

CREATING INTERACTIVE MEDICAL MEETINGS

Top 4 Strategies



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THE VALUE-ORIENTED OPENING

Remember: it's all about your audience

This is a great way to begin a meeting. Value is conveyed to participants once they realize that your meeting is really all about them. Consider using the TOPIC or Value Oriented Opening to determine their learning goals, or simply to find out what's on their mind.

TOPIC

Time and Topic.
Open by Asking.
Playback Responses.
In Writing, Capture Comments.
Clarify Coverage.

TOPIC: It's all about your AUDIENCE

TIME AND TOPIC

Specify time allotted and clearly define your topic parameters

OPEN BY ASKING “WHAT....?” (Open-Ended)

- Questions
- Thoughts
- Expectations
- Learning Goals

PLAYBACK RESPONSES

Demonstrate your understanding

IN WRITING, CAPTURE COMMENTS

- Write in silence
- Visibly Post list
- Address issues when you are ready

CLARIFY COVERAGE

- Clarify what items you will (or will not) cover based on available time and focus
- Let your audience know why certain topics are out of scope

BRING YOUR MEETING TO LIFE

10 Ways to Keep Your Audience Interested

1. **Ask a question.**
2. **Change your syntax.** If there's no response to your question, ask the same question differently.
3. **Take a poll.** Ask for a show of hands. When raised, you now have permission to call on someone for a quick comment.
4. **Silently brainstorm.** And then share. Give them 30 seconds to write down ideas and questions and then ask them to convey their thoughts to the group.
5. **Read your audience.** Respond to body language. "Bob, you look perplexed."
6. **Play traffic cop.** Prevent behaviors that might limit others' participation. "Jeff, we've heard a lot from you today; how about the rest of you?"
7. **Place equal value.** On a flip chart, record all responses generated by audience.
8. **Include quiet processors.** Help them get involved. "Let's go 'round robin' and hear from everyone."
9. **Always have a spare.** Have a typical question handy if the audience doesn't respond.
10. **Keep the motor running.** "Who else has a comment?"
"What other input do you have?"

PROMPTING FOR INFORMATION AND PRESSING FOR SPECIFICS

There are two ways to expand on a time of interaction. The first is to broaden the discussion to include other people or other ideas. The second is to drill down deeper with the same person or the same topic. The following words and phrases help you set up both kinds of interactive experiences, yet keep you in control.

TIP

You can always bring extra energy to a meeting when you turn your audience into participants.

Generating Conversation

Follow-up phrases that get participants talking.

- Mirror: replay what you've heard them say in your own words
 - "So...."
 - "And..."
 - "What else should I know?"
 - "Tell me more..."
 - "In other words.."
 - "You mean..."
-

Pressing for Specifics

Follow-up phrases that keep participants talking and generate specifics.

- "Why do you say that?"
- "For example?"
- "Such as?"
- "What do you mean?"
- "Tell me more..."
- "Specifically...."
- "How does that apply?"

Limiting Conversation

Follow-up phrases that limit or eliminate participant's conversations.

- Ask a closed ended question (questions with a yes or no answer).
 - “We have time For one or two more questions.”
 - “And your bottom line is...?” (useful for rambling.)
 - “OK Bob, we’ve heard from you a lot so far this morning. I know where Bob stands; how about the rest of you?”
- Defer to meeting timing, agenda, and/or objectives to curtail conversation.
- Remind them that they’re getting off track from the agreed-upon agenda.

MAINTAINING CONTROL OF YOUR ROOM

Once your meeting has come to life, there are times when things get out of control due to a difference in views. It is your job to exercise control, re-establish order, and get back on track. Depending on the level of the problem there are several things you can do.

6

WAYS TO STAY ON TRACK

- Call a break.
- Defer to time.
- Appeal to conscience.
- Agree to disagree.
- Ask for attention.
- Call security.

MAINTAINING CONTROL OF YOUR ROOM

6 Ways to Stay on Track

- 1. Call a break.** If things get out of hand and a participant will not play by the ground rules, and you've tried everything else, you can call a break. During the break discreetly catch this person offline and talk with them. Find out what's troubling them. Maintain your composure and control, and do not let them know that they've caused a disruption.
- 2. Defer to the timing of the meeting.** Let them know "The issue will most likely not be resolved in the time we're allotted here today. We're going to get thrown off our schedule and agenda if we don't move on." Tell them that you'd be happy to talk off-line with them after the meeting. Be sure to follow up!
- 3. Appeal to their sense of conscience.** Let them know that for the sake of the other participants, you are going to have to put this discussion on hold and pick it up after the meeting.
- 4. Agree to disagree.** If the issue is at a stalemate or if you're focusing on minor issues, tell them, "It sounds like we're at a stalemate. Your point is well taken; however, in the interest of time we're going to have to 'agree to disagree' and move on." Keep your tone friendly.
- 5. Ask for their attention.** If participants are involved in a side-bar conversation that is disturbing other audience members, avoid looking directly at them and say, "Alright, we have a number of side conversations taking place. For the sake of maintaining focus, let's bring our attention back to the front of the room."
- 6. Call security.** If all else fails, and as a very last resort, call security to deal with the situation.

Contact Us

If you have questions about leading interactive meetings or would like to learn more about our communication training and coaching, contact us through your favorite communication channel.

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