
Best Foot Forward: Bringing Your A-Game to Meetings



**I N D I A N A
COMMUNITY ACTION
POVERTY INSTITUTE**

Research and Public Policy

A Program of **INCAA™**
INDIANA COMMUNITY
ACTION ASSOCIATION



Indiana Community
Action Poverty Institute

The Indiana Community Action Poverty Institute engages in research and promotes public policies to help Hoosier families achieve and maintain financial well-being.

Agenda

1

**Share Collective
Wisdom (&
Vent/Laugh/Cry)**

2

**Review Evidence-
Based Practices**

3

**Choose What You
Will Change**



2020's Most Embarrassing Zoom Moments

CGTN is funded in whole or in part by the Chinese government.



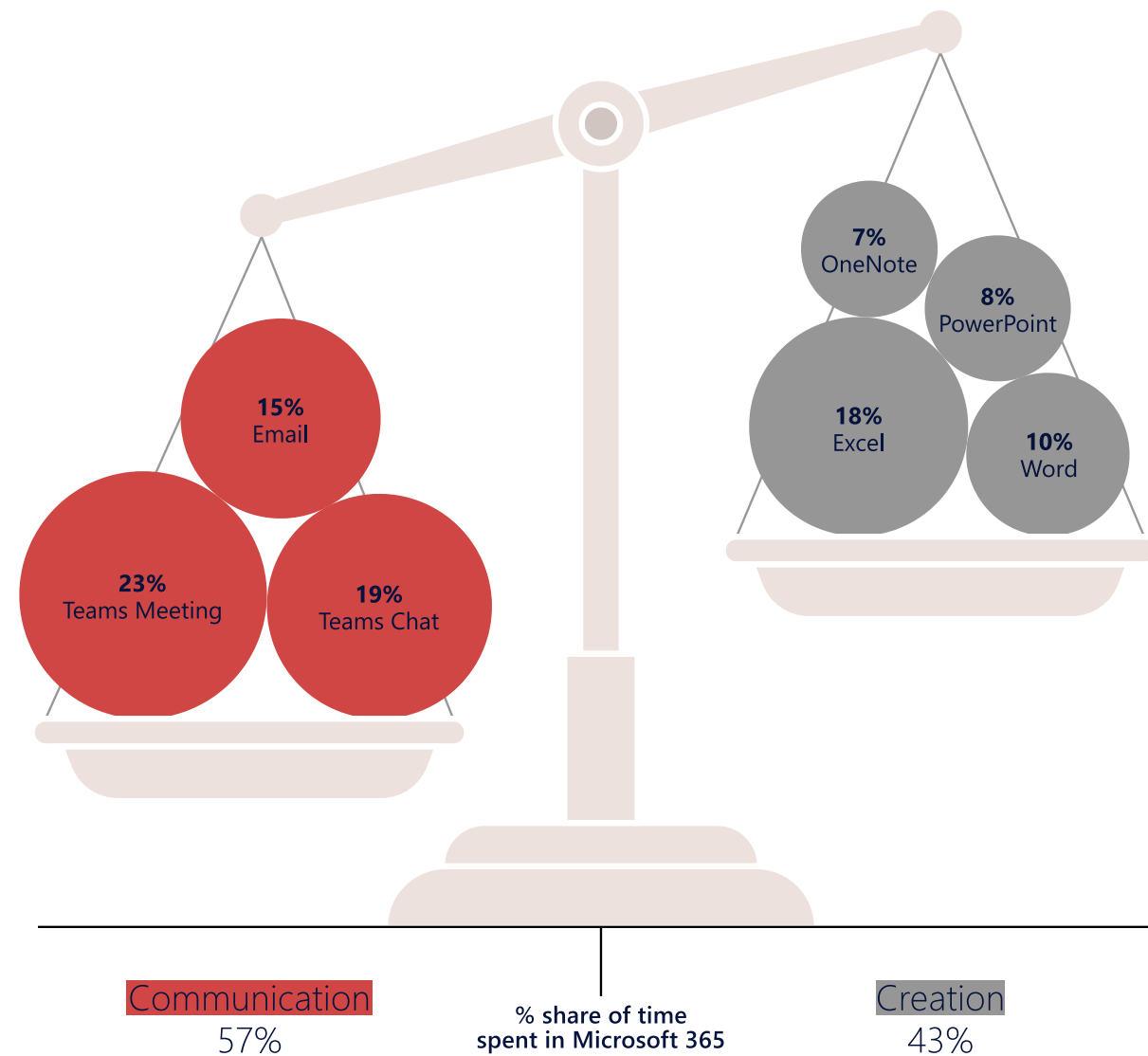
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2020'S MOST EMBARRASSING ZOOM MOMENTS

Watch on  YouTube

Why Does It Matter?

We're in Meetings....A Lot



- **"Inefficient" meetings are the number one barrier to productivity**
- **"Too many meetings" came in at #3**
 - **68% of workers don't have enough uninterrupted time to do work**

From: <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/worklab/work-trend-index/will-ai-fix-work>

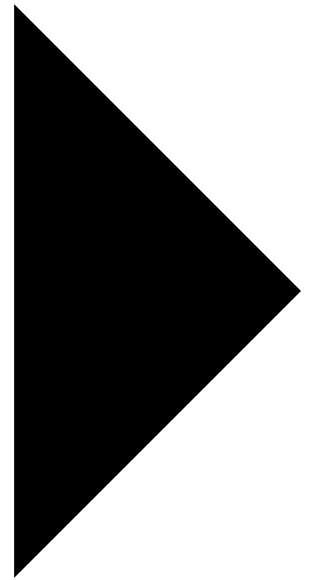
Drawing on Our Experiences

With your neighbor, take two minutes each to describe one of the best meetings you've attended recently.

With your neighbor, take two minutes each to describe one of the worst meetings you've attended recently.



Why don't people like meetings?



- **Because it could have been an email, huddle, or solved with a project management tool.**
- **You dread icebreakers.**
- **The meeting gets off track.**
- **The meeting goes over the designated time.**
- **The meeting was not planned well.**
- **There is no room for engagement.**
 - **One person hogs all the talking time**
 - **The facilitator is talking at you (not engaging)**

What is the purpose of a meeting



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**Information
sharing**



**Problem
solving**



Brainstorming



**Decision
making**



Planning



**Relationship
Building**

A Good Meeting

Meetings should have a well-defined:

- Purpose
- Agenda
- Engaged participants

Fruits of a good meeting:

- Communication
- Motivation
- Productivity
- Expectations



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The Part of the Meeting That's About Research on Meetings

True or False

"Small talk" before a meeting starts is an evidence-based practice to increase meeting effectiveness.



Table 1: Factors that influence meeting effectiveness

Factor	Effect size
Practicalities and setup	
Meeting facilities	●●●○○
Meeting frequency	●●○○○
Meeting size	●○○○○
Meeting duration	Data unavailable
Preparing	
Goal clarity	●●●◐○
Meeting punctuality	●●○○○
Formal agenda	●●○○○
Meeting rules/procedure	●●○○○
Behaviour	
Meeting-leader behaviour	●●●●○
Focused communication	●●●○○
Positive humour, playful activities, small talk	●●●○○
Surface acting	●●●○○

Notes: Effect sizes indicate positive influence on the specified outcomes. We interpret statistics using a standard rule of thumb: ●●●●● very large; ●●●●○ large, anybody can easily see the difference; ●●●○○ moderate; ●●○○○ small to medium; ●○○○○ small; ○○○○○ none.

Effective meetings

Young, J. and Gifford, J. (2023) Productive meetings: An evidence review. Practice summary and recommendations. London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

Preparing for a meeting

Participants

- **Review the agenda**
- **Research information to contribute**
- **Be prepared to participate and share your perspective**
- **Be prepared to listen intently & take notes**

Facilitators

- **Determine if it's a meeting, or a huddle.**
- **Set a clear agenda.**
- **Create engagement pieces (icebreaker, questions, polls) with awareness of your audience.**
- **Be open to feedback.**
- **Reflect on the meeting goals.**
- **Ensure that all meeting materials are present, available, tested, and working.**
- **Only invite essential people.**
- **Make clear next steps**

Do you need all that time?

PRO TIP:

“Once a time estimate is generated, consider cutting it by 5 or 10%. A bit of extra time pressure and added stress can actually help attendees stay focused, stimulated and reach optimal performance.”

Young, J. and Gifford, J. (2023) Productive meetings: An evidence review. Practice summary and recommendations. London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.



Facilities

Effective space (but not table shape), refreshments, temperature and lighting contribute to meeting effectiveness.

True or false

Being late to meetings has been associated with:

- Reduced trust,
- Increased disrespect, and
- Increased intentions to quit one's job.



How to respect punctuality while accommodating for the fact that “life happens?”

PRO TIP:

“Prepare strategies to take account of latecomers, for example by structuring the agenda with the most impactful items in the middle. This lessens the risk of starting late and helps ensure everyone is present for the key discussions.”

Young, J. and Gifford, J. (2023) Productive meetings: An evidence review. Practice summary and recommendations. London: Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.



During the Meeting

- Be punctual
- Introduce yourself
- Listen actively
- Take notes
- Be confident
- Stay engaged

Your Professional Identity

Meetings are a time to allow others to meet you and get to know you professionally.

- **Networking**
- **Connecting**
- **Using critical thinking skills**
- **Opportunity to take initiative**



Your Professional Pitch

Pitch Statement:

"Hello! My name is Ashley Phillips. I am a Community Needs Analyst at the Indiana Community Action Poverty Institute. I've been at the Institute for two years. I have six years of formal experience working in this area. One of my strengths are collecting and presenting qualitative data in compelling ways.

Connection Point:

I am also an Army veteran, wife, and mother of two toddlers and a dog.

I am in sunny California and as much as I love the heat, I think I am melting this week.

I'm a traveling softball parent so we stay busy.

I love traveling and went to Italy for the first time this year.



One minute or less



Name: first and last



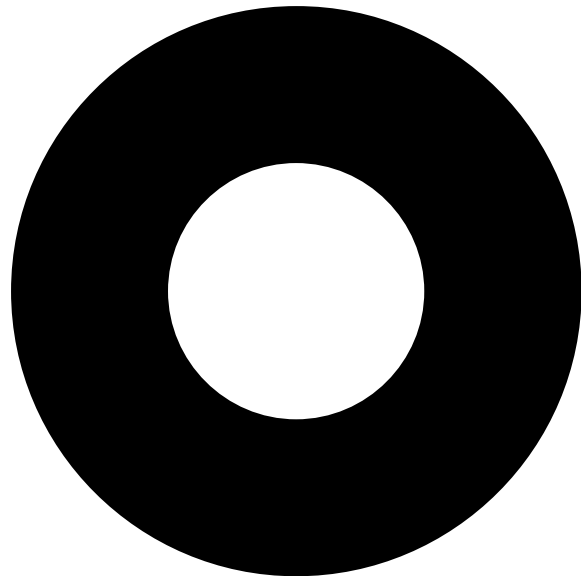
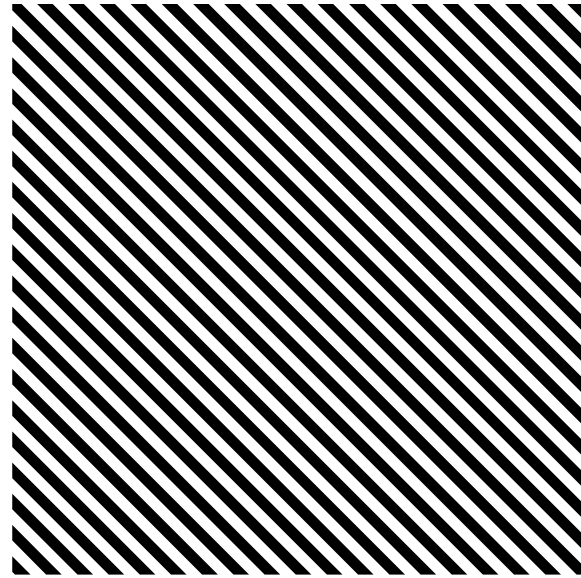
Professional title



Experience or projects you've worked on



If appropriate something personal to build connection and relationship.



What you do or
say is also
creating the
identity of your
organization.

How are you representing your organization and its mission?

Effective Meeting Communication



Respectful

- Verbal
- Expressive/ body language

Clear & Concise

- Stay on topic
- Efficient

Encouraged

Informative

Thoughtful

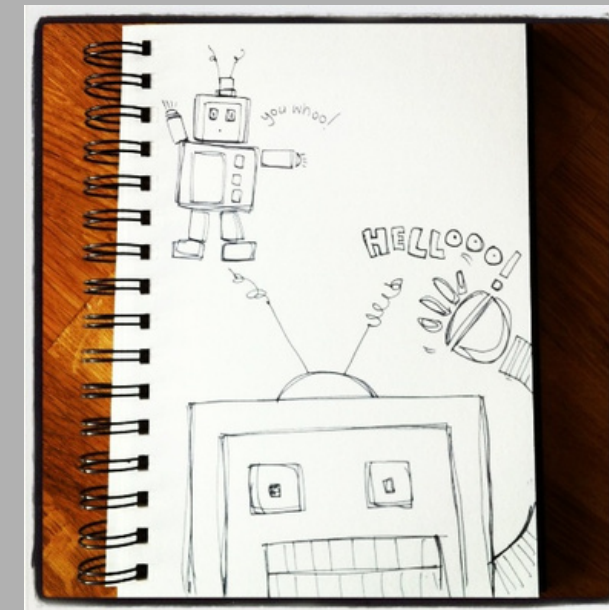
Techniques for Staying Engaged

**Take notes
or doodle**

**Bring a
fidget toy**

Stand

**Drinking
water/snack**



Meeting Facilitators

Be mindful that participants may have an attention disorder, injuries, or pain that may cause them to need to move around.

Avoid distractive or dismissive behaviors like:

- **Checking cell phone or watch (bring your laptop to keep up with the time)**
 - **Walk out if you need to take a call**
 - **Sighing**
 - **Be mindful of your facial expressions**
 - **Laugh inappropriately**
-

Remain Mindful of Differences



After the meeting

Participant

- **Follow-up on action items**
 - **Specific asks**
 - **Brainstorming**
 - **Planning**

Facilitator

- **Send meeting notes and action items**
- **Evaluate meeting**





When in Doubt, Ask!

A quick debrief, open conversation, survey, or poll can give you feedback on how people experience the meeting / your participation.

We'd love your feedback!

