



WSC- Meetings for more safety, confidence, influence, buy-in and accountability

30 second summary:

- ✔ **Summary:** Under 5 minutes, test a framework of best practices to optimize your meetings, especially when pressure is on
- ✔ **Main Outcome:** In your meetings, build more (psychological) safety, confidence, influence, buy-in, and accountability
- ✔ **Top Benefit(s):** More impactful meetings, You are perceived as a better Leader; Less time to follow up on actions
- ✔ **Next Steps:** For your next meeting with high stakes, adjust the proposed framework into a relevant agenda and rate yourself and the results against it
- ✔ **Duration:** <5 minutes.
- ✔ **Target Audience:** Anybody willing to improve the ROI of their meetings and reduce stress and anxiety when the stakes are high

Why it works

✔ Before:

Many clients report feeling more triggered when meeting with others, especially with key stakeholders or with high stakes or potential hard discussions...

When we ask our clients about safety and its impact on these triggers, at first they usually don't relate that much...For them, it is all about forcing a change in their environment and spending more time, and money on it. But when they understand that 1) most of their anxiety, stress, fears, and inability to deliver their "Should" is driven by their Reptilian Brain triggering because it believes your Survival is at risk and that 2) Safety is the main driver to get it out of Survival Mode then they pay much more attention to Safety and usually are eager to understand how to build more of it.

✔ After:

This post is meant to propose practical strategies that under 5 minutes can increase your feeling and level of safety when meeting with others.

Of course, winning 50 M\$ at the lottery would build a lot of safety and you would approach your CEO with less stress but the strategies we propose here are meant to be 100% under your control!

With safety, less trigger for less time, therefore, less stress, more focus with more lightness so you feel better in meetings, especially when the pressure is on, and get better outcomes (more buy-in, commitment, support, influence...).



Top Strategies for meetings

Strategy	Steps	Example
-1- Introduction / Ice Breaker / Kick Off	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -welcome each attendee when they join and thank those on time -Get started no later than 3 minutes after the stated start time -Thank audience for attending and for being on time -Statement if missing stakeholders: "I am aware we are missing key stakeholders, but I want to respect every one's time, so let's get started" -Introduce myself (name, role) and whoever is new to most attendees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -welcome each attendee when they join and thank those on time -Get started no later than 3 minutes after the stated start time -Thank audience for attending and for being on time -Statement if missing stakeholders: "I am aware we are missing key stakeholders, but I want to respect every one's time, so let's get started" -Introduce myself (name, role) and whoever is new to most attendees
-2- Get buy-in on outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -State my expectations for the meeting outcome -Get comments or buy-in from audience -Reframe what audience proposes (to make them feel respected and heard), then state the agreed upon outcome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -State my expectations for the meeting outcome <i>" at the end of meeting, ideally I would like to have the following outcome and actions... I would like to be able to say that..."</i> -Get comments or buy-in from audience <i>" When you think of what you would like to take away at the end of the meeting, what else would you like to add?"</i> -Reframe what audience proposes (to make them feel respected and heard), then state the agreed upon outcome
-3- Get buy-in on agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -State my proposed agenda and for each section: -Ask for comments and buy-in -State the rules of the meetings (TO/NOT DO) and give some examples of implications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -State my proposed agenda and for each section: -the time allocated -who is the presenter -who is the decision maker -what is the expected outcome -any specific condition (if the section is optional, ...) -Ask for comments and buy-in <i>" with the agreed upon outcome in mind, how do you think we should adjust the proposed agenda"</i> -State the rules of the meetings (TO/NOT DO) and give some examples of implications <i>-we will leave 15 minutes for takeaways, next steps and conclusions to optimize accountability</i> <i>-we will respect the time of each section and avoid digression</i> <i>-"we will talk about this subject..."</i> <i>-that means, I may interrupt you to ensure we cover all sections and if I do, please remember it is not personal</i>



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Strategy	Steps	Example
-4- For each section	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -maintain safety at all times with open ended questions and emotional reframes: -for transition, use question -interrupt and diffuse conflicts before they erupt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -maintain safety at all times with open ended questions and emotional reframes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -ask open ended questions -reframe at emotional level and with soft terms and redirect back to next item of agenda -for transition, use question <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>"before we switch to the next part of the agenda on Do you have any more comment?"</i> -interrupt and diffuse conflicts before they erupt: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>"we have 2 different opinions here; that is OK; that is one of the reasons we have this meeting today; on one hand... on the other hand...; as this could take time, I propose to add it to the parking lot and come back to it later and discuss in another meeting if not enough time"</i> -Ask if comments are personal and ask for facts if strong accusations or judgements -Label the "elephant" in the room (if any) with priming and no judgement/accusation/blame <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>"If I was in your shoes, I could certainly think that the main question is.... And I would probably be very uncomfortable discussing it; I'm curious to hear what your view is on that?"</i>
-5- Handle objections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -To avoid the objection in the first place : Run an effective discovery process before closing objections arise -When objections arise, thank your prospect instead of saying "NO" -Empathize to put your prospect at ease and validate the objection -Ask open-ended questions to uncover the root cause of the objection -Urge the prospect to tell you what they like about your product -Tie it all together -Back your claims up with proof and customer references -Validate status of objection with objector and ask permission to move on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -To avoid the objection in the first place : Run an effective discovery process before closing objections arise -When objections arise, thank your prospect instead of saying "NO" -Empathize to put your prospect at ease and validate the objection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>"I hear this a lot. I'm sorry you feel that way. It sounds like this has been very frustrating," or "I hear what you're saying and I think I can help."</i> <i>"if you think the objection is personal, ask for confirmation": this could reduce triggers</i> -Ask open-ended questions to uncover the root cause of the objection -Urge the prospect to tell you what they like about your product -Tie it all together <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fill in the blanks and connect the dots. If they forgot something that they liked but noted earlier, bring it back up. Reiterate some of your key talking points. Show them how your product will address pain points articulated in the objection, or get them to their desired result. -Back your claims up with proof and customer references -Validate status of objection with objector and ask permission to move on



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Strategy	Steps	Example
<p>-6- Wrap up</p>	<p>-announce it and remind audience of my commitment to finish on time</p> <p>-thank audience for their contribution</p> <p>-through round table (if <3 attendees) or by focusing on top 3 stakeholders, ask them to reframe their takeaways and state what they would like to have happened next week we regroup or report on the same subject.</p> <p>-to secure commitment, ask action owner to state how they would measure that the completion is "good enough" then reframe as appropriate</p> <p>-to secure engagement, ask action owner what the action completion would mean for him/her</p> <p>-Be the last one to speak</p>	<p>-announce it and remind audience of my commitment to finish on time</p> <p>-thank audience for their contribution</p> <p>-through round table (if <3 attendees) or by focusing on top 3 stakeholders, ask them to reframe their takeaways and state what they would like to have happened next week we regroup or report on the same subject.</p> <p>-to secure commitment, ask action owner to state how they would measure that the completion is "good enough" then reframe as appropriate</p> <p>-Make action owner to commit in front of others</p> <p><i>"If I understand correctly, next time we meet, if you report that ..., then that would mean success for you; is this correct?"</i></p> <p>-Call out if missed or misinterpreted actions</p> <p><i>"In my notes, I heard you would also ... did I get that wrong?"</i></p> <p>-to secure engagement, ask action owner what the action completion would mean for him/her</p> <p>-Be the last one to speak:</p> <p>-share your takeaways</p> <p>-repeat key messages and actions (with their owners)</p> <p>-state implication or recovery actions if actions are missed (parking lot)</p> <p>-visualize success to finish with a visual or a story the resonates at emotional level and that the audience will associate with you and the meeting until the next follow up meeting</p> <p>-clarify time and methodology to follow up (recording, minutes, follow up meetings...)</p> <p>-thanks audience for attending and for their contribution</p>



TO DO

- ✔ **Set a 5-minute timer**
- ✔ **Pick one of the proposed strategies**
- ✔ **Follow the script and think about your next opportunity to apply it**
- ✔ **As you visualize the experience, focus on:**
 - how you feel below your throat as this is the language of safety (Reptilian Brain)
 - on the incremental and relative change for your emotions: it is more a marathon than a sprint
 - on what you have control over (what you say, your intention, how you listen...), which excludes others
- ✔ **Act on it now (book a meeting, send a note...) to commit yourself and anchor the memory at body level for a stickier habit**

NOT DO

- ✔ **Stay in your head! (Safety is an emotion therefore to be found in your guts and heart)**
- ✔ **Forget that others have a Reptilian Brain that needs safety too (good news: Safety is contagious and the safety you build for yourself also helps others)**
- ✔ **Spend too much time preparing... the value is in the doing and the emotional experience**
- ✔ **Don't disqualify it yet if I don't feel a major change after the first time**
- ✔ **Multi-task when I do any of the strategies**
- ✔ **Deny or play down the power of my Reptilian Brain (remember it controls most of my stress)**



Your next 2 weeks steps

✔ **Start NOW or schedule your first try:**

Apply TO DO right away (<30 minutes)

Once done, decide your commitment for the next 2 weeks

How are you feeling right after? Compared to before? What was the value for you?

What to adjust for you to commit for 2 weeks?

Visualize the next time you apply it and how you would like to feel

Celebrate that you have tried something new

✔ **Build your habit (-> more practice -> more results)**

Model: After [OTHER CURRENT HABIT] and at/when [TIME], I will [NEW HABIT] in [LOCATION].

Example: When I sit at my desk for the first time in the morning, I visualize myself completing one strategy during a meeting with stakes and feeling good about it; then I create a timeslot in my calendar with the details about this strategy; I read them and visualize myself practicing the strategy and feeling safer and less stress and happier about the outcome of the meeting as a result.

Print your sticky habit

✔ **Total time:**

6 X 5 min = 30m in 2 weeks

✔ **How you measure success:**

Have applied at least 6X times in the next 2 weeks

✔ **What value you can expect:**

Feel safer; Less stress or internal noise; You feel more efficient in meetings (more buy-in, commitment, support...) and that you are building stronger relationships

✔ **How to get started:**

Print and fill your Habit template then apply right away