

Fewer, Shorter, Better Meetings

Getting the most out of Stand-ups, Networking, & More

Jill Finlayson, Director, EDGE in Tech Initiative

CITRIS and the Banatao Institute, University of California



Large Scale Analysis of Multitasking Behavior
During Remote Meetings

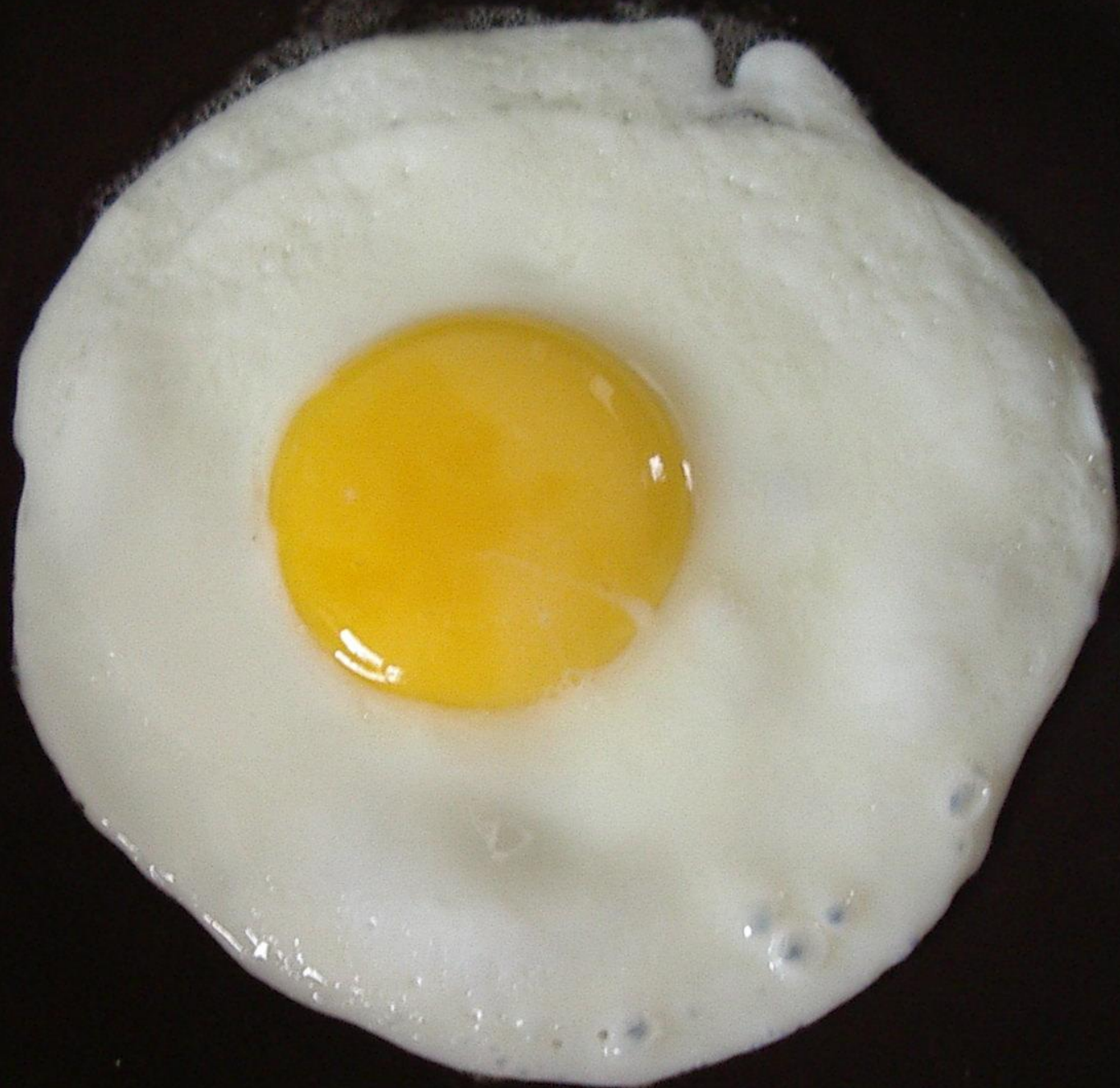




zoom

[Join a Meeting](#)

[Sign In](#)





"L'Atelier Des Chefs - frying quails eggs" by Rev Stan is licensed under CC BY 2.0

A Quick Zoom Poll - 1



What is your personal record for consecutive zoom meetings?

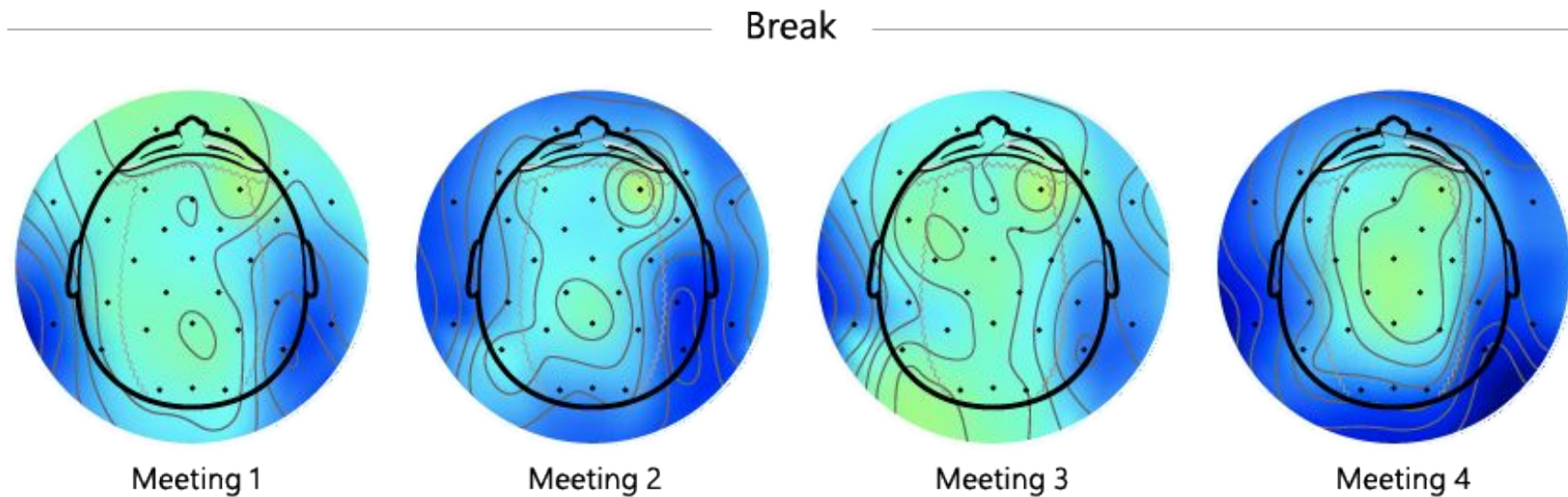
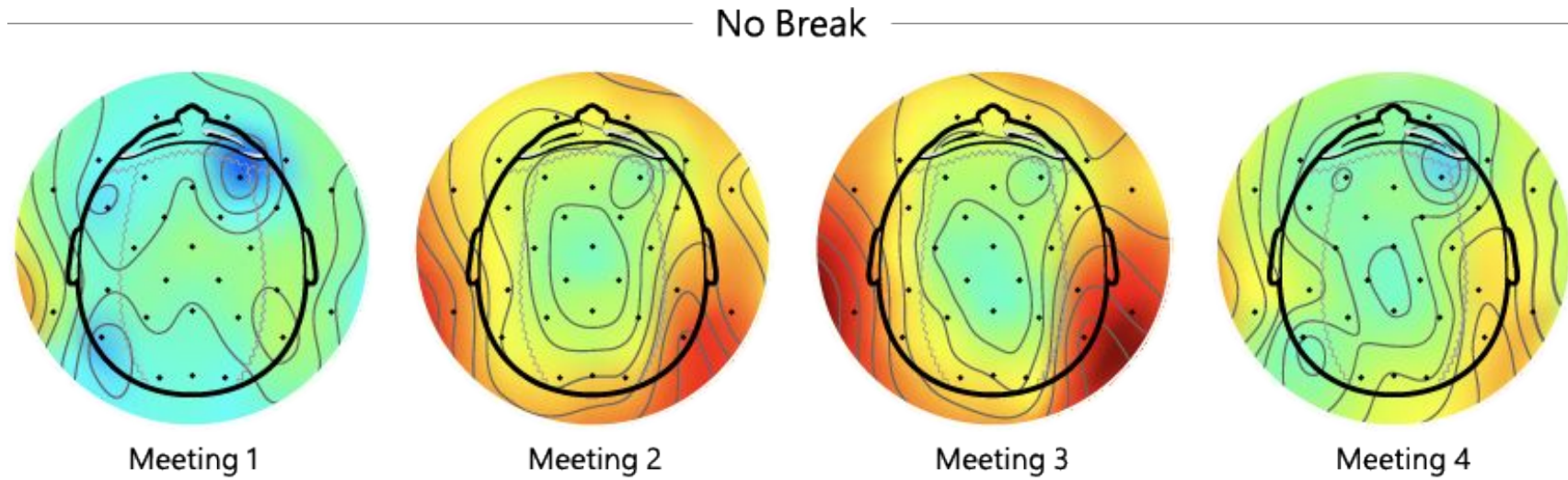
Do you take a break between meetings?

How would you describe most of your meetings?

Research Proves Your Brain Needs Breaks



Carve out downtime between meetings



Pomodoro Time-saving Bonus Tips

Pomodoro Technique

Start timer and focus on the task for 25 minutes

Take a break for 5 minutes when the alarm rings

<https://pomofocus.io/>



Agenda - Fewer, Shorter, Better Meetings

Purpose: Sharing strategies and time-saving tips for meetings

Goals:

- Clarify the purpose of meetings
- Share practices to make meetings more effective and equitable
- Adopt strategies to boost meeting outcomes

Non-purpose: Logistics of meetings (room set-up, food)

Parking Lot: Put your questions & tips in the chat to be addressed at the end

Agenda - Fewer, Shorter, Better Meetings

Background (10 minutes - Jill)

Topics

Reduce meetings (10 min - Jill, 5 min Poll/Reflection - All)

Reshape meeting (10 min - Jill, 3 min Poll/Reflection - All)

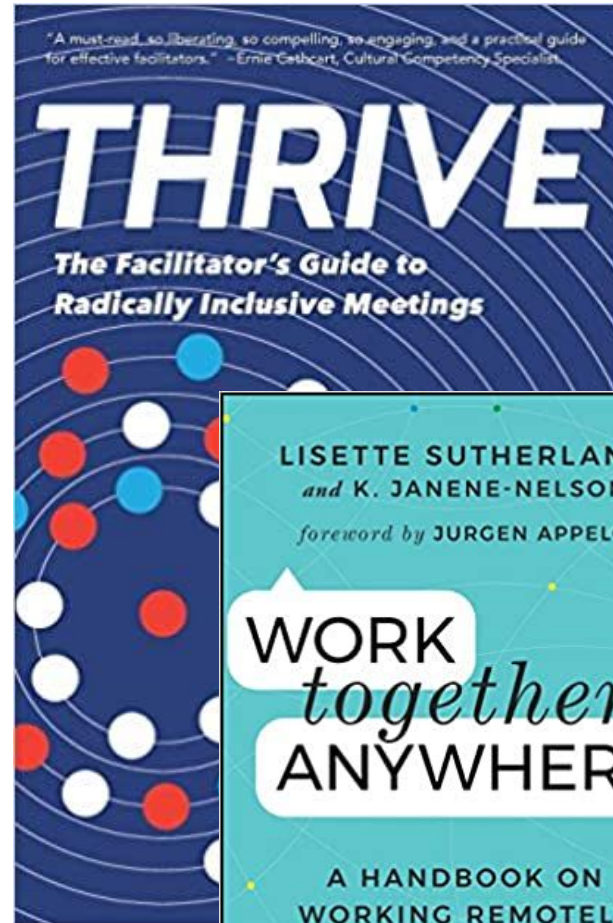
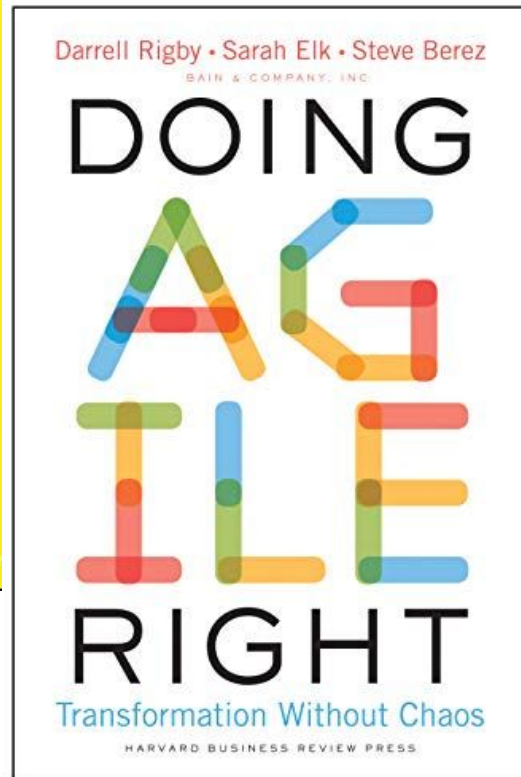
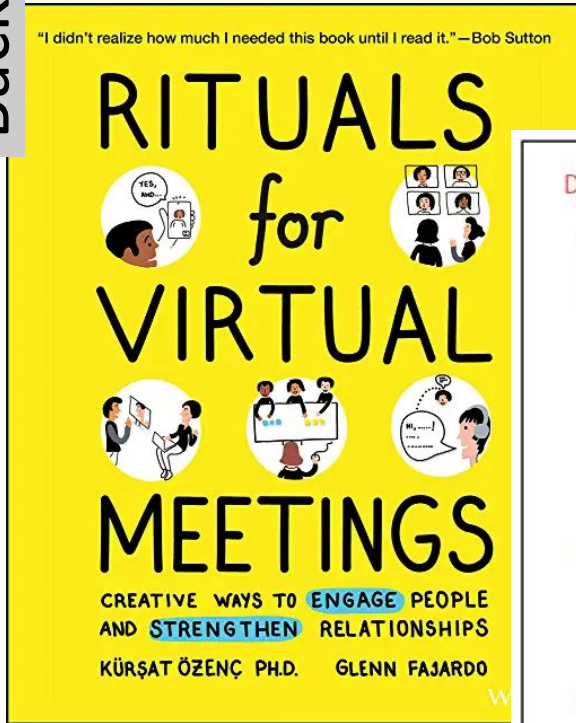
Retool meetings (10 min - Jill, 3 min Poll/Reflection - All)

Rejuvenate meetings (5 minutes - Jill)

Next steps (5 minutes - All)

Q&A (10 min - All)

60,000+ Books on "Meetings" on Amazon



By the numbers: the good

Meetings...

1. Improve Overall Communication
2. Bring Issues to the Forefront
3. Provide Accountability
4. Build Team Morale
5. Foster Collaboration
6. Create a Shared Sense of Purpose



Photo: UC Berkeley News/Zoom

<https://news.berkeley.edu/2020/03/24/uc-berkeley-staff-stay-connected-strive-for-normalcy-amidst-pandemic/>

Why Meetings Matter More Than You Think, Inc.

<https://www.inc.com/eric-holtzclaw/why-meetings-matter.html>

Why Work Meetings Matter

<https://www.millertanner.com/why-internal-meetings-matter/>

By the numbers: the bad

8 -17 meetings per week across all employee types and company size

37%-67% are pointless

Costing **\$541bn**

Every year, **24 billion hours** will be wasted in pointless meetings.



By the numbers: the ugly

The opportunity cost - pre, during, and post

- **~11 million meetings** held on average every single day
- **62 meetings every month** on average.
- middle managers spends **~35% of their time** in meetings
- those higher up can spend **50% of their time in meetings**

Each week, people spend on average
5 hours 3 minutes in meetings and
4 hours 15 minutes preparing for them.



5 HOURS



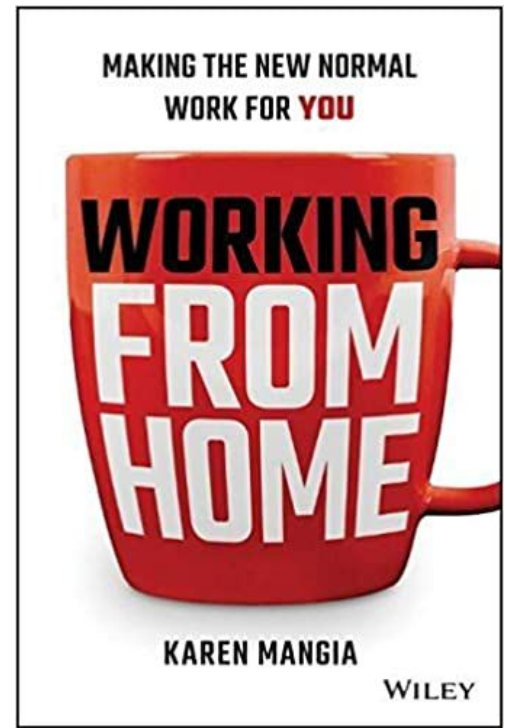
4 HOURS

By the numbers: the covid

13.5% ↑ # of meetings on average rose

from 5.9 meetings pre- lockdown, to 6.9 meetings post

20.1% ↓ average length of meetings decreased



Virtual meetings can save time:

40% of workers waste up to **30 minutes** just searching for a collaborative space for meetings.

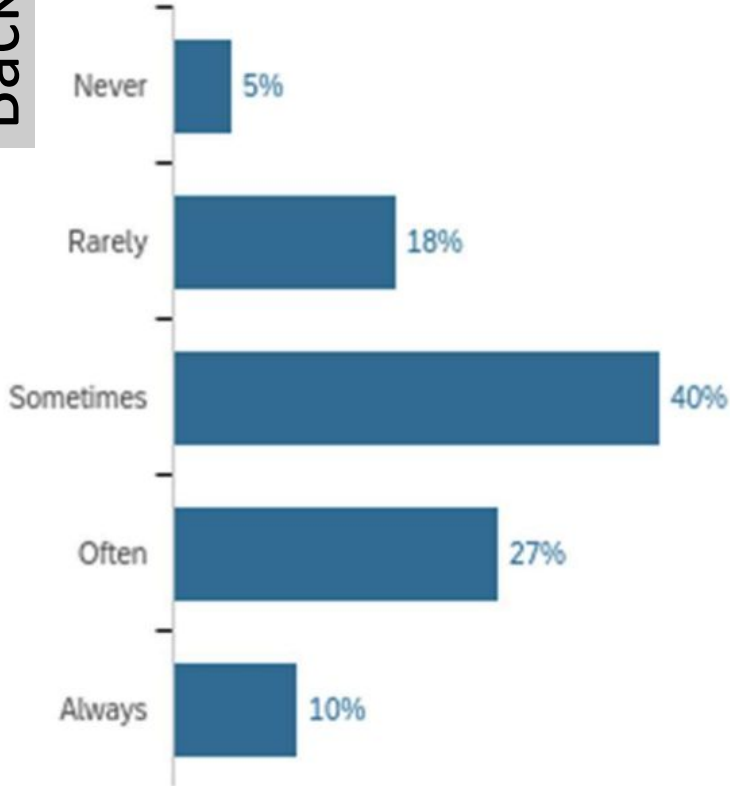
A Quick Zoom Poll - 2



How many meetings do you have per week on average?

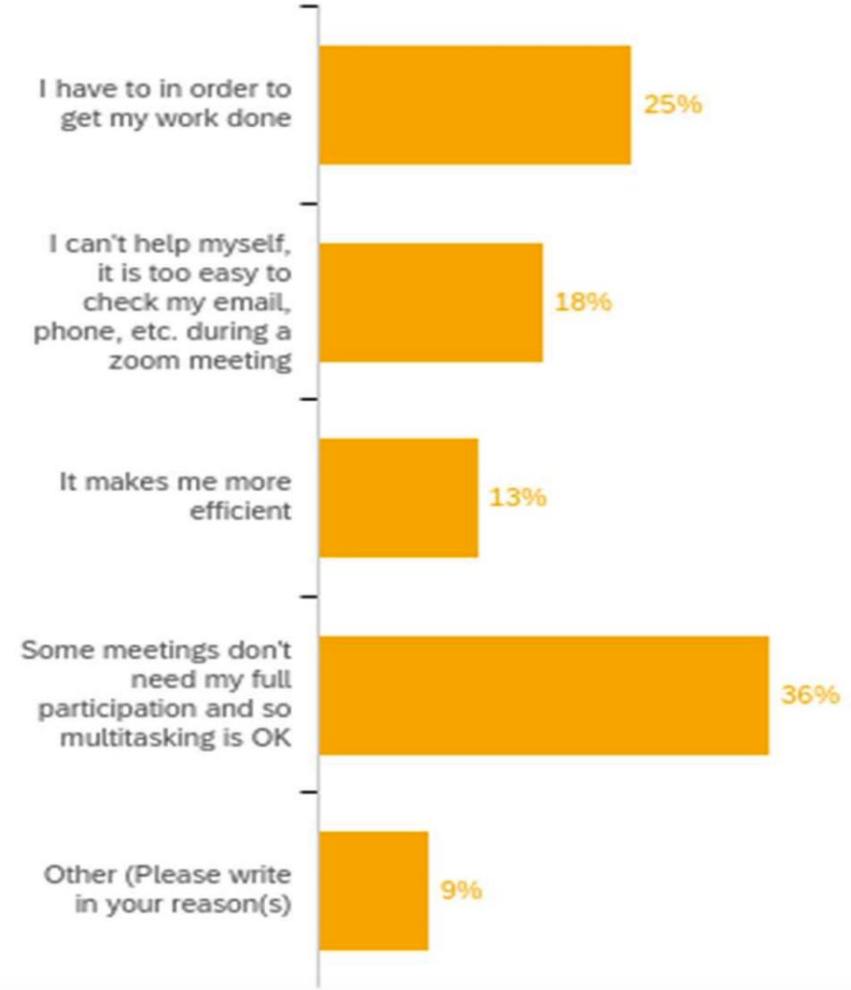
How often do you multitask during video conferences?

UC Berkeley Culture Survey



37% multitask always or often during video conferences

why we multitask:
“some meetings don't require our full participation and so it's ok to multitask.”



Multitasking and Remote Meetings

More multitasking happens in:

- large meetings
- long meetings
- morning meetings
- in recurring and scheduled meetings vs ad hoc meetings

Notifications distract people from the meeting itself

Multitasking

- + can boost productivity
- causes mental fatigue, loss of attention, disrespect

Support meeting related multitasking behavior such as note taking and searching for information

Types of meetings

Status update meetings

Purpose: Keep project(s) moving ahead

Goals:

- Bring everyone involved up-to-date, promote collaboration
- Share progress made, challenges, and next steps
- Promote accountability & address challenges
- A plan of action with clearly delineated responsibilities

Types of meetings

Working meetings - [Edward Tufte](#) says use meeting time to read!



Decision-making meetings

Purpose: Agree on a course of action

Goals:

- Bring in expertise and explore options
- Solicit different points of view and opinions
- Build consensus
- Identify next steps

Types of meetings

Problem-solving meetings

Purpose: Figure out what caused a specific issue & how to correct it

Goals:

- Incident response or strategy session
 - What is (and what caused) the problem?
 - How can we address the problem immediately?
 - How can we prevent the problem from recurring?
 - What course of action will we take and why?
- Solution, timetable, and safeguards

Types of meetings

Team-building meetings

Purpose: Foster understanding of one another and further cohesion

Goals:

- Improving trust among teammates
- Helping the group feel valued and welcomed
- Bolstering shared vision around mission
- Increasing dedication to getting the job done

Types of meetings

Info-sharing meetings

Purpose: Educate the team in-depth on pertinent topics

Goals:

- Share information to help folks in their roles

Types of meetings

Innovation meetings

Purpose: Brainstorming

Goals:

- Generating ideas (quantity over quality)
- Creativity, blue sky thinking
- Excitement about the project

Types of meetings

[It Starts with You! Building Relationships at Berkeley](#)
Presenters: [Charlotte Cowden](#) and [Jennifer Mora](#)

Networking meetings

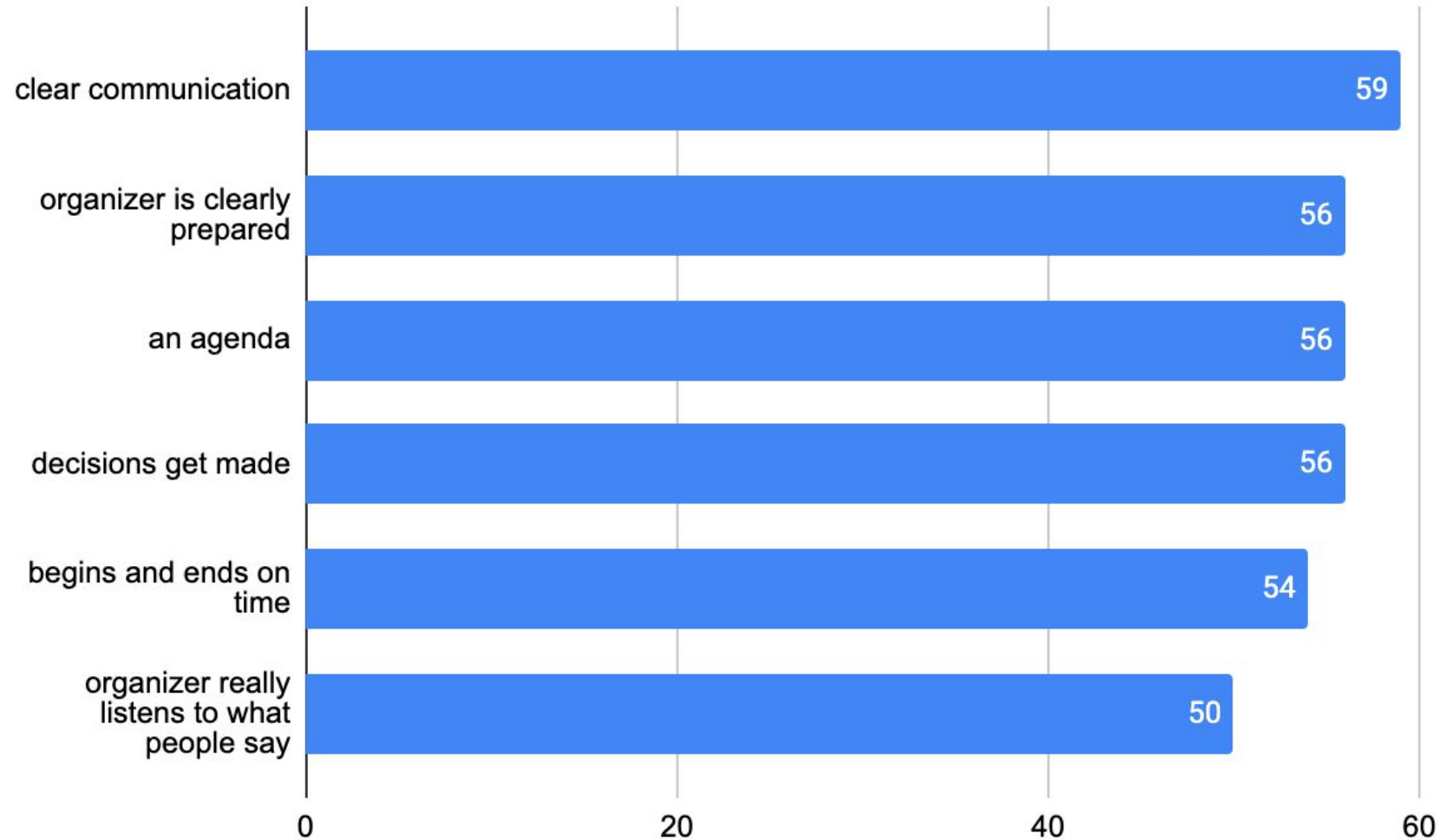
Purpose: Shared value exchange

Goals:

- Job/industry insights and connections
- Serendipity
- Authentic curiosity
- Brave, relevant, not just coffee, taking

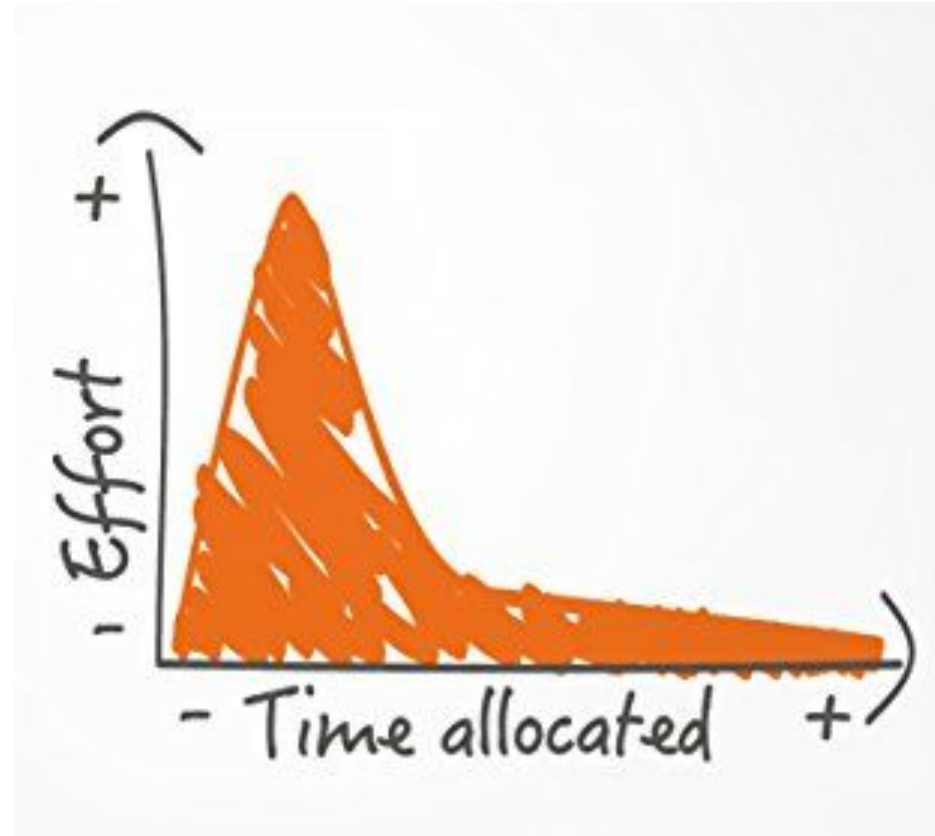


What makes a meeting engaging?



Reduce Meetings

WARNING: Work expands so as to fill the time available for its completion.



1. Shorter meetings

Event settings

Default duration
50 minutes

Speedy meetings

End 30 minute meetings 5 minutes early and longer meetings 10 minutes early



← Settings

General

- Language and region
- Time zone
- World clock

Event settings

| | |
|-------------|-------------|
| 15 minutes | 15 minutes |
| 20 minutes | 20 minutes |
| 30 minutes | 25 minutes |
| 45 minutes | 40 minutes |
| 60 minutes | 50 minutes |
| 90 minutes | 80 minutes |
| 120 minutes | 110 minutes |

GYSHIDO



物事をやり
遂げる芸術

THE ART OF GETTING YOUR SH*# DONE



1. Relentless Focus

Focus on the 10% of your activities which drive most of the value. Relentlessly.



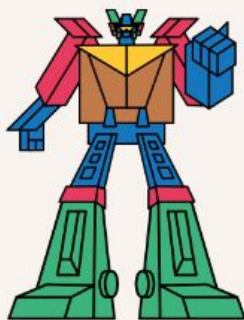
2. Single Task

Multitasking is a myth. By doing multiple things at the same time we keep ourselves busy doing shitty work with lousy outcomes. Laser sharp focus.



3. Boring Consistency

Do the right things over and over again. Consistency forms habits. Habits make hard things effortless.



4. No Bullsh*#

Don't bullshit yourself or others. Apply brutal honesty and transparency to everything you do.



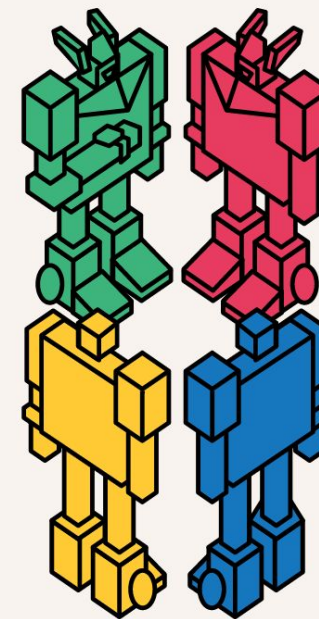
5. No Meetings

Meetings come in only two forms: Standing or social. If it's social, it's over breakfast, lunch, coffee, dinner or drinks. If not – don't sit down.



6. Follow Up

Don't let others wait for your part of the job. Ever.



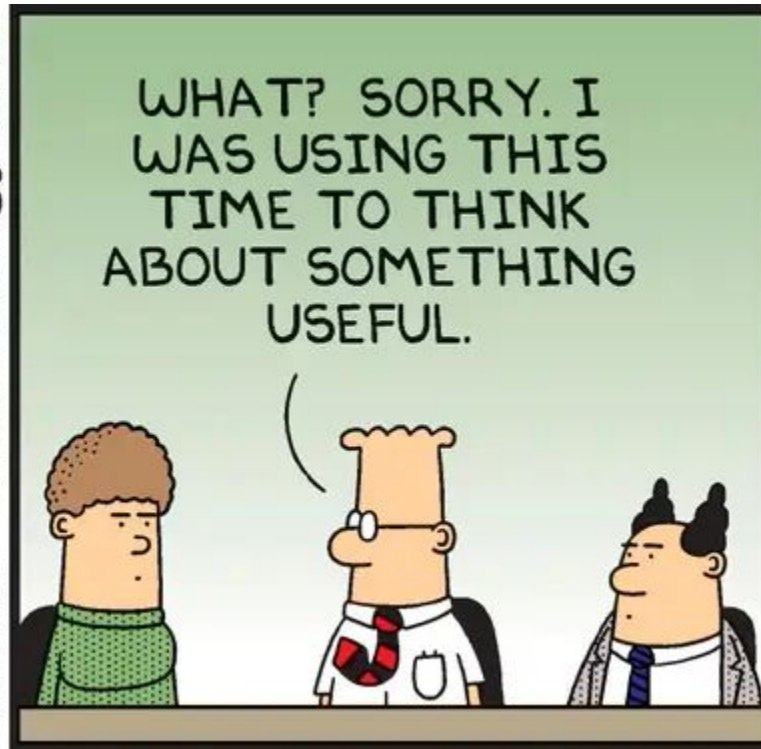
5. No Meetings

Meetings come in only two forms: Standing or social. If it's social, it's over breakfast, lunch, coffee, dinner or drinks. If not – don't sit down.

2. Fewer Meetings: Do you need one?



Dilbert.com DilbertCartoonist@gmail.com



9-27-10 © 2010 Scott Adams, Inc./Dist. by UFS, Inc.



Alternative ways to get outcomes?

- Are there other ways to get the info you need?
- Consider the value of asynchronous, thoughtful feedback, and polls
- Refer back to purpose
- Design for desired outcome?

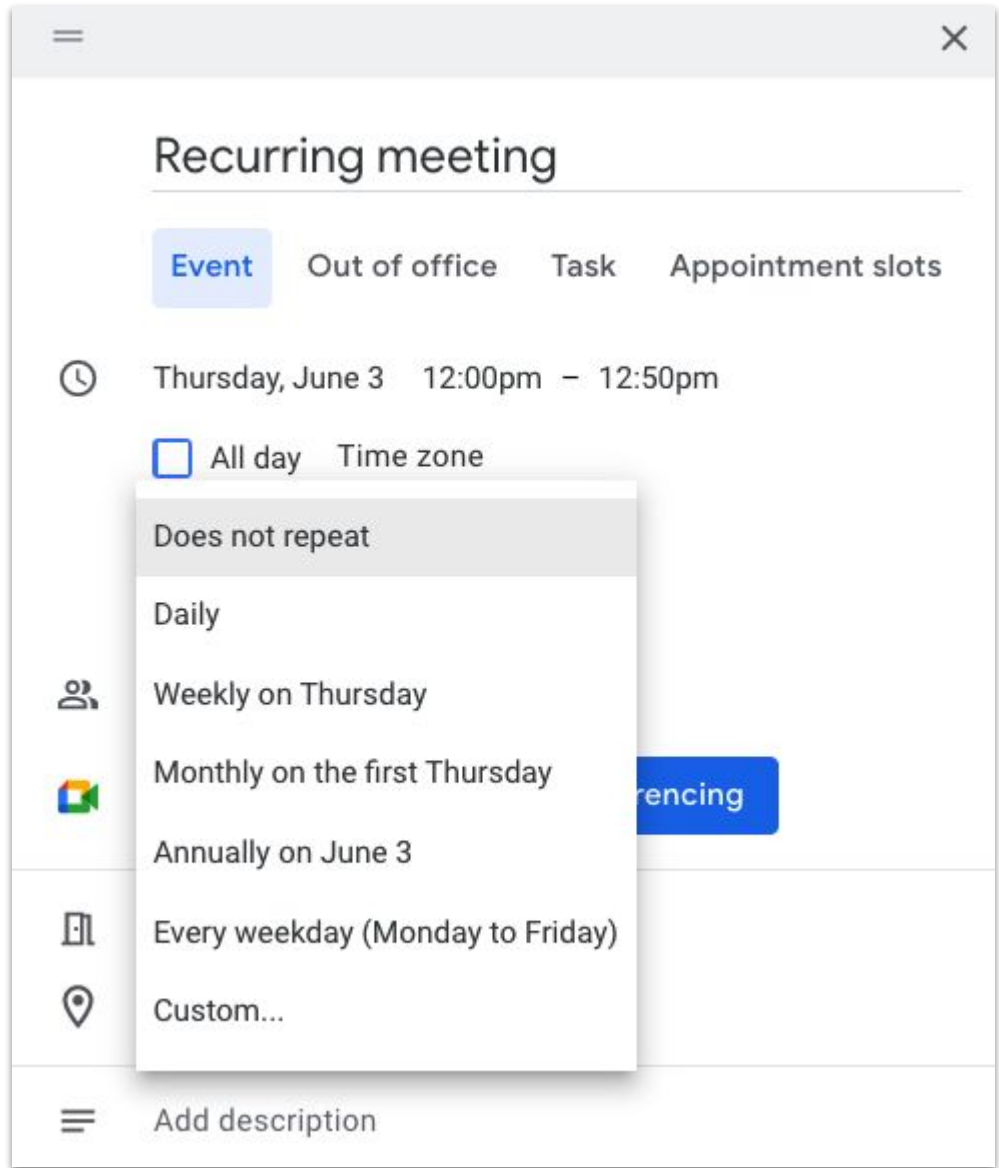


3. Fewer Attendees: Who needs to be there?

- Required vs Optional
 - Supervisors make it clear it is actually optional
 - Help people decide which meetings to attend.
 - Help people skip some parts of the meeting.
 - Recording - for asynchronous participation

4. Less frequent meetings

- How often do you need to meet?
- How many times do you need to meet?
- Is there an “ending date?”



A Quick Zoom Poll - 3



Which way do you think will be the easiest for you to reduce the number of meetings?

Reshape Meetings

1. No Agenda, No Attenda

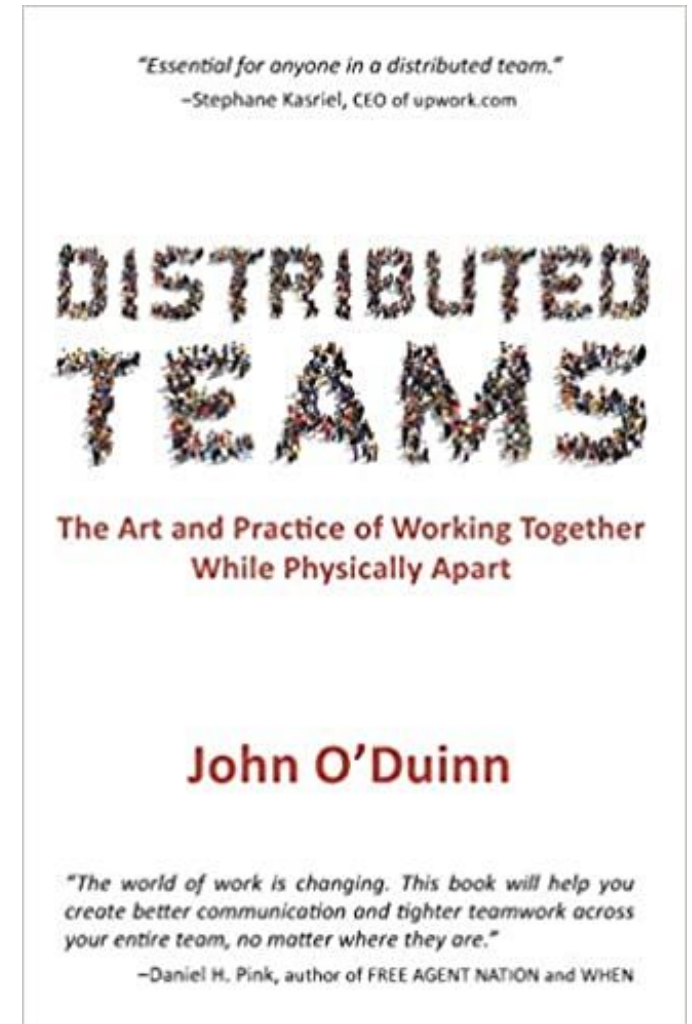
- If no one has anything to discuss, cancel the meeting, end early
- Collaborative agenda
 - Append!
- Assign times



"Revok MSK 'Agenda' Los Angeles Graffiti Art" by anarchosyn is licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0

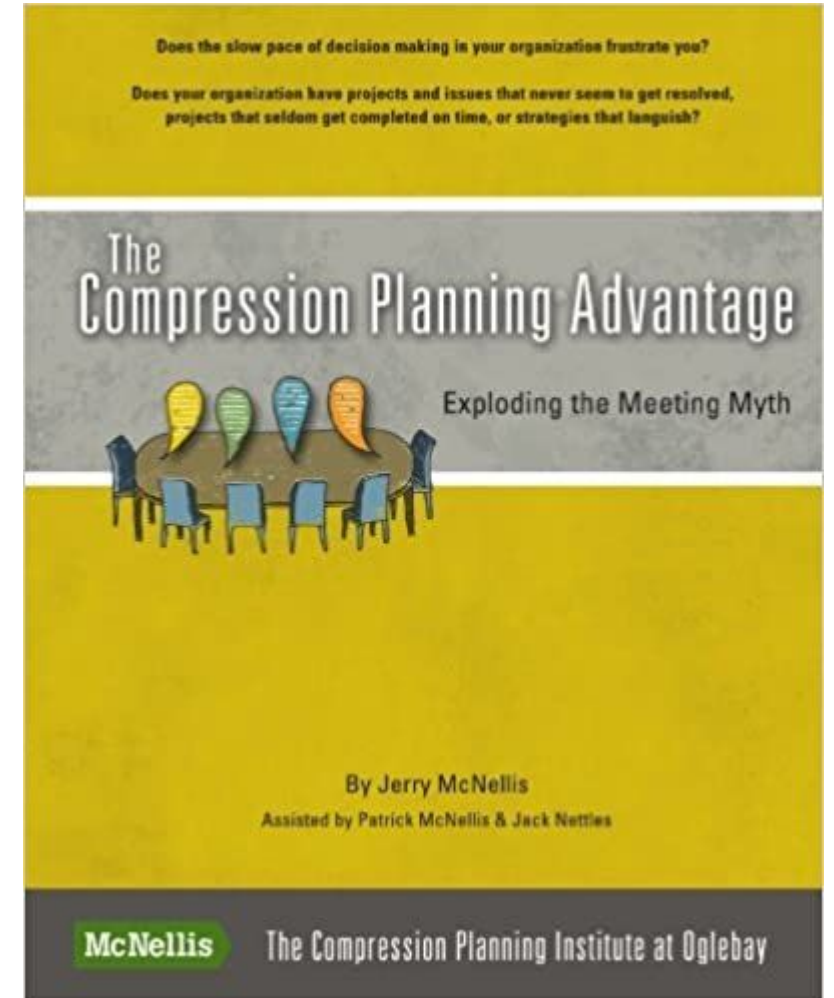
2. Democratize Meetings

- Append items to collaborative agenda
- Collaborative notetaking
- Take space, make space
- Better allies
- Better leadership
 - Psychological safety
 - Rotate order, moderation
 - Invite comments
- Remote-first



3. Prepare to design important meetings

Background Board - orients
 Topic - Specific, 10 words or less
 Purpose - End Goal, precise, measurable
 Non-Purpose - Not going to discuss
 Parking Lot - For later
 Permission Meter - analytical -> blue sky
 Headers - 4-6 active questions + misc.
 generative or analytical
 Activities to move from ideas to action (dots)
 WHO? WHAT? BY WHEN? +communicate



4. Avoid “Simple Sabotage”

- Insist on doing everything through “channels.”
- Never permit shortcuts to expedite decisions.
- Talk as frequently as possible and at great length.
- Refer all matters to committees
- Make committees as large as possible -- never fewer than five.
- Bring up irrelevant issues as frequently as possible.
- Haggle over precise wordings
- Refer back to matters decided upon at the last meeting and attempt to reopen that decision.

SIMPLE SABOTAGE
FIELD MANUAL
Strategic Services
(Provisional)
STRATEGIC SERVICES FIELD MANUAL No. 3

A Quick Zoom Poll - 4



Which strategy do you prefer for reshaping meetings?

Retool Meetings .

1. Scheduling with Groups



When2Meet

Doodle (charges \$)

About When2meet Plan a New Event

When2Meet.com

What dates might work?

Click and drag dates to choose possibilities.
Click and drag labels to shift the calendar.

Survey using: Specific Dates

| | S | M | T | W | T | F | S | |
|------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-------------|
| May | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 2021 |
| May | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 2021 |
| May | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 2021 |
| May/June | 30 | 31 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 2021 |
| June | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 2021 |

Today

What times might work?

No earlier than: 9:00 AM

No later than: 5:00 PM

Time Zone: America/Los_Angeles

Ready? Create Event

Scheduling with Individuals Let them book with you



The image shows a screenshot of the Calendly web interface. The main view displays 'My Calendly' with tabs for 'Event Types', 'Scheduled Events', and 'Workflows'. Under 'Event Types', there are three event type cards: '15 Minute Meeting' (15 mins, One-on-One), '30 Minute Meeting' (30 mins, One-on-One), and '60 Minute Meeting' (1 hr, One-on-One). Each card has a 'View booking page' link, a 'Copy link' button, and a 'Turn On' button. A 'New Event Type' button is also visible.

An 'Availability' modal is open over the top right, titled 'Set your availability'. It prompts the user to 'Choose a schedule below to edit or create a new one that you can apply to your event types'. There is a 'Default Hours' button with a star icon and a '+ New schedule' button. Below this, the 'Default Hours' section shows it is the 'default schedule' and is 'ACTIVE ON' '1 Event Type' in the 'Pacific Time - US & Canada' time zone. The 'Set your weekly hours' section shows 'SUN' as 'Unavailable' and 'MON' as available from '9:00am' to '7:00pm'. Each day has a '+', a trash icon, and a copy icon.



3. Personalizing Zoom



zoom SOLUTIONS ▾ PLANS & PRICING SCHEDULE A MEETING JOIN A MEETING HOST A MEETING ▾

Meetings
Webinars
Personal Audio Conference
Recordings
Settings
Account Profile
Reports

Jill Finlayson [Edit](#)

Jill Finlayson
Employee ID 
Account No. 

Phone Not set [Add Phone Number](#)

Personal Meeting ID *** ** *941 [Show](#) [Edit](#)

https://berkeley.zoom.us/j/*****941 [Show](#)

✔ Use this ID for instant meetings

Personal Link <https://berkeley.zoom.us/my/finlayson> [Hide](#) [Customize](#)

[Attend Live Training](#)



Studio Effects

Apply to all future meetings

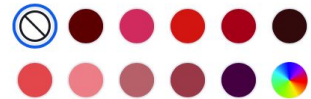
▼ Eyebrows



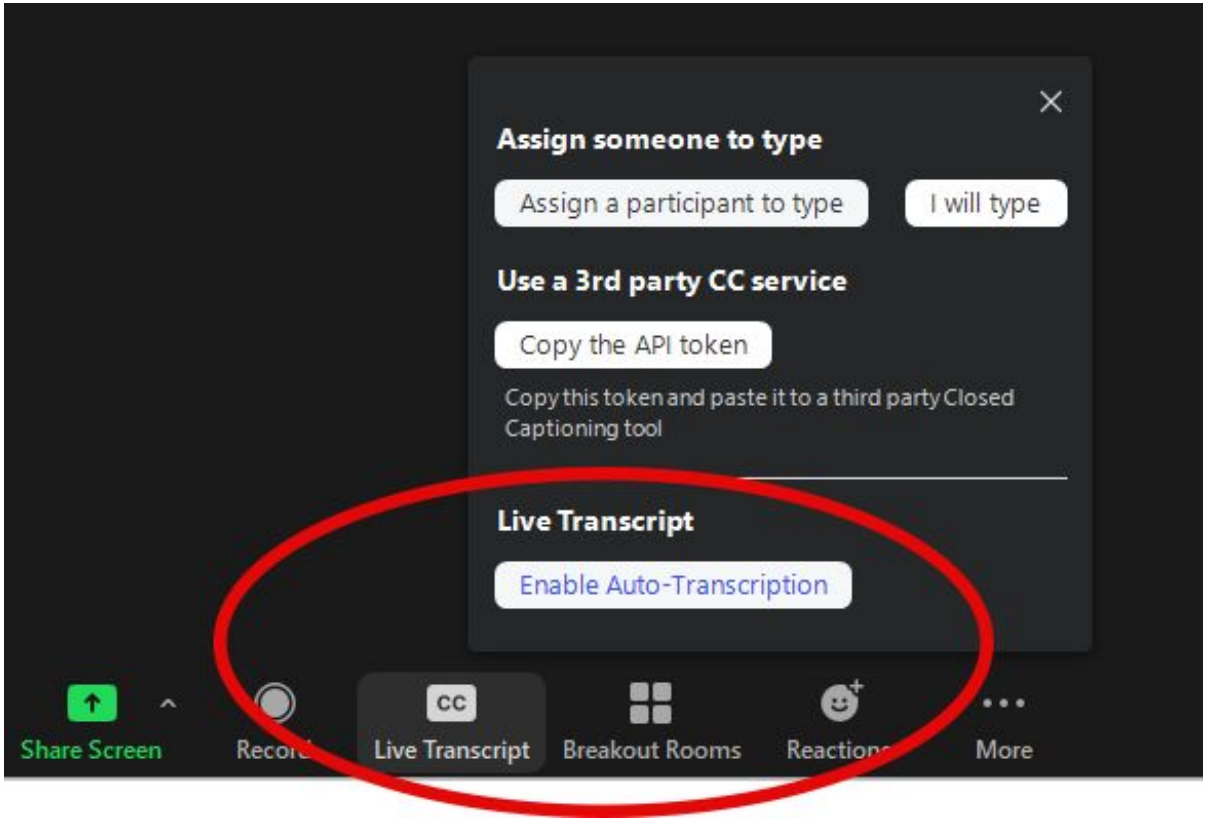
▼ Moustache & Beard



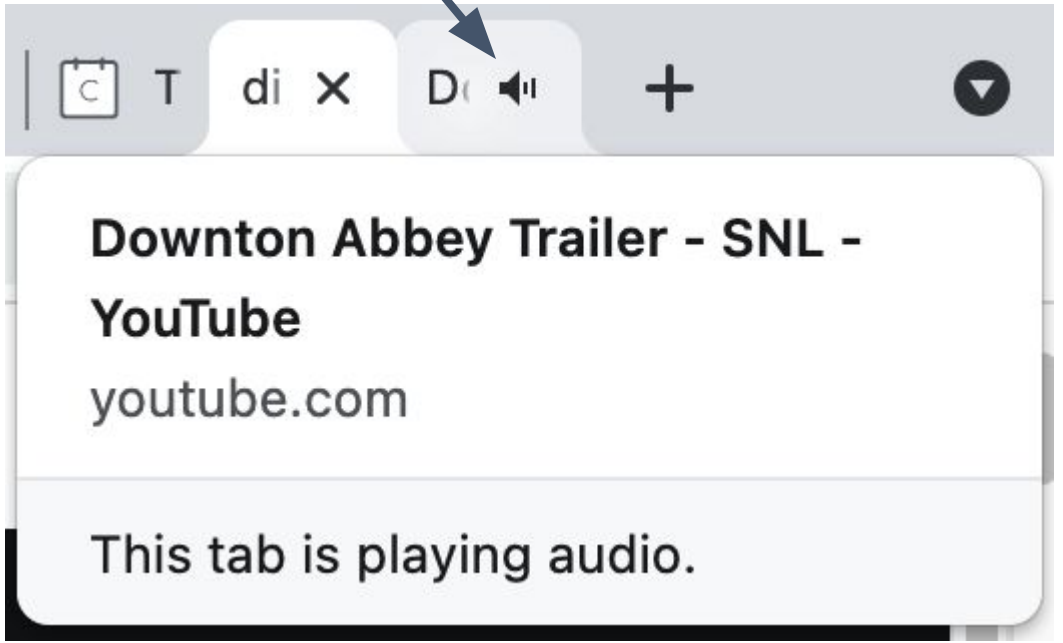
▼ Lip Color



Turn on Live Transcript

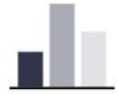


Find that tab making noise...




4. Polling Tools


Popular question types ?




Multiple Choice




Word Cloud




Open Ended



Scales



Ranking

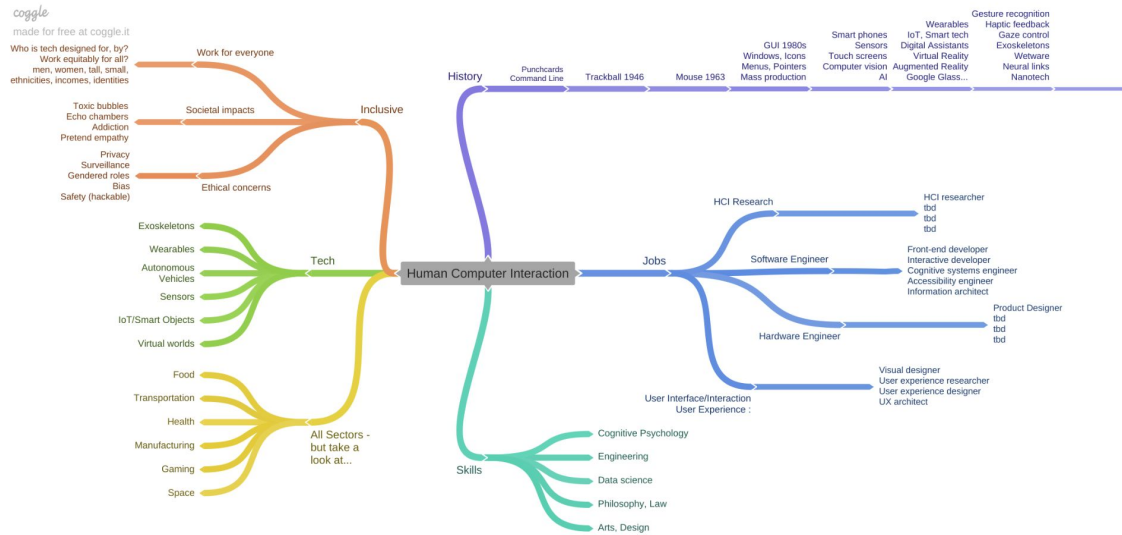


Q&A

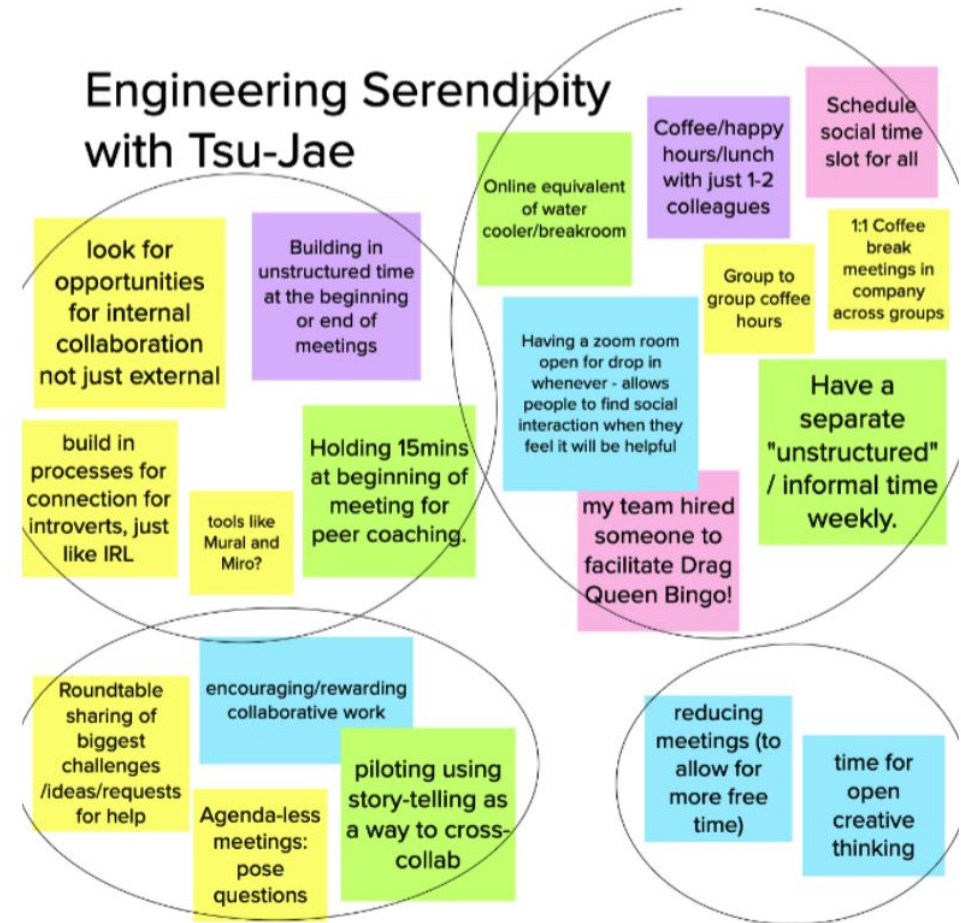


4. Collaboration & Creativity Tools

Miro, Mural, Coggle...



Engineering Serendipity with Tsu-Jae



Engineering Serendipity: Brainstorming Session Using the Mural App



A Quick Menti Poll

<https://www.menti.com/hk5yv7qx95>

What is your biggest pet peeve about meetings?

What is your favorite thing about meetings?

What advice do you have for making meetings great?



Rejuvenate Meetings



Next
Opportunity at
Work **2021**
Innovate, Collaborate, Grow!

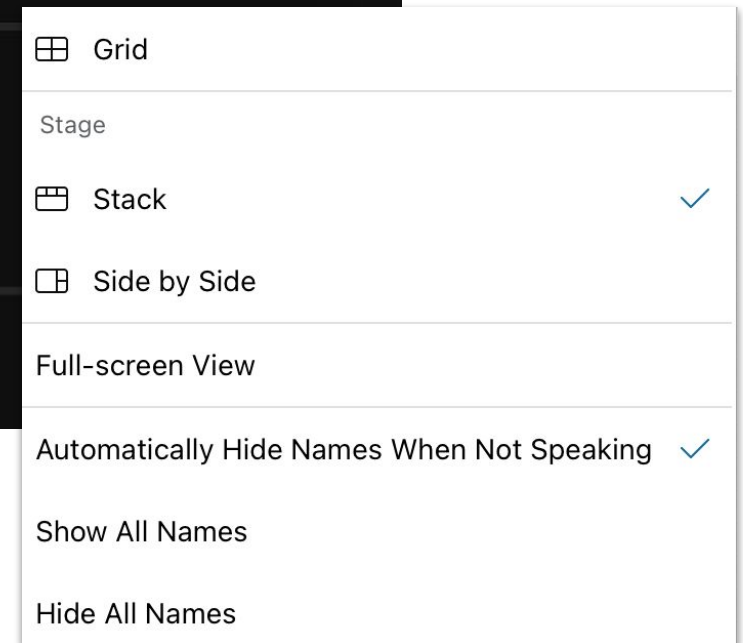
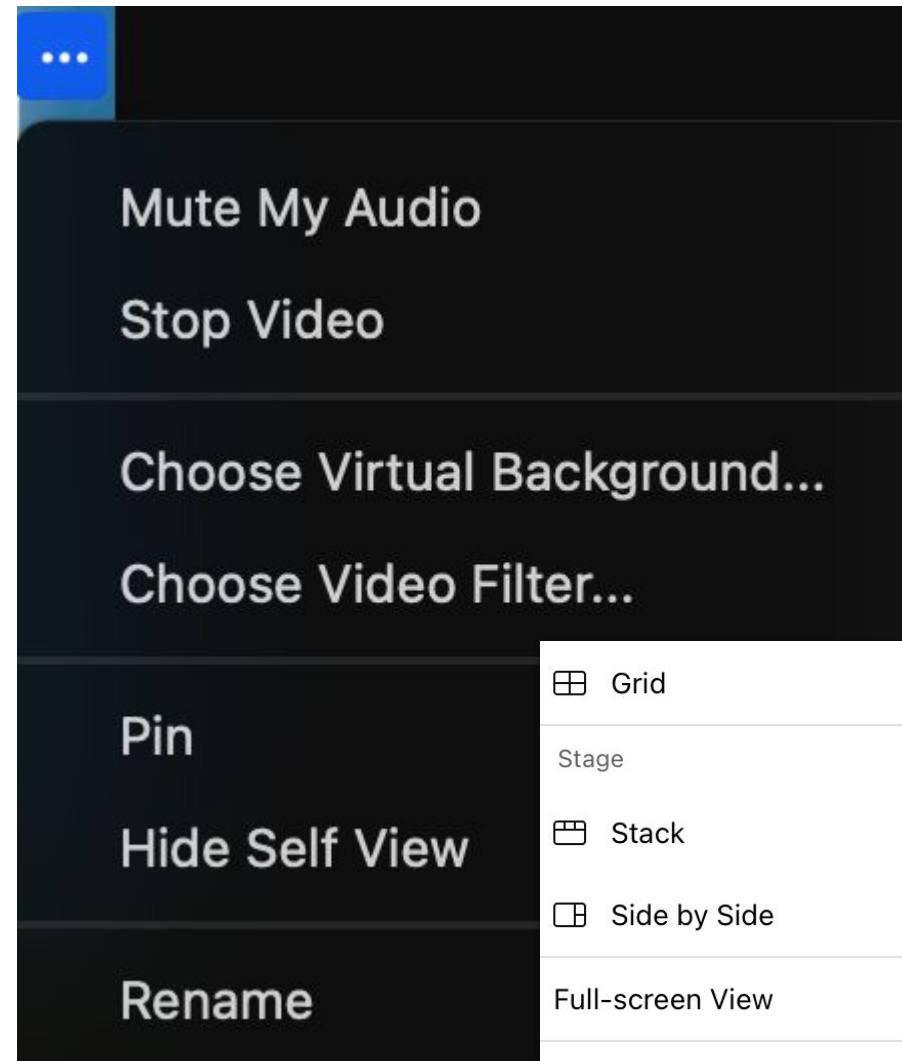
Berkeley
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

"My reward for being on time... An empty conference room." by Kevin Lawver is licensed under CC BY-NC 2.0

1. Hide self-view

“Zoom fatigue” – is greater for women (1 in 7 women – 13.8 % compared with 1 in 20 men – 5.5 %) reported feeling “very” to “extremely” fatigued after Zoom calls.

If speaking, you can “Hide thumbnail video” & it will become a text box indicating who’s speaking.



2. Walking meetings

PRODUCTIVITY

7 Reasons to Schedule Walking Meetings

Want to boost collaboration, and creativity at work? Then leave your desk and start moving.

We Sit Down – A Lot

Office Worker: **12** hours per day

Average Jill: **9.3** hours per day

Weekends: **8** hours per day

80% of jobs require **NO** physical activity

Increase in average daily sitting time **8%** 1980 **2000**

[Why Sitting Is The New Smoking](#) By dacadoo

If You Sit More Than FOUR Hours:

50% Increased **RISK OF DEATH** from any cause

125% Increased risk of events associated with **CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE**, such as angina pectoris or heart attack

SITTING CAN AFFECT:

- Muscles
- Mood

3. Delight & Surprise

Snail mail

Games

Mental Health breathers

Ice Breakers

Breaks

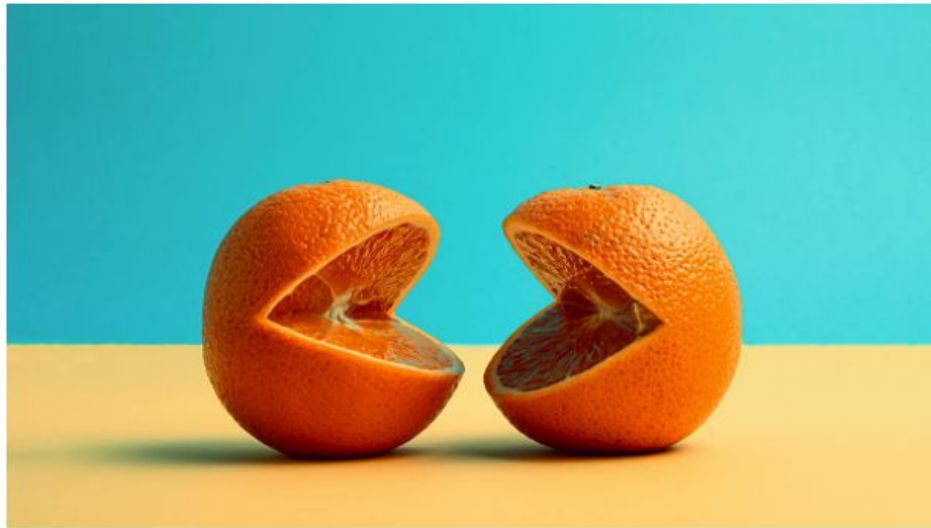


4. Small Talk

Make Time for Small Talk in Your Virtual Meetings

by Bob Frisch and Cary Greene

February 18, 2021



Francesco Carta fotografo/ Getty Images

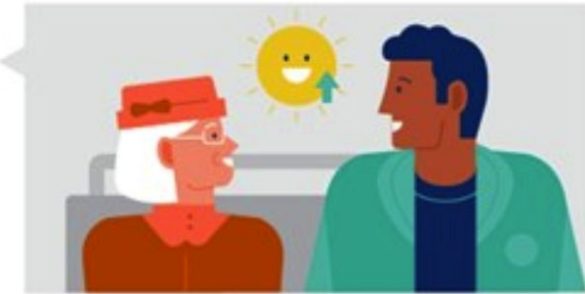


SMALL TALK MAKES US SMARTER

Researchers at the University of Michigan found that social interaction such as a 'get-to-know-you' conversation can help you focus, plan, prioritize, and organize.¹

SMALL TALK MAKES US HAPPIER

According to a study by Nicholas Epley and Juliana Schroeder, interacting with strangers results in a more positive experience than solitude.²



SMALL TALK MAKES US FEEL BETTER

University of British Columbia researchers found that daily interactions with casual acquaintances like your local barista contributes to feelings of "belonging and happiness."³



Recap Next Steps

- Reduce meetings
- Reshape meeting
- Retool meetings
- Rejuvenate meetings

Design a better, more equitable new normal



Q&A

Contact Info

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finlayson@berkeley.edu



"Question mark made of puzzle pieces" by Horia Varlan is licensed under CC BY 2.0