

# Meeting Skills - Top Tips

*“A meeting is an event where minutes are taken and hours are wasted.”*

Meetings waste more time than almost any other business activity. Apply these simple, but frequently flouted tips, to save yourself hundreds of hours this year.

As with any ‘interruption to work’, ask questions before agreeing to attend:

- What is the purpose/outcome of this meeting?
- How long will it take?
- Do I really need to be there; should, or could someone else attend report back afterwards?
- What will be the consequences if I don’t attend; and can I live with this?
- How central is this to my job; is there something more valuable that I need to be doing right now?
- Can it be scheduled for later today/later in the week, which will allow more time for preparation/thinking?



## Chairperson:

- Be clear about the purpose of the meeting
- Restrict invitations to only those people who can add significant value
- Always circulate an agenda in advance - with timed items, and an end time
- Require all attendees to prepare; give them a structure if possible
- Keep hospitality simple, just tea/coffee, unless it’s a working lunch to save time
- Start on time (don’t wait for latecomers), and re-negotiate the end time if required
- Consider appointing a time-keeper (not the chair-person) to keep all on track

## Attendees:

- Only attend meetings with published objectives and a timed agenda
- Only attend the parts that are relevant to you; get up and leave when you’re done



- Prepare in advance; read all pre-circulated documentation and make notes
- Keep the discussion focused, and bring it back on track if it veers
- Take ‘action minutes’ (what? who? when?), not copious long-winded notes