

LESSON

1 Organizing Meetings

Learning Objectives

After this lesson, you will be able to...

- ✓ Define the purpose of the meeting
- ✓ Clarify the desired outcomes
- ✓ Choose attendees and their roles
- ✓ Set a meeting time
- ✓ Handle the logistics and necessary preparation
- ✓ Complete and share agendas

1 Useful Expressions

The expressions can be used to effectively communicate plans and ideas when organizing a meeting. Make your own sentences using them.

- ① Can you make it on...?
- ② We're planning on...
- ③ We're going to go over...
- ④ What's ... schedule like?
- ⑤ Do you have a ... preference?
- ⑥ Could you RSVP by...?
- ⑦ Don't forget to...
- ⑧ Let me write this down.
- ⑨ What's going to be on the agenda?
- ⑩ ... add it to the shared schedule.
- ⑪ Who's responsible for...?
- ⑫ I'll pencil it in for...

2 Language Practice

Reword the sentences using the Useful Expressions above.

- ① **Are you coming to** Monday's meeting?
- ② **We're thinking about** using the third floor conference room.
- ③ **Please remember to let me know if you are coming before** 5 o'clock.
- ④ **Let me make a note of that.**
- ⑤ **Who's going to write up the agenda?**
- ⑥ **Could you put it on the team's agenda?**
- ⑦ **I'll put in on the calendar for** next Tuesday, but we can always change it later.
- ⑧ My team **is going to discuss** an alternative to the current marketing strategy.
- ⑨ **Are you available on** Monday at 4?
- ⑩ **What time works best for you?**

Read the conversation and answer some questions from your instructor.

“Meeting Prep.”

Jared

We need to organize a joint planning meeting for our teams sometime next week.

Hillary

What’s going to be on the agenda?

Jared

We’re going to go over some of last quarter’s sales data and collaborate on a new strategy.

Hillary

Sounds good. **What’s** your team’s **schedule like?**

Jared

Jack and Angela will be out of town on a business trip until Wednesday. **Can** your people **make it on** Thursday?

Hillary

Thursday works well for me. **Let’s write up an agenda.**

Jared

Could I borrow your pen? **Let me write this down.**

Hillary

Where do you want to have it?

Jared

We’ll need a room with a projector.

Hillary

How about the meeting room on the fifth floor? It has a projector and a computer hooked up.

Jared

That’s fine with me. **Do you have a time preference?**

Hillary

We’re planning on having a team meeting in the morning, so after lunch would be better.

Jared

Okay. **I’ll pencil it in for** 3 o’clock until I check if the room is reserved. **Who’s responsible for** letting everyone know once the details are fixed?

Hillary

I’ll add it to the shared schedule.

Jared

Could you get your team members to **RSVP by** Friday?

Hillary

That shouldn’t be a problem.

Jared

Also, **don’t forget to** send us copies of the data you’ll be going over. I’ll try to get my team to e-mail their files by Tuesday.

4 Common Mistakes

Read the paragraph and share your thoughts.

Many people take pride in working independently. For this reason, it can be tempting to try to take on all details of meeting planning by yourself. However, this can potentially lead to headaches, such as schedule conflicts and forgotten tasks later on. When trying to singlehandedly organize all the particulars, it is easy to overlook small things. For this reason, meeting planning should be a team effort. Getting another perspective from someone you trust will help you effectively plan and coordinate all the small aspects of a meeting.

5 Good to Know

Here are some expressions that are useful when in a telephone meeting. Make your own sentence for each.

Making arrangements

- I'll be in touch with you about that...
- Would it be better to...?
- Could you get back to me by...?
- Would you mind being responsible for...?

Checking information

- Could I just confirm one detail?
- Let me check something. Did you say...?
- Are you sure this is accurate?
- I need to do a final check. Is ... right?

Returning a call

- I'm calling to get back to you on...
- I'm returning your call about...
- I got your message about...
- I heard you called about...

Wrapping Up

Share two things you learned from this lesson and review.

1. _____

2. _____

LESSON

2 Opening Meetings

Learning Objectives

After this lesson, you will be able to...

- ✓ give greetings and introductions
- ✓ review the meeting purpose
- ✓ clarify roles and responsibilities(R&R)
- ✓ check agendas

1 Useful Expressions

The expressions below can be used to effectively open a meeting. Make your own sentences using them.

- ① I'd like to start by welcoming...
- ② If I can get your attention...
- ③ Let's get down to business.
- ④ called this meeting to...
- ⑤ ..., could you take the minutes?
- ⑥ Let me begin with...
- ⑦ Could you remind me what...?
- ⑧ I'd like to briefly go over...
- ⑨ Have you all seen a copy of the agenda?
- ⑩ When was this ... finalized?
- ⑪ ... to aim for a ... finish.
- ⑫ ... direct your attention to...

2 Language Practice

Fill in the blanks to complete the sentences using the Useful Expressions above.

- ① I'm sorry to interrupt, _____ time this meeting is expected to finish?
- ② _____ our visitors from the Australian Branch. Mr. Jones, it's an honor to have you here.
- ③ Could I _____ the 4th item on the agenda? I think it would be better to start with this first.
- ④ _____ I'd like to get the meeting started.
- ⑤ Now that everyone is here and settled, _____.
- ⑥ Now that I have your attention, _____ the first item on the agenda.
- ⑦ Before we continue I'd like to clarify our roles for this meeting, Paul, _____?
- ⑧ Before we look into the first item, _____ the modified budget for the second quarter.

Read the conversation and answer some questions from your instructor.

Getting Started

John

Thank you all for coming. **I'd like to start by welcoming** a special visitor. We have Mr. Preston visiting from our branch in Shanghai. Welcome.

Preston

Thank you for the warm welcome.

John

Now, **if I can get your attention again, let's get down to business.** I've called this **meeting to** review our current marketing strategy and focus on making some schedule changes as requested by the Shanghai branch. But first, Mallory, could you give us a review of the last meeting's proceedings, and Jack, **could you take the minutes?**

Mallory

Right, **let me begin with** the previous meeting's minutes. Our last quarterly marketing meeting was held on July 7th with all ten members of the TF* present. The meeting was opened at 16:00 by John, who was chairing the meeting. The previous meeting's minutes were reviewed by the secretary and the agenda included two items.

Preston

Sorry for interrupting, **could you remind me what** the two items were?

Mallory

They were the production schedule and the distribution issues. Moving on, the meeting was concluded at 17:30 with all items on the agenda reviewed and the minutes shared by Jack.

John

Thank you. That sounds good. Now, if there are no additional remarks, **I'd like to briefly go over** the agenda for today's meeting. **Have you all seen a copy of the agenda?** Mr. Preston?

Preston

Yes, agenda number two. I don't think I was informed of this. **When was this agenda finalized?**

Mallory

On Thursday, I sent an e-mail.

Preston

I must have missed it. Please, continue.

John

I would like **to aim for a** three o'clock **finish**, so let's try to keep it brief. Could everyone please **direct your attention to** page 7 of the handout?

4 Common Mistakes

Read the paragraph and share your thoughts.

One common mistake made by many meeting chairs is that they do not make the finalized agenda and the meeting's desired results clear from the start. This can result in confusion and a disorganized meeting. A way to overcome this is by taking a few minutes during the opening of the meeting to review roles, the agenda, and to remind everyone of the desired outcome of the meeting to keep everyone on the right track.

5 Good to Know

Here are some expressions that are useful when holding conference calls. Make your own sentence for each.

Checking a word

- Is that ... as in...?
- Could you spell that back to me?
- I'm sorry, but how do you spell that?
- Would you mind spelling that for me?

Asking about plans

- What do you intend to do about...?
- Have you given any more thought to...?
- Are you intending on...?
- Have you made a decision about...?

Asking for clarification

- I'm sorry, but I didn't catch that...
- Would you mind repeating that for me?
- Could you say that one more time?
- You're saying that...?

Wrapping Up

Share two things you learned from this lesson and review.

1. _____

2. _____