

Employers Council, the nation's largest employers association, has provided expert assistance and thoughtful guidance to employers since 1939. We collaborate with our members to develop effective, successful employer-employee relationships by providing "one-stop shopping" in every facet of human resources and employment law. Employers Council offers the broadest array of professional services under one roof. We walk alongside our members, offering guidance, support, and expertise.



Contact me with any questions or to discuss how we can assist your organization.

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Four Key Steps to Effective Meetings

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1. **Plan and Prepare.** Take time to identify the following:
 - a. What is the purpose for this meeting?
 - b. What specific items need to be addressed at this meeting?
 - c. Is a meeting necessary to accomplish the identified purpose and/or address the specifically identified items?
 - d. Who needs to attend this meeting?
 - e. How much time will be needed for the meeting?

A word on agendas: A great script is the key to a play's success. In the same vein, a well-structured, informative agenda is as vital to a meeting's success as a script is to a play. If you want an organized, structured meeting, you have to script it. Your meeting agenda should outline the specific items to be discussed, the person responsible for leading each agenda item, the time allocated to each item, the desired outcome or action to be taken on each item, any supporting information to be reviewed, and any preparation required. For your agenda to be really effective, you should distribute it (along with any supporting information) at least a day or two before the meeting.

2. **Structure and Control.** Construct and control the meeting in the following ways to accomplish both the meeting's purpose and the desired outcome on each agenda item:
 - a. Start on time and end on time.
 - b. Open by explaining purpose.
 - c. Follow the meeting agenda.
 - d. Introduce each agenda item, the presenter, and the expected outcome.
 - e. Maintain control by keeping the discussion and decision-making stages separate.
 - f. Don't let people talk over each other.
 - g. "Close" each agenda item – state the decision or make assignments.
3. **Conclude.** Conclude each meeting by reviewing each agenda item and pointing out any action items that need to be followed up on. If you know when your next meeting will be, notify the participants of the date and time.
4. **Follow-up.** After each meeting, minutes should be prepared and distributed to all participants. Minutes serve two critical purposes. First, minutes memorialize decisions. Second, properly prepared and distributed minutes help to ensure that participants follow-through on their assigned action items. Other steps that meeting leaders could take to ensure participant follow-through include:

Contact the participants prior to the next meeting to discuss their progress.

- Send a reminder email to participants.
- Set an interim meeting with individual participants to discuss their progress.
- Send minutes out again with next meeting agenda.
- Ask participants to report on their progress by a certain date – prior to the next meeting.