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Composition

Essay 4 First Draft

Today’s Business Meeting

Statistics show that professionals these days have about 61.8 meetings per month, and of these 61.8 meetings, 50% of the time spent in the meeting is not fully utilized and therefore wasted. I believe the business meeting is a dying tool in the modern business setting and needs innovating. They are counter-productive and there are better, alternative methods. Within this paper I’ll explain my personal experience with business meetings, the disadvantages of meetings, and alternative solutions in the contemporary work place.

In high school I worked at a grocery store. We would have meetings fairly often to discuss various topics, such as what we could do better as a store. These meetings were always very dry and seemed obvious in subject matter. It seemed illogical to be having this pointless meeting about grocery carts, when we could be working downstairs. There had to be a better way of doing this. After much research I discovered the specifics on the disadvantages of business meetings and why they’re unnecessary.

One con of business meetings is that they prevent a lot of work from getting done. Statistics show that “professionals lose 31 hours per month in unproductive meetings, or approximately four work days” (The State of Meetings Today). If time weren’t being spent in these meetings, they could be using these extra days to be more productive or maybe as additional vacation days. Giving more time for employees to do their work would increase the productivity levels of the company. In a study conducted by *Industry Week,* they found “45 percent of senior executives surveyed said that their employees would be more productive if their firms banned meetings for a least one-day a week” (Why Meetings Kill Productivity). In addition to the time in meetings, employees also have to prepare and conclude for meetings, taking away even more valuable time (The State of Meetings Today).

This wasted time has a bigger effect than you’d think. According to the article *The State of Meetings Today*, “most professionals who meet on a regular basis admit to daydreaming (91%), missing meetings (96%) or missing parts of meetings (95%). A large percentage (73%) say they have brought other work to meetings and 39% say they have dozed during meetings.” Obviously the current way of business meetings is not being as successful as it could be. These statistics affect the actual workplace in many ways. Ineffective meetings often lead to more ineffective meetings because the information wasn’t delivered properly the first time, taking even more time from actual work. These unproductive meetings also may result in anger and frustration all employees. If employees aren’t practicing the information they learned in the meeting, the manager probably isn’t too happy. The old way of doing things for business meetings is no longer practical.

Now one person might argue that business meetings are still important because of their vital functions to inform and prepare employees. However, there are more productive and alternative ways to conduct business meetings. One example is how Yahoo conducts its meetings. Yahoo has its special meeting called the “Friday Afternoon Club” where “80 employees gather over beer, wine, and snacks. For 20 to 30 minutes they discuss the current status of projects, how to take advantage of business challenges and opportunities, and what the unit should be looking forward to in the future” (Shake It Up: Alternative Meeting Strategies). With this sort meeting, it gives the meeting a more personal and relaxed feel. People can connect easier and don’t have to worry about a strict conference room vibe.

Another business doing meetings uniquely and successfully is Ritz-Carlton, the luxurious hotel company. At the beginning of every 8-hour shift, they hold a quick 15-minute stand-up meeting. They use these meetings “as a way to reinforce corporate values, to inform employees of new products and services that Ritz-Carlton may be introducing, and to communicate breaking news” (Shake It Up: Alternative Meeting Strategies). By doing these quick, efficient 15-minute meetings, it allows employees to be able to get to their job faster.

Correct use of technology can also essential to the betterment of meetings. “Employing these technologies will allow meeting participants to access computer-based information, share data and automatically save information generated during their meetings – all functionality for enhanced group collaboration” (The State of Meetings Today). Cloud-based technologies can be very beneficial and even eliminate the need of the meeting.

After much research, I concluded that the business meetings these days are way too ineffective to justify the time wasted on them. If employees and managers often aren’t leaving the conference room with the correct information, it will only hinder the company. There are alternative approaches to these methods that are far more productive and efficient. Some other approaches are Yahoo’s method of informal, relaxed meetings or Ritz-Carlton’s process of quick and efficient meetings. With how fast society is moving today, there’s no time for unproductive meetings. Meetings need to be structured differently towards today’s age.

Author’s Note: As you can see the paper’s a bit shorter than intended. I’m trying to think of another point I could potentially explore. My intro and conclusion don’t really tie together. I should probably also find some other sources. One thing I struggled with is getting on my thoughts on to paper. I have them in my head, but I’m having trouble articulating them.

Works Cited

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