



The Insider's GUIDE TO BETTER MEETINGS

Our top tips to banish boredom, promote productivity and enhance effectiveness.

Supported by

CITRIX
GoToMeeting

Are you ready to become a meeting superstar?

“Meetings are a great way to fill my working day.”
Nobody. Ever.

If you've ever sat through a meeting and felt it was an utter waste of your time, this guide is for you.

It doesn't matter whether it's a quick catch-up with a colleague or a regular team get-together: a meeting should be an organised gathering of the right people to serve a useful purpose. If it lacks any of these hallmarks, it's not a meeting.

This guide contains some simple tips and actionable techniques from us here at Citrix that we really believe will make you a meeting superstar – whether you're a participant or the organiser.

Pushed for time?

Here are the top 5 take-aways from this eBook:

1	Workers spend on average 3 hours a day in meetings, over a third of which are considered unproductive. Conference calls make collaboration excruciatingly difficult.
2	Good meetings have a clear objective, required participants only, an agenda sent out in advance and minutes with follow-up actions distributed afterwards.
3	Online meetings with HD video support face-to-face interactions rather than relying solely on conference calls or travelling to a designated location.
4	Business-grade online meeting tools offer the functionality, reliable connectivity and data security mandated by corporate IT that free tools lack.
5	Work is something you do, not somewhere you go. Work-shifting supported by HD video is a win for employees, employers, the economy and the environment.

Contents

Why bad meetings are bad news	4
Make the difference (if you're an organiser, moderator or leader)	10
Make the difference (if you're a participant)	14
Survey insights	17
Online meetings	18
Our top online meetings tips	22
Home, sweet home	25
Objections to workshifting	27
Citrix spotlight: Daniel Waas	32
A quick recap...	34
Recommended further reading	35

Tip:

*Click here to
download a
**fancy screen-
optimized** version
of this guide*

Why bad meetings are bad news

If you added up all the time people waste in bad meetings every day worldwide, the cost would probably equate to the annual GDP of a small country, or at least an elite footballer's transfer fee. So why do we all go along with it? It's time to take a stand. But first, we need to get a few things off our chest!

Rant #1

Most meetings are too long

The average person's attention span in a face-to-face meeting is 35 minutes, and just 23 minutes on a conference call. When people aren't actively engaged in a discussion or presentation, they tend to tune out –furtively texting, checking email or playing Angry Birds on their smart phone.

Rant #2

Meetings are expensive

Normally, if you were going to incur business expenditure for any reason – say, you wanted the latest tablet for work, or needed to offer a customer a discount or hire staff for a new role – you'd have to put together a business case to justify it. Yet meetings are organised every day with little consideration that time is money. Here's a challenge: do a quick survey of your team or department to find out how much time they spend in meetings, then multiply that by their hourly rate. More than likely, you'll be staggered by the hidden cost of getting people together!

Rant #3

Most meetings are unproductive

(but some are more unproductive than others)

In a recent survey, we found UK office workers consider over a third of all meetings to be a total waste of time – ouch! And guess which function has the worst perception of meetings? IT, who said over half the meetings they attended were unproductive. And yet we continue to set up and attend them out of routine and habit. Email has contributed to meeting proliferation by making it all too easy to invite a

whole bunch of people to gather round a table by just hitting 'send', rather than considering whether the goal could be accomplished some other way.

Rant #4

A lot of meetings are pointless

Meeting organisers often fall into the trap of not having a defined outcome – a decision to make or a problem to solve. As a result, the discussion gets bogged down in planning and due diligence, but doesn't reach any sort of resolution. This is especially true of recurring team or project meetings, where more of the time is typically allocated to reviewing what's already happened rather than to making progress.

Rant #5

Traditional meetings stifle innovation

If someone introduces a novel solution or radical idea into a meeting, it often ends up going nowhere. It's a similar phenomenon to what psychologists call the 'bystander effect', where the greater the number of people present, the less likely observers are to help a person in distress. Nobody takes ownership, so 'decision by committee' means the concept gets watered down, or the outcome is a safe option or even no decision at all.

Rant #6

Conference calls are bad meetings at their worst

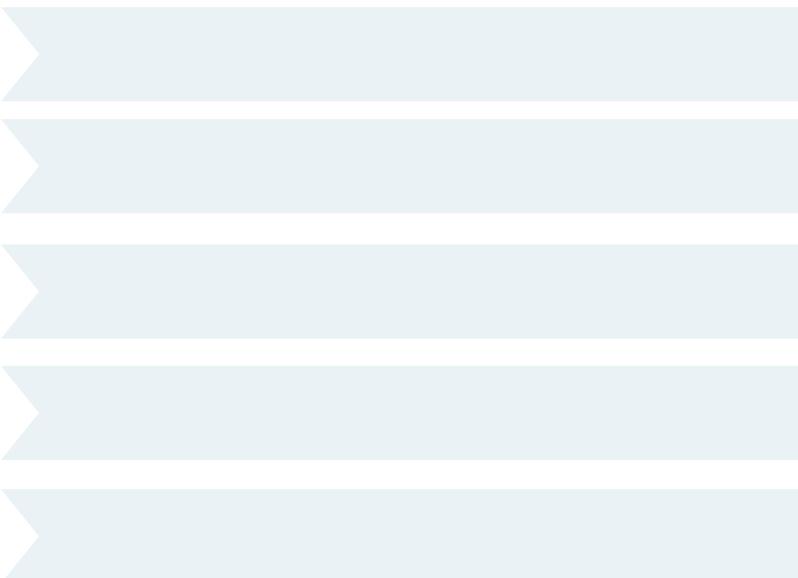
We're not big fans of conference calls at Citrix. Does that surprise you? Take all the ingredients of a bad meeting, then strip out participants' body language and all visual cues as to what's happening, and it's little wonder you end up with cacophony and confusion that makes collaboration excruciatingly difficult. And that is before you even factor in background noises, "please hold!" messages replaying endlessly to the whole group, or fiddling to enter a multi-digit conference passcode into your smartphone while driving.

Rant
#7

Bad meetings are bad for business

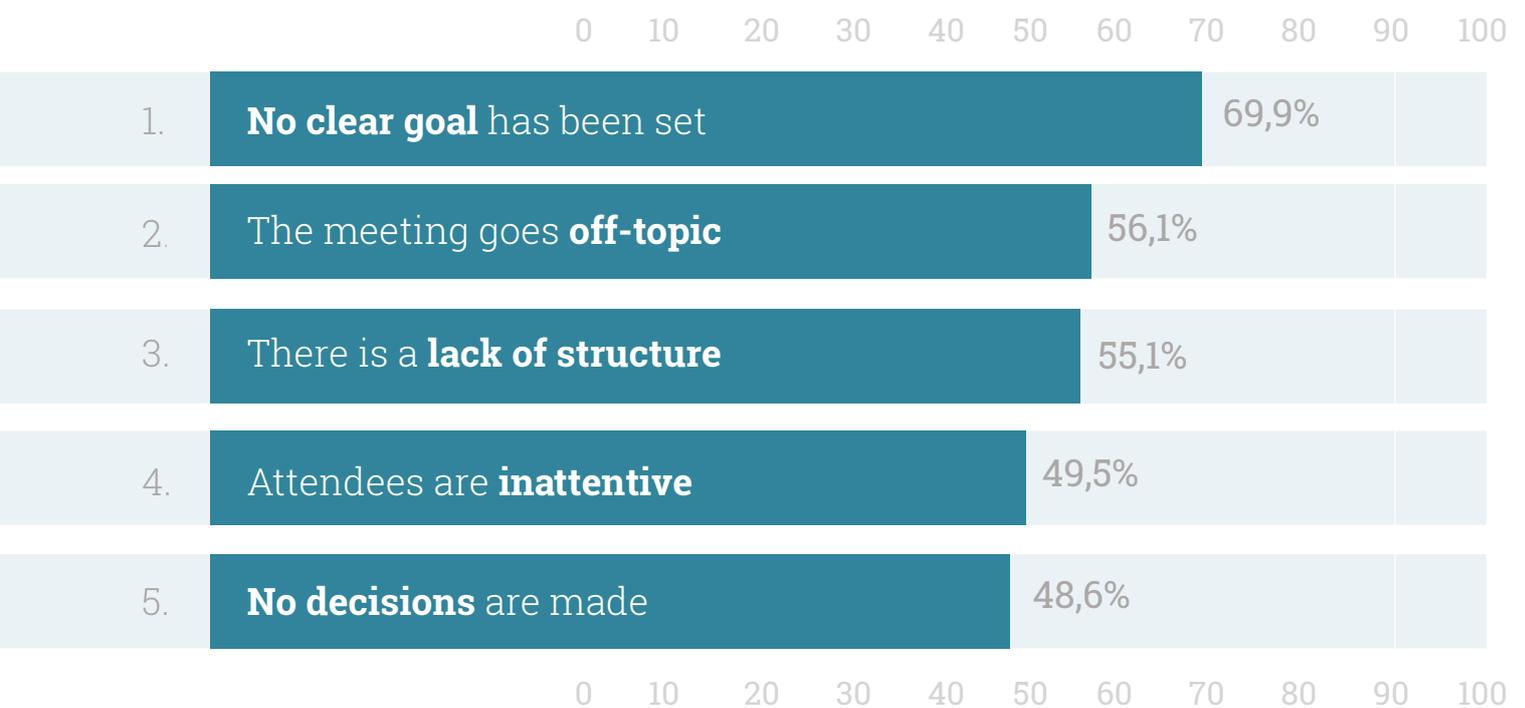
Meetings tend to be a barometer of a company because they're where a lot of the organisation's culture plays out. If, as an employee, you find yourself attending mind-numbing meetings with tedious people, you may start to think you work for a boring company. Likewise, if your colleagues are regularly argumentative, hostile or defensive, there may be an underlying blame culture. Either way, it's not good for staff morale or retention.

See our
top 5
indicators
of a
bad meeting



Survey data*

Common characteristics of a bad meeting

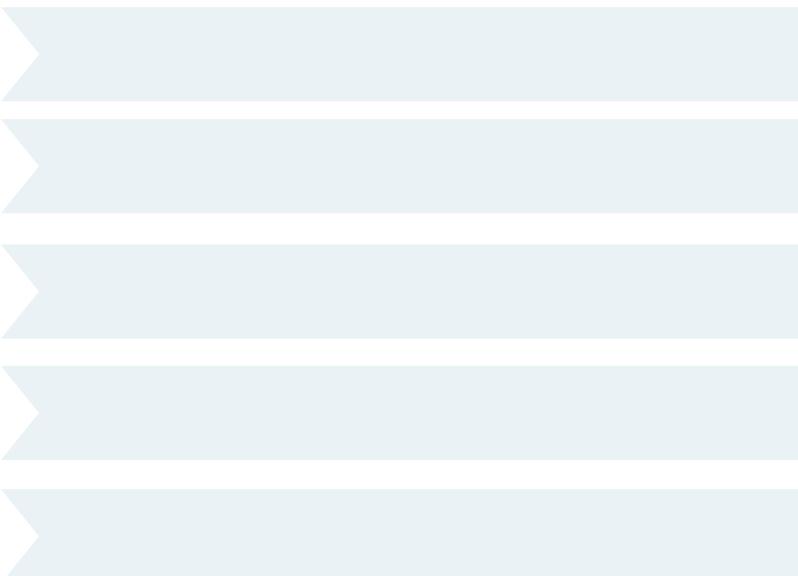


*Citrix Survey of 280 UK office workers, 2013

Good meetings – and what you can do to make them happen

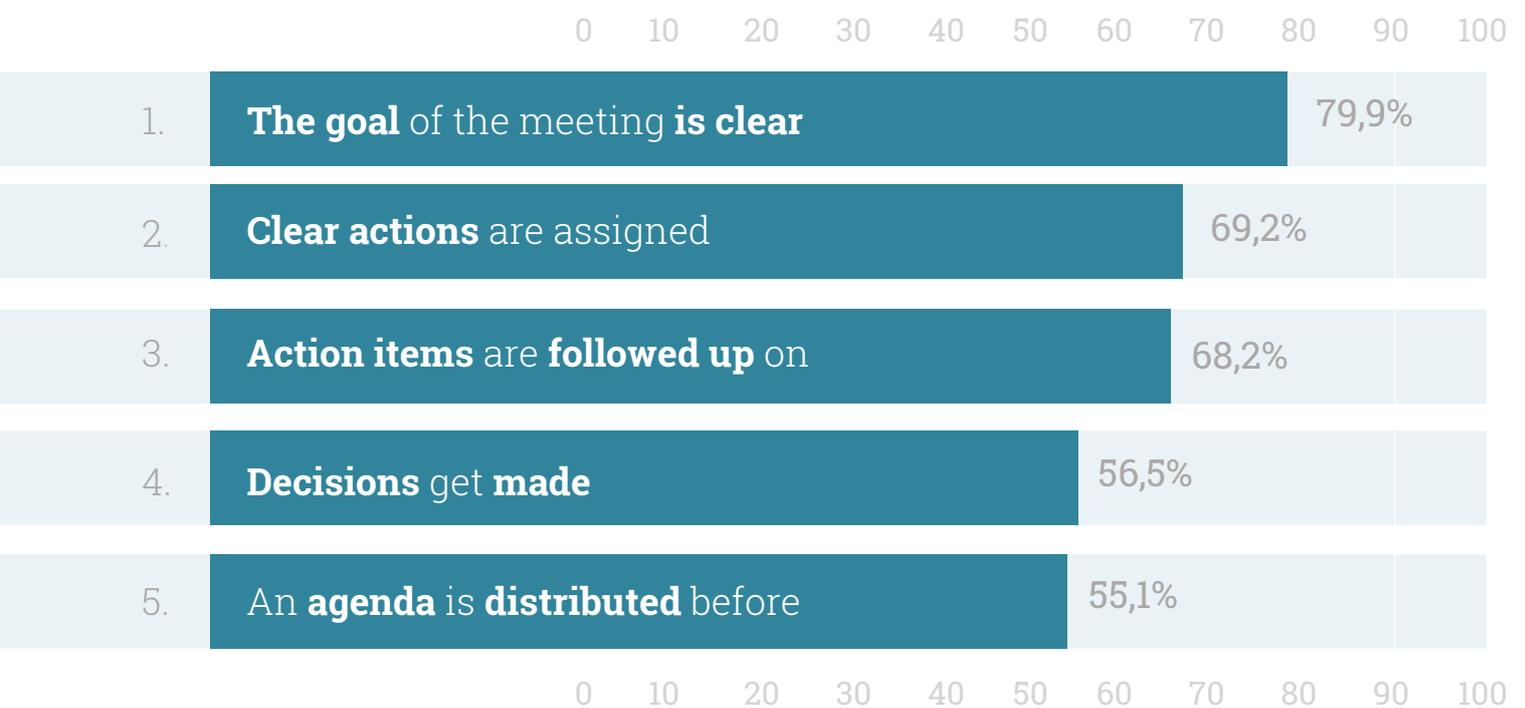
Effective meetings don't happen by chance – they share a common set of characteristics that you can control. Whether you're the organiser or a participant, there are a few simple steps you can take as best practice to help everyone get more from their meetings.

See our
top 5
indicators
of a
good meeting



Survey data*

Common characteristics of a good meeting



*Citrix Survey of 280 UK office workers, 2013

**If you're the
meeting organiser,
moderator or leader,**
here's how you
can make the
difference, and
inspire others
to do so.

Before the meeting

Tip #1: Establish an objective – and stick to it!



Successful meetings have a clear purpose or aim in mind. What key decisions need to be made? What actions need to be taken during the meeting? If you can't define what this is, you're not ready to call the meeting.

Tip #2: Choose your people carefully



Be thoughtful when inviting people to your meeting – you're probably not the only person making demands on their time. It's only too easy to end up with a calendar full of back-to-back meetings without pause for thought (or comfort breaks or lunch!). And, of course, while there's no visible cost to you for their time, there's a financial cost to the company and an opportunity cost to your colleagues in terms of their own workload. Just because Outlook defaults to 30 minute slots doesn't mean you have to book meetings by the half hour. Consider whether you're asking for an hour to discuss something that could be covered in 45 or even 40 minutes.

Tip #3: Set the agenda



Does the word 'agenda' sound intimidating? Not to worry. For smaller meetings, a handful of bullets covering the key points you want to address will generally suffice. Only more formal meetings with a bigger and more varied attendee list will usually call for a more structured approach.

The important point is: have an agenda and send it out before the meeting (and no – five minutes earlier does not qualify as "before"!). That way, people will know what to expect, come prepared and the schedule will prevent the meeting from descending into a free-for-all.

Tip #4: Knowledge is power



Meetings can get a bit political sometimes, particularly if there's an important or contentious issue at stake, so it doesn't pay to fly by the seat of your pants. In advance of the meeting, email or speak to each individual participant and ask "what is your main goal for the meeting?". Don't send out a group email or BCC – you want to

“On the first slide of your company presentation template, put the sentence: 'This meeting will be a good meeting if...' and mandate meeting organisers to complete the sentence before calling the meeting.”

*Michele Morgan,
Senior Online Marketing
Manager (EMEA),
Citrix Online*

establish one-to-one trust. Once you've received everyone's replies, you'll know who in the room will have a similar view or interests, helping you to run the meeting more effectively and manage any conflicts.

Tip #5: Run through pre-flight checks



Managing the meeting process is about more than simply inviting people, ensuring they can attend, and organising the practicalities. You can help maximise everyone's time by assigning meeting roles and communicating your expectations of each assignee upfront. Good roles to have are a facilitator, a note-taker and a timekeeper. Ensure anyone (including yourself) who's presenting or sharing information has prepared their supporting materials or presentations with time to spare.

Tip #6: Good housekeeping



It's a good idea to establish some meeting protocols, such as whether people should ask questions during or at the end of a presentation. It's also helpful to remind people of the importance of starting and finishing on time. If a key attendee is fifteen minutes late for an eight-person meeting, the latecomer has cost the business two hours of lost activity. Having to recap for the benefit of late arrivals is disruptive and wastes further time.

If a key attendee is fifteen minutes late for an eight-person meeting, the latecomer has cost the business two hours of lost activity.

During the meeting

Tip #7: Orchestrate the discussion



Running a meeting is like conducting an orchestra – you need to guide the conversation, maintain the tempo and ensure no single voice drowns out everyone else. That means keeping an eye out for people who are being too passive – sitting back, fidgeting or otherwise distracted – as well as those who are too enthusiastic and hogging the conversation. If it's a team meeting, consider rotating responsibilities around the workgroup. This not only rings the changes but can also help individuals to develop their skills because each will bring a different style or contribution to a given role.

Tip #8: **Appoint a timekeeper**



You can't always keep a meeting short, but you can help it run to time. In smaller meetings, the leader usually acts as moderator, too. However, you may want to nominate someone else as time-keeper, so you can focus on the agenda rather than the discipline. They should make sure the meeting stays on track for each agenda item and inform everyone when only five minutes remain on the current item.

Tip #9: **Keep your mind on the money**



Going round in circles? You can flag up the 'cost to decide' with a simple, spreadsheet-based tool like [The Meeting Meter™](#) to track the true cost of group discussions. You could make it visible during the meeting, to help the workgroup be more economical with their conversation. Or encourage participants to consider whether it's worth dwelling on an issue, by informing them how much 'money' has already been spent on that particular agenda item.

Tip #10: **Minutes shouldn't take hours**



The minutes provide a vital reference point when a meeting's outcomes impact other activities or projects, and keep everyone on the same page. But minuting doesn't have to be an arduous task. The main thing is to capture the essence of the discussion, e.g. ideas, feedback, agreements and decisions, next steps planned, action items and progress checks.

After the meeting

Tip #11: **Follow up appropriately**



After the meeting, fine-tune the minutes – even if they're just bullet points. Circulate by email, and don't forget to include those unable to attend on the distribution list. You'll need to continue to manage team communications to ensure everyone stays informed of progress and is aware of their responsibilities or action points, and any deadlines.

If you're a
participant in
someone else's
meeting, here's
how you can
make the
difference, and
inspire others
to do so.

Before the meeting

Tip #1: Come prepared



Nobody wants their time wasted, yourself included. So if you're expected to have reviewed something, make sure you've read it beforehand. If you're using a laptop or tablet in a meeting, check your battery has adequate charge or bring your power cable. And even in today's digital world, it always pays to carry an old-school pen and notepad as a back-up!

Tip #2: Minimise distractions



Have you ever been annoyed at the cinema by someone's mobile phone? It's the same for meetings. Tempting though it can be to multi-task, spare yourself the embarrassment of being asked to put your phone on silent, either by activating voicemail or using the Do Not Disturb function when you arrive. Make sure any audible email or calendar alerts are turned off or muted – nobody wants to be distracted by chimes, whooshes or pings.

During the meeting

Tip #3: Participate!



Don't assume you can sit back, relax and listen to everyone else. You've been invited to the meeting for a reason – if it's not obvious what that is, ask what role, responsibility or contribution is expected of you beforehand. If it turns out you don't need to be there, then by all means don't accept. You've just regained some precious time in your day! If you have a comment or question during the meeting, raise your hand. Keep your point succinct: if it's in-depth or complicated, break it down into separate questions. On the other hand, unless a speaker or presenter specifically invites open discussion throughout the meeting, it's a good idea to hang onto your thoughts until asked.

Tip #4: Be truly present, not just 'there'



While it's easy to let your mind wander off, you will only get full value from your participation by staying in the moment. Do your posture, body language and facial expressions convey respect and attentiveness, or boredom and impatience? Is there a chance you're wasting meeting time by asking something that's already been answered or addressed? If you catch your thoughts drifting, take a breath and, without judging yourself, bring your attention back to the present.

Tip #5: Set a good example



Good meeting culture can be spread virally, so as Mahatma Ghandi famously said, 'be the change you want to see'. Show accountability and integrity by only promising what you can deliver and communicating all news (good or bad) proactively. Unless it's absolutely necessary and you have prior permission, don't duck out of a meeting early – it's disruptive to the other attendees and implies your time is more important than theirs.

After the meeting

Tip #6: Do your homework



With today's demands on our time, it can be easy to flit from one meeting to the next, barely pausing for breath. But it's also important not to add to your stress by letting things pile up. Note any action items that have been assigned to you and complete any tasks promptly. Be driven to get things done, but also done right.

Results from our "Better Meetings" Survey

Average time spent
in meetings every day:

3.3 hours



Percentage of meetings
attended considered unproductive:

36%

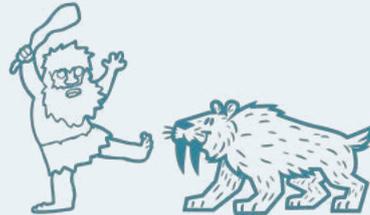
The time we collectively waste on bad meetings every year

We did the math* (see how at the bottom). Turns out we collectively waste just shy of 300,000 years per annum in useless meetings.

300,000 years!

300,000 years ago, our stone age ancestors didn't have time to waste in meetings – they were too busy fending off sabre-toothed tigers.

At least all we have to fight off nowadays is boredom. (and not even that, if you follow the advice in this eBook ;-)



Industries with the highest proportion of unproductive meetings:



IT Consulting

50%



Education

42%



Financial Services

40%

What would you do if you didn't have to go to those meetings?

31% Do other
work-related stuff

28% I'd get on with
my real work

10% Meet online/do
a teleconference

10% Do non
work-related stuff

7% I'd always attend
if invited

6% Send an email

* **How we did the math:** 220 working days per annum x 3.3 hours = 726 hours
726h x 10 mio workers = 7,260,000,000 hours or 302,500,000 days or 828,767 years

Online Meetings

Have a face-to-face without going place-to-place



So, we've talked about what makes a good meeting. But what could make a good meeting even better? You probably had a hunch this was coming: the answer, from our perspective, is to move meetings online whenever it makes sense. If you're still relying on conference calls to do business, or only meeting intermittently with customers at their premises, it's time to drag yourself out of the Dark Ages.

Online meetings are the natural successor to conference calls when it comes to relationship-building. They bring a visual dimension to any get-together, whether it's a one-to-one, a project meeting or a presentation with an audience numbering in the hundreds. And they also provide a useful complement to in-person meetings that helps sustain momentum behind team efforts and deepen customer relationships.

Of course, we benchmark everything by the standard of Citrix GoToMeeting, because we've built it to work exactly the way we and our customers want it to. But what can online meetings give you over and above a phone or conference call?

Desktop sharing

The ability to share your desktop with everyone present literally keeps people on the same page. It does away with the clunky process of emailing a file, calling the other person, asking them to open the file and then discussing it over the phone. As well as displaying the contents of your screen to all participants, you can truly work as a team by passing control of the meeting to attendees as presenter, or enabling everyone to collaborate by annotating or editing the document directly. This saves you from having to write up action points and implement changes to the document after the meeting, while putting a team effort and momentum behind your project.

Audio

When selecting a web conferencing solution, most buyers look only at one aspect of audio: the quality. Don't get us wrong – audio quality is certainly important (and GoToMeeting's HD audio is as crisp as you can hope for). Yet an equally important factor that is frequently overlooked is audio integration – how traditional audio conferencing integrates with Voice over IP (VoIP). Most solutions only let you use one or the other, or worse still, only VoIP. The downside: Any meeting with three or more participants will probably include at least one person who's not comfortable with or able to use VoIP. This forces the whole group to use traditional audio, foregoing the cost benefits of VoIP. So make sure you select a solution that combines VoIP with traditional audio and gives each participant the choice. In our own meetings, easily three-quarters of the team opt to use VoIP. If you currently rely on teleconferences, this would translate into a 75% cost reduction in your audio conferencing costs!

Chat

Public and private chat options allow you to address typed comments and questions to the presenter only or to everyone in the meeting, without interrupting the conversation. But use it sparingly!



Citrix Spotlight: **Clare**

Title:
Senior Campaign Manager,
Northern Europe

Distance between home and office:
35 miles away

Office-to-remote working ratio:
3:2

How do you use virtual meetings?
I use it several times a day for internal and external meetings and also to collaborate on documents with my media agency.

What is the impact of video on your virtual meetings?
I wouldn't have a meeting without turning on my webcam – being able to see people is really important as you can gauge their reactions and can be as good as sitting in the same room, but without the need to travel.

What are the main benefits of virtual meetings?
I can meet with colleagues and business partners across the globe across different time zones. By saving on travel time I am more productive and can focus on getting the job done, rather than what train I need to catch!

What is the most memorable or strange virtual meeting you've had?
With someone I had worked with for over 2 years but never met as we are in different parts of the country. We were both quite nervous when we turned on our webcams not knowing how we would react to seeing each other. We now very rarely email or phone each other as we love having a quick catch up face to face.

Top tips for making any meeting more productive:
Have an agenda and ensure you stick to it. If someone has not been on an online meeting before, explain how the meeting will run and how they can interact with the software. Open the meeting up 10 mins before to allow people to join.



HD Video

Given that a large proportion of communication is non-verbal, the ability to observe body language and facial expressions goes a long way towards eliminating misunderstandings and building relationships. Some companies have spent tens or even hundreds of thousands on high-end 'telepresence' systems. Like something out of James Bond or Minority Report, these offer the highest level of technical sophistication and fidelity in sight and sound, and no doubt if you're wanting to hold a G8 summit without putting world leaders on a plane, they're the tool of choice. But in practice, these systems are over-the-top for most businesses – a vanity project for executives who are happy to squander company resources on something that only benefits a niche group of users.

Nowadays, PCs, smartphones and tablets all come with a microphone, speaker and video camera integrated as standard, which democratises the use of video to every employee, from the shop floor to the top floor. Online meeting software takes advantage of these inbuilt tools to let everyone see each other. This enables both multi-point video meetings and point-to-point conference between two people – ideal for bringing the human touch to informal conversations and catch-ups.

We recommend that you choose a tool that includes HD video for a more natural and high quality face-to-face meeting experience. GoToMeeting has the added benefit of displaying whichever participant is currently speaking, so you can make eye contact just as you would in a real-life meeting.

Mobile

Today, mobile apps aren't simply the equivalent of desktop software on a smaller screen. Ease of use and convenience mean people and business processes are becoming increasingly 'mobile first'. Online meeting solutions like GoToMeeting that offer mobile apps let people to attend online meetings on the go via their smart phone or tablet – no bulky laptop required.

Why pay when I can get it for free?

There are various free tools available, such as Skype and Google Hangouts, and we're not going to discourage you from using them just to flog our own products. If you have no experience with videoconferencing, they're not a bad way to dip your toe in the water – after all, if grandparents can use it to connect with their grandkids, how hard can it be?

However, these tools aren't business grade. What does that matter? Well, as you might expect, many lack the functionality of paid-for tools, such as contextual HD video, desktop sharing and mobile apps. But more importantly, they're simply not reliable enough for multi-party calling. The quality of audio and video tends to be patchy. Glitches and dropped calls are frustrating enough when you're dealing with colleagues, but downright unprofessional when interacting with clients or business partners.

Security is a top priority for any business technology initiative, to prevent confidential company information from finding its way into the wrong hands. It's more than a check-box exercise to keep your IT department happy – free tools can expose your business to cyber threats such as malware (infectious programs used by criminals to gather sensitive data) or hefty fines because you've failed to comply with data protection regulations.



Citrix Spotlight: **Gemma**

Title:

Senior International Campaign Specialist

Distance between home and office:
25 minutes' drive

Office-to-remote working ratio:
3:2

How do you use virtual meetings?

I have regular weekly team meetings, external meetings with agency partners, and ad hoc one-to-ones.

What is the impact of video on your virtual meetings?

Video changes the way I work with people – it makes a real difference to see their reactions. And it means I don't feel isolated working from home.

What are the main benefits of virtual meetings?

People are more focused – it shortens the meeting window. And being able to share my screen means I can show instead of tell. Without the commute, I'm at my desk earlier. I save money on petrol and can balance my professional and personal life.

What is the most memorable or strange virtual meeting you've had?

I've had a video meeting on a train before. And I had a meeting with a colleague in Germany who showed me her new baby – that was sweet.

Top tips for making any meeting more productive:

Have an agenda up front, ensure you invite the right people, and provide strict timekeeping. And be polite – good manners can improve any meeting.

Our top online meeting tips

Whatever tool you're using, follow these simple, actionable best practices for online meetings that are as smooth as a pair of cashmere underpants.

Tip #1: All the usual rules apply

Everything we've talked about already in terms of good meeting etiquette applies just as much to a virtual meeting as a face-to-face one. You still need a clearly identifiable leader, a defined agenda and good housekeeping. Punctuality, professional courtesy and politeness are just as important, if not more so, when people are dispersed. Good meeting etiquette helps build and maintain relationships at arm's length, which can prevent feelings of isolation among remote workers.

Tip #2: What you hear is what you get

If you're joining the discussion by VoIP, it's helpful to perform a quick audio check, whether using your computer's inbuilt mic and speakers or a dedicated headset. If you're dialling in by phone, use a good quality landline or ensure you can maintain reception on a mobile to prevent break-ups or dropped calls. Keep the conference number and PIN code handy so you're not scrabbling around at the last moment. Join a minute or two early and have any questions or topics you want to raise jotted down in preparation. Mute your line when you're not speaking and keep background noise to a minimum. If you're at home, put up a "DO NOT DISTURB" sign if necessary, so your family know you're on a call (this may not work with pets, though!). Don't forget to speak more slowly and concisely on a multi-way conference than you would on a one-to-one phone call, especially if not all participants are native speakers of your language.

Tip #3: Eliminate first-time nerves

If your meeting participants have never used a tool like GoToMeeting before, ask them to join a few minutes early the first time they take part in an online meeting to ensure there are no hold-ups for technical reasons. In practice, you should find that the more intuitive your online meeting software, the more enthusiastically people will embrace the online meeting format.

“If a key attendee is fifteen minutes late for an eight-person meeting, the latecomer has cost the business two hours of lost activity.”

Tip #4: Avoid desktop faux pas

Online meetings shouldn't lack personality. But if you are likely to be sharing your screen, you'll appear more professional if your desktop isn't chock-a-block with icons, or wallpapered with photos of your cats, kids or yourself. Switch off pop-up email notifications for the duration of the meeting if you are likely to receive any sort of email that is confidential, sensitive or non-work-related. Nobody else wants to know about the romantic evening your spouse has planned for you when you get home!

Tip #5: Prepare your environment for video

Whether you're having an online meeting in your living room or an airport lounge, make sure your environment is neither too bright nor dim so people can see you properly. Keep body movements to a minimum to avoid distracting your audience (you may need to pay special attention to this if you're someone who gesticulates wildly with their hands when they talk!). Avoid fine stripes or intricate patterns on your clothing if at all possible, and remove noisy jewellery or dangly earrings that might provide an unwanted soundtrack to your meeting.



Citrix Spotlight: **Sharin**

Title:

Senior Campaign Manager, Central Europe

Distance between home and office:

70 km

Office-to-remote working ratio:

3:2

How do you use virtual meetings?

I use it for both large and small team meetings on a regular basis, plus I use it several times a day when working from home – instead of calling, I'll set up a virtual meeting.

What is the impact of video on your virtual meetings?

I know most of the people I meet with, but it's always nicer to be able to see them. Video meetings combat any feelings of isolation when I'm at home.

What are the main benefits of virtual meetings?

I'm able to work much more flexibly, adapt faster to changing schedules and stay in close contact with colleagues and business partners. I save a lot of time travelling. Plus I don't end up doing my housework at midnight!

What is the most memorable or strange virtual meeting you've had?

I once had an ad hoc virtual meeting in my car while stuck in traffic, which we would otherwise have had to postpone.

Top tips for making any meeting more productive:

Give people time to prepare or think of questions in advance. Assign tasks and circulate minutes so everyone knows the actions they need to take.

Tip #6: Overcoming camera-shyness

At first, you may feel a little self-conscious knowing other meeting participants can see your face. You might even be uncomfortable seeing yourself on screen. But once you get going, it's surprising how quickly you forget about it and fall into a more relaxed, organic conversation because you and your fellow participants can see one another. Stay focused, but relax and be yourself – the point of video is that it's the closest thing to being there in person. The most important thing to remember is to maintain eye contact by looking into the camera instead of your screen or your keyboard (you shouldn't be typing anyway!).

Tip #7: Use chat, but sparingly

Live chat is a discreet way to address the presenter or confer with other participants during a meeting. But it's not an excuse to hold a sneaky side conversation while the main meeting goes on. This might sound obvious, but when using live chat, don't inadvertently address a private comment intended for one individual to the entire team. You'd be surprised how many people make this schoolboy error. If it's not polite, it's probably better to keep your thoughts to yourself!

It works!

ShareFile: Video increases sales efficiency by a dramatic 34%

The ability to connect and collaborate with customers is vital to sales success. So ShareFile, a Citrix company, recently put video conferencing to the test in their sales demonstrations with prospects across all industries. Sales reps were automatically prompted to share their webcam when launching demos in the test scenarios, while in the control scenarios they weren't.

When sales people used GoToMeeting and turned on their webcams, they saw a 34% higher close rate than without video.

“ I have seen a significant lift in closing... I feel like people are more willing to return my calls and emails when I used the camera as opposed to when I didn't. ” Beth Longley, ShareFile Sales Representative

We realise we're blowing our own trumpet, but if you're sceptical, try it yourself. Turn on your webcam today to see how it affects your close rate.

Home, sweet home

When work is something you do, not somewhere you go

Online meetings – together with the many other Citrix tools designed to enable flexible working styles and practices – give employees the freedom to be productive wherever they need to. Working from home, while staying connected via online meetings, allows many people to get more out of their day by eliminating the dead time and energy drain of a tedious commute, not to mention the cost.

Whether that means starting and finishing earlier, using the time to get more work done or simply grabbing an extra hour in bed, it's a no-lose situation. Instead of an ongoing tension between work and home life, employees can apply themselves wholeheartedly to meeting their professional responsibilities without neglecting their friends, family and non-work pursuits that give their life purpose. Employers in turn benefit from a reduction in both excused leave and sickness absence.

What's more, many businesses are running out of real estate to warehouse their staff. These companies are finding that online meetings can help them maximise existing meeting rooms or workspaces without the cost of buying or renting new office facilities. Being able to support remote and flexible working means staff can be rotated between the office and off-site locations, so the building effectively operates at over 100% of its usual capacity.

Making the case for workshifting

So, there are proven, affordable, secure tools to make flexible and remote working practices not only achievable but desirable. But what if you work for a company that steadfastly refuses to embrace workshifting on principle?

There are countless 'Future of Work' studies and statistics that point to a rising proportion of the workforce becoming mobile or at least non-co-located. Nevertheless, many employers are still shutting their eyes, putting their hands over their ears and shouting "la, la, la, la" to the prospect of relinquishing direct visibility of, and perceived control over, their knowledge workers.

The win-win-win of workshifting

Technical, economic, demographic, environmental and societal factors are combining to make workshifting a no-brainer. It's good for business, good for people, and good for the environment and the economy. Everybody wins.



Employee benefits

- Reduced public or personal transport expense (train fares, fuel, car wear and tear)
- Reduced general work expense (e.g. daycare, convenience food, clothing)
- Time savings



Employer benefits

- Increased productivity
- Reduced real-estate requirements
- Reduced energy consumption
- Reduced absenteeism
- Positive impact on attraction and retention



Community benefits

- Reduced dependence on imported oil
- Reduction in greenhouse gas emissions
- Reduced traffic congestion and road accidents
- Increased standard of living in rural and disadvantaged areas

Objections to workshifting – and how to overcome them

Before having a discussion with your supervisor or HR department, you might want to role-play some of these scenarios with a friend or colleague. Gaming out your strategy in advance will allow you to be rational and assertive, rather than defensive, when you come to put your case forward.

Objection #1:



We've **never** done it before.

Workshifting has been proven to boost productivity and cut costs among leading businesses and progressive employers. It's also shown to have a big impact on attracting and retaining employees. Many workers who have used video meetings to enable remote working say they wouldn't take a job with company that didn't support the use of this technology.

If your staff are asking for greater flexibility, encourage them to find examples of similar companies in your industry or sector that have successfully implemented a flexible working policy. You can share this as a 'case study' with your HR function, who can adapt it as a template for your own business's flexible working policies or guidelines.

Objection #2:



If I let **YOU** do it, **EVERYONE** will want to do it!

You've probably known someone who has been challenged by life circumstances and has had special dispensation to work from home. The problem is, these discretionary arrangements aren't democratic and perpetuate the idea that flexible working is a perk.

However, workers are increasingly expecting a degree of flexibility as a rule, rather than an exception. So if an employee's work style and job role are a good match for remote working, allow them to give it a fair trial period for so many days a week, and gauge the reaction from people that work with that person, internally and externally. If nobody is inconvenienced and the employee's performance isn't adversely affected, the arrangement can be formalised and extended to others in similar roles.

Besides, as the benefits of workshifting are so compelling, why wouldn't your business want more people to embrace it?

Objection #3:



"You're a **manager**. How can you manage **if you're not there?**"

In national or multinational companies, workers are typically dispersed over several locations. It's not unusual for people to report to a line manager on a different continent, let alone a different country. The management of knowledge workers tends to be less authoritative and more democratic. Bosses are not there to check that their staff are working, like a supervisor on a production line – their role should be to let staff get on with their jobs autonomously while doing whatever is necessary to facilitate. Line managers who use video meetings to stay in touch with their direct reports say they have more, not less, contact with their staff and are better informed about issues and challenges on a day-to-day basis.

Objection #4:



We let so-and-so work from home once and **they took advantage**. We can't **risk** it.

As Aristotle said, "one swallow does not a summer make". He probably didn't have working from home in mind three hundred-odd years BC, but he had a point. One anecdotal account of someone abusing a flexible work arrangement doesn't discount the entire principle. After all, if we banned things simply because some people can't be trusted, we'd have to have an amnesty on scissors, hot coffee in paper cups, and hedge funds.

If a previous arrangement didn't work, it's either because that individual lacked motivation (and could happily find ways to slack off even while in the office under the beady eye of their line manager) or because there wasn't an adequate framework in place. Employers need to be able to monitor and measure the performance of remote workers (although this should never become a time-and-motion study) and use tools like video meetings to ensure regular contact so that employees don't feel abandoned or isolated.



I just don't
like it and
that's it.



Objection #5:



I just
don't like it
and that's it.

Sometimes, we all have to put subjectivity aside. Managers that don't 'get' flexible working should encourage their team to share how they believe flexibility will solve their business challenges, and what they think that vision of flexibility will look like. In return, managers need to be able to freely express the 'price' they fear they'll pay by allowing this flexibility (they usually discover their fears are unfounded).

Lastly, managers should establish right from the get-go that any issues related to work flexibility which cause the team not to meet its goals will be resolved by everyone, and not fall solely on the manager. So for example, if having two members of the group working from home on the same day causes a problem with customer coverage, the manager should ask the team to come up with a way to solve the problem instead of taking it all upon him- or herself to make flexible arrangements work.

Objection #6:



Video meetings
are an executive
plaything.

Today's tools are not yesterday's toys. Web conferencing is now becoming embedded in business, rather than a nice-to-have. Bandwidth isn't the concern it once was, and video no longer buffers and lags. In fact, Citrix GoToMeeting with HDFaces™ provides a high quality, telepresence-like meeting experience just using a webcam and an internet connection. But unlike high-end telepresence solutions, hi-def video meetings are accessible and affordable enough to be used on a company-wide basis, not just by an executive elite. It's a powerful way to overcome the personal engagement challenges of remote working.

Citrix Spotlight: Daniel Waas, Director Demand Generation EMEA

“Ok, let me get personal on this one. My name is Daniel Waas and I run the Demand Gen department here at Citrix' SaaS Division in Europe. As you might expect for a company that sells this stuff, we are heavy users of online meetings. And I mean Bob the Builder hard hat heavy.

The company I worked for previously got acquired by Citrix in 2011. We pretty much had exactly the same line-up of products – products allowing you to work and collaborate from anywhere. Yet flexible working was not allowed. There'd been a sales rep once who had abused it and it got shut down for everyone. Great. Thanks, Mr. Sales Rep.

One of the first things I received from Citrix right after the acquisition was a slide deck talking about what the company stands for and what its values are. You know, the kind of document you'd expect from any larger corporation. You probably have one of your own gathering dust somewhere. But ours is different.

Different in the sense that this company really means every single word. Our claim is enabling people to “Work better. Live better.” and this starts with a flexible working policy for employees. I can hardly think of anyone for whom this has been as impactful as it is for me.

I went from five days in the office to three days a week working from home. I have a 40 mile commute that takes about one hour each way. Multiply that by the 132 days per year that I now work from home and you'll find that I save 11 full days of commuting. Let's take this a step further and assume I work until I'm 67 (Germany's retirement age). If I keep up the flexible working, I will save 330 full days.

Yes, almost an entire year of my life!

But time saved is not the only benefit I get. Working from home, I was there when my son, Vincent, now two, had his first solid food. I pick him up from day-care twice



Yes, that's me

a week at 4.30pm, without raising eyebrows among my co-workers, because they know I'll make the time up by checking in later that evening or at another time that suits me.

Another treat of working flexibly: every other week on Tuesday I have breakfast at a local coffee shop, feeling hip and free as I check email via Wi-Fi while sipping on my latte – the epitome of the (admittedly small town) knowledge worker.

So how do I lead a team while being at home 60% of the time? Well, my team is distributed across multiple locations anyway – Chalfont (UK), Karlsruhe (Germany) and Paris (you guessed it, France) – so I wouldn't be able to give them full-time face time, even if I was in the office every day. So I meet with them every day via video using GoToMeeting's HDFaces feature (see above).

I was sceptical when we launched the feature. What difference would it really make? Wasn't video just eye candy that nobody would use anyway? Well, now I'm a total convert. Video really makes all the difference when working with people across multiple locations.

It doesn't feel as if we're remote because we see each other every day, albeit virtually.

Do you need to meet in person every now and again? Absolutely! Online meetings cannot replace face-to-face get-togethers. These pictures are from a recent team event we did, spending an evening together cooking under the supervision of an exquisite chef. You cannot bond this way in an online meeting.

Working together every day, however, is something you absolutely can do, even if half the team is working remotely and the other half is scattered across three countries.

This is why I fell in love with the (online) meeting. It has helped me bring a team together that works with high spirit, dedication and a friendly virtual poke in the ribs every now and then.

I (selfishly) recommend you give it a try. ”

Daniel

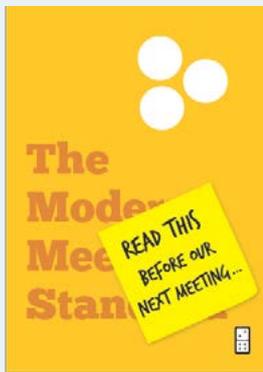
A quick recap...

Bad meetings are bad news for business – they're expensive, unproductive, lack clear outcomes and stifle innovation.

1. Good meetings don't happen by chance – they require thoughtful preparation, good discipline and strong leadership.
2. Online meetings have several advantages over conference calls, such as desktop sharing, Voice over IP, Chat, mobile capability and video.
3. HD video conferencing is a high quality, more natural way of collaborating, and integrated webcams in PCs make it affordable enough to be used pervasively in companies.
4. While free tools are available, they lack the quality of service and security that businesses need to be professional and compliant.
5. Good meeting etiquette applies equally to online meetings, together with a few simple practical considerations such as camera set-up and working environment.
6. Work is something we do, not somewhere we go: work-shifting supported by online meetings allows people to get more from their day while reducing commuting time and cost.
7. Making the case for work-shifting needn't be an uphill struggle, if you apply our pragmatic, evidence-based arguments for change.
8. Online meetings have revolutionised the way we do business here at Citrix, so we can honestly attest to the benefits for organisations and employees.

Recommended further reading

Hopefully, you're now equipped with inspiration, best practices and constructive arguments for better meetings and more agile ways of working. But if you want to dive deeper into the tools and techniques that can help you have fewer, higher quality meetings, you might want to get your hands on a copy of these top reads:



“Read this before our next meeting” Al Pittampalli

Al Pittampalli addresses a time worn challenge that all of us have experienced for which many of us are chief executioner: Death by Meeting. The single most powerful question to ask yourself or your co-workers when faced with a challenging situation is: What difference could you make that requires no one's permission other than your own? Al embraces this critical notion of personal responsibility in his counter-intuitive approach to getting senior management to adopt

the modern meeting: you don't have to get everyone on board – you just need to start and let your success influence others to get on board.

“Meeting for Results Tool Kit: Make Your Meetings Work” Richard M Lent



The Meeting for Results Tool Kit provides a different approach to running effective meetings. Written for leaders whose focus is on holding meetings to get work done and not on facilitation, it provides 12 clear choices and 31 supporting tools for planning, conducting and achieving results from meetings. It can help you structure a naturally effective meeting instead of relying on rules or norms for guiding meeting behaviour, and run effective board, team or staff meetings in a business or non-profit setting. You can also follow Richard Lent's blog – Meeting for Results: Making Meetings Work – at www.meetingforresults.com/blog/



CITRIX® GoToMeeting

Our Citrix online service for better collaboration

Get your free trial version: 0800 011 2120
www.gotomeeting.co.uk

For more tips and insights - visit our [blog!](#)

CITRIX®

North America
Citrix Systems, Inc.
7414 Hollister Avenue
Goleta, CA 93117
USA
Tel. +1 805 690 6400
info@citrixonline.com

Europe, Middle East & Africa
Citrix Systems UK Limited
Building 3
Chalfont Park
Gerrards Cross
SL9 0DZ
United Kingdom
Tel. +44 (0) 800 011 2120
europe@citrixonline.com

Asia Pacifics
Citrix Systems Asia Pacific Pty. Ltd
Level 3, 1 Julius Avenue
Riverside Corporate Park
North Ryde NSW 2113
Australien
Tel. +61 28870 0870
asiapac@citrixonline.com

About Citrix

Citrix (NASDAQ:CTXS) is a leader in mobile workspaces, providing virtualization, mobility management, networking and cloud services to enable new ways to work better. Citrix solutions power business mobility through secure, personal workspaces that provide people with instant access to apps, desktops, data and communications on any device, over any network and cloud. This year Citrix is celebrating 25 years of innovation, making IT simpler and people more productive. With annual revenue in 2013 of \$2.9 billion, Citrix solutions are in use at more than 330,000 organizations and by over 100 million users globally. Learn more at www.citrix.com.

© 2015 Citrix Systems, Inc. All rights reserved. Citrix, GoToMeeting, GoToWebinar, GoToTraining, ShareFile and Podio are trademarks of Citrix Systems, Inc. and/or one or more of its subsidiaries, and may be registered in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, with the Office of Harmonization for the Internal Market, and in other jurisdictions. All other marks appearing in this piece are the property of their respective owner/s.

410EN/WP/2015.28.01