



# EVERY MEETING COUNTS

HOW THE MOST INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE  
IN THE WORLD CONDUCT THEIR MEETINGS

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an ebook by meet in place

The logo for 'meet in place' consists of two white circles. The first circle contains the word 'meet' and the second circle contains the words 'in place'.

# Meetings

They can be amazingly productive or a huge waste of time.

As we are in [Meet In Place](#) are known as “*The place for business meetings*”, we realized that we can give you the perfect meeting room with all the amenities and service you can hope for in the best location in town, but after all, meetings are about people getting together and trying to make the best out of their time together, and that’s what counts the most.

Besides the tips and information we regularly provide on our blog and social networks about how to make your meetings great, as we learned them from our experience in the meeting rooms business and with tens of thousands of meetings taking place at our meeting rooms complexes, we gathered that we can learn a thing or two from the most inspirational and influential people who ever lived on how they make their meeting productive.

This is why we published this eBook, to help you make every meeting count, by learning from the best figures in meetings history.

We hope you find these tips helpful and get inspired.

Yours,  
The [Meet In Place](#) team



**Steve Jobs.**  
*Photo by Matthew Yohe*  
*Source: Wikipedia*

## **Steve Jobs**

Founder and Former CEO – Apple

Steve Jobs is known for many things – he changed the mobile, music and movies industries forever and made all of them better by using out of the box thinking, entrepreneurship and amazing touch for the smallest of details.

One other thing he was known for was his 0 tolerance for wasting time.

## 1. The concept of DRI – Directly Responsible Individual

To back this Get-To-The-Point way of life, he had strict rules regarding meetings, known inside Apple as “*The accountability mindset*” – which means everyone knows who is responsible for every action item in the meeting.

All meetings in Apple had a list of items, and each one of them had an DRI – Directly Responsible Individual next to it.

According to Gloria Lin, who used to work for Apple:

“The DRI concept works phenomenally well. Note it's just that - a concept. A simple tool to make ownership clear and point people with questions to the right place.”

## 2. Keep it small

In his book called *Insanely Simple: The obsession that drives Apple's success*, Ken Segall – who worked for many years with Jobs, describes a real meeting of around 8 people with the CEO.

As Jobs went in and started the meeting, his eyes fell on the one thing in the room that didn't belong there – a young woman who Segall calls Lorrie, although he admits he don't remember her real

name and never came across her again since that day.

“Who are you” – He asked, and after the first shock, Lorrie gave him her name and told him she was asked to join as she’s involved with some of the marketing project that were to be discussed during the meeting.

“I don’t think we need you in this meeting” was the reply from Jobs according to Segall, and then immediately back to the updates like she was never really existed.

Segall describes Lorrie’s long walk from the table and outside of the room and refer to her as “Poor Lorrie”.

This is of course a very harsh thing to do, but we can take away from it the core principle – keep your meetings as small as possible, since more participants = more distractions.

### **3. No Presentations**

“I hate the way people use slide presentations instead of thinking,” Jobs recalled. “People would confront a problem by creating a presentation. I wanted them to engage, to hash things out at the table, rather than show a bunch of slides.

People who know what they're talking about don't need PowerPoint."

This quote was written by Walter Issacson, the Steve Jobs biography author, and it's another way to show you the mind set of Jobs: Be creative and know your stuff.



**Jeff Bezos.**  
*Photo by Seattle City Council*  
*Source: Flickr*

## **Jeff Bezos**

Founder and CEO – Amazon

Bezos's Amazon first changed the way we buy books, then the way we buy anything and everything, and today it dominates many markets, including television, music, and most of all – Retail. Since day one Bezos put his spotlight on the customer experience and efficiency, and that's why he got some great insights on how to conduct meetings.

## **1. The “Two Pizzas team” rule**

Between trying to get as much feedback and opinions as possible in every meeting and try not to get too much of them, Bezos’s Two Pizzas team rule helps to focus by having the exact amount of people in each meeting: Meetings are no larger than the amount of people that can be fed by two pizzas.

## **2. No PowerPoints – yes memos**

Like Steve Jobs, Mr. Bezos also doesn’t find any good at presentations in his meetings. Instead, every meeting moderator needs to prepare a 6 pages memo with all the information he wants to deliver in the meeting.

Bezos recently wrote to Amazon’s shareholders:

"The great memos are written and rewritten, shared with colleagues who are asked to improve the work, set aside for a couple of days, and then edited again with a fresh mind. They simply can't be done in a day or two."

How does this make a meeting more productive?  
This is where the 3<sup>rd</sup> rule comes in.

### **3. The silence treatment**

Every meeting inside Amazon starts with silence. All the attendees of the meeting are sitting together and reading the memo written by the moderator.

They get ALL the information they need in order to defend or attack the subjects of the meeting, and they are all coming from the same level of understanding the material, since they all read the same information.

From there, it's up to them and their experience to decide how to deal with the information and their feedback.



**Elon Musk.**  
*Photo: Steve Jurvetson.*  
*Source: Flickr*

## **Elon Musk**

Founder and CEO – SpaceX,  
Tesla

Elon Musk is changing the world in so many ways, it's hard to keep up – he co-founded Paypal, SpaceX, Tesla, Hyperloop, The Boring company and many more. He is also huge on Twitter and often reply to people in a humorous manner and make headlines on a daily base. He is known as a cut-to -the-

## **1. Do your homework**

When you're having a meeting with Musk, the most important thing to do is be prepared. He's always in the details and will usually ask follow-up questions that you should know the answers to. Do your homework and know everything about the subject you're presenting.

## **2. It's basic**

Musk is well known to never forget any piece of information. That's why he loves the small details rather than the big picture, which he builds in his mind during the presentation.

If you talk to him about any subject, you need to present the small details and break it into atoms. No headlines – but all the microscopic details under the skin of the subject. And be rest assured – He'll remember it all.

## **3. Work harder**

An anonymous engineer at SpaceX wrote on Quora:

“If you believe that a task should take a year then Elon wants it done in a week. He won't hesitate to throw out six months of work because it's not pretty enough or it's not

"badass" enough. But in so doing he doesn't change the schedule.

One of the most famous quotes that runs around the office is one from a companywide talk Elon gave a couple of years ago where he said: "Not enough of you are working on Saturdays.""

To be fair, Musk applies this hard work way of life on himself.

#### **4. The long-term is what matters**

It's ok to fail. It's ok to be wrong. As long as you keep on moving towards the company vision, and always have it your sight when doing your work, you're doing the right thing, according to Musk.

When SpaceX employees suffered not 1, not 2, but 3 failures in launching the Falcon1 rocket, Musk told them he will never give up on this dream, and his belief on the end result is what made gave them the fuel (Rocket Fuel in that situation) to keep going and find the right solutions.



**Mark Zuckerberg.** Photo:  
Anthony Quintano  
Source: Wikipedia

## **Mark Zuckerberg**

**Founder and CEO – Facebook**

From a geek with social issues solved by coding his way out of them, to the king of social media, Zuckerberg made a long way to become one of the most influential people of our times.

Knowing how to make a meeting count is without a doubt one of the reasons.

## **1. Keep everyone in the loop**

According to a Quora answer by Sheryl Sandberg, COO at Facebook:

“Mark has done a really good job improving the efficiency of meetings at Facebook this year. He asks people to send materials in advance, so we can use the time for discussion”

## **2. Set goals to the meetings**

According to Sandberg, Zuckerberg also insist on setting goals to every meeting.

Is it a meeting about decision making or about a discussion?

That way, there are no surprises in the room – the entire meeting is going in the same direction and everyone are on board about what is expected of that meeting at the end of it.



*Sir Richard Branson.  
Photo: Chatham House  
Source: Flickr*

## **Richard Branson**

Founder and CEO – Virgin group

Sir Richard Branson is the founder of the Virgin group, which have over 400 companies under it. As such, he made a meeting or two in his life time.

So how does he conduct his meetings?

## 1. Stand up – Not the comedy type

Sir. Branson is always on the go, literally. If you're going to meet him, make sure you're ready to stand up, as he likes to take his meeting on his feet.

He finds it, as he says, a much quicker way to get down to business and  
If you catch him in the mood, he'll even go further and have a walk with you.

As he wrote in a blog post:

“I sometimes even set myself a personal challenge of trying to come up with a plan of attack in the time it takes to walk around the block... five minutes, go!”

## 2. The 10 minutes meetings

Branson is also known for having most of his meetings in 5-10 minutes.  
He says that he can have many more meetings every day and that

“It's very rare that a meeting on a single topic should need to last more than 5-10 minutes.”



**Bill Gates.**  
*Photo: UK DFID.*  
*Source: Flickr*

## **Bill Gates**

Founder and former CEO –  
Microsoft

Bill Gates used to rule the once biggest company in the world – Microsoft. Ever since he left the CEO chair he found more time for his philanthropy work. So how does one of the richest men in the world makes his meetings count?

## 1. No paper

One thing that goes through all of Gate's working life is using less paper. His office has 3 synchronized screens and it's rare to find a paper on his desk.

It's the same in meetings. He'll always bring his tablet PC and take notes on it rather than on paper notebooks. That way he also keeps everything synched, as his tablet is connected through the cloud to his computer.

## 2. Follow up

Meetings are important, they are full of information and decisions, but sometimes after a meeting, you continue with your day and forget about what was discussed.

Gates takes his spare time between meetings to follow up on previous ones, write emails and make sure nothing gets lost in the everyday life.

He even does that at night and if he didn't finish – the weekends.

As he wrote in a post for CNN:

“When people come in Monday morning, they'll see that I've been quite busy.”



**Gary Vaynerchuk.** Photo:  
VaynerMedia  
Source: Flickr

## Gary Vaynerchuk

Founder and CEO – Vaynerx,  
VaynerMedia

Gary Vaynerchuk is an internet phenomena. Started as a wine critic, he helped grow his family's winery in huge numbers, and he's now leading his New York based digital marketing companies.

Besides being one of the world's best-known entrepreneurs, he makes YouTube shows, and he wrote a number of best-selling books. You can imagine he has some great meeting methods.

## **1. Make the meeting something to remember**

Since Vaynerchuk has a very busy schedule, his meetings are time framed per the topic of the meeting.

But according to a blog post by Manu Goswami, who met him as his idol when he was 19 years young, you can tell that a meeting with Vaynerchuk is a great treat.

From that meeting description, it seems that Vee (as he often called) is very time aware but gives his guests the feeling that they are all that matters.

If you make your meetings something that people will never forget and make them feel like the center of your world in that particular time, they will most likely be willing to go an extra mile for you.

9 out 10 times, being friendly is probably the way to go, as people tend to do more for people they consider their friends. And it makes the meeting so much better for both sides.

## **2. Honesty is always the best way to go**

Be honest with the person(s) sitting in front of you. If there's something that you know you can't do – tell them: “I'm sorry, that won't be possible”. This is much better than promise things that you can't deliver.

It's also ok to check first and give the answer later, but never let people think you can do things you can't, it'll give you nothing besides hurting you and your brand, and in the Users Review Era we live in, it'll be a common knowledge much faster than you think.

## **3. That said – always be creative with your solutions**

Think outside the box is one of the biggest clichés of modern time, but it might be the most important one when meeting people. Whether meet to close a deal, to present something or just give advice – always stretch the borders and look at everything from a few angles. It may result in nothing, but you might find a whole new view.

Thank you for reading this eBook.

We hope you enjoyed reading it as much as we enjoyed researching and writing it.

We'd love to meet you in person in one of our venues worldwide.

All our meeting rooms are equipped with strong WiFi, in-room coffee machines, water, sparkling water, big screens and all the connectivity you can possibly need.

Looking forward to meeting you,

The Meet In Place team.

