes is in principle, a good one.

It saves time and also helps in formulating useful questions and considerations in advance.

The Executive Summary should be brief, that is short.

### **In conclusion**

An effective meeting starts with adequate planning.

At the core of this success are the Personal Assistants, who are saddled with the responsibility of organizing meetings.

Once the planning is right the meeting goes well.

**In closing, think on this;**

“The only way to do a great work is to love what you do”

Steve Jobs



