



Better Meetings And Organization

by [Steve Brown](#)

Let's face it, meetings can be stunningly boring. After all, listening to a colleague that is all jacked up on coffee and donuts can be brutal sometimes. This is probably because some of them will spend long periods of time pontificating about the bank, while others brag on how things can be improved in other groups as their own hum along perfectly. Still others just don't seem to know how to wrap up their remarks or get to the point of their endless and frankly often needless discourse.

To fix this issue, and the broader one about the best way to get organized, everyone seems to have tried their own angle at some point in time. As such, some seem to work, while others do not. Today we explore how some famous people deal with meetings and organization in general, as we layer in some tips we have picked up over the years along with some research to help you.

Larry Page, the CEO of Alphabet (holding company of Google), reportedly enters meetings with only his brain and his smartphone. It has been reported that this approach is intended to keep him mobile, while also simplifying his day.

Bobby Flay, famous chef and restaurateur, says he stays organized by making lists. He uses a yellow pad and crosses things off as he goes. He says it makes him feel like he is accomplishing things and says it is the best way he knows to get things done.

Still other experts say one of the best things you can do to increase your productivity is to work diligently to stick to your schedule. Make sure to hold your meetings to 45 minutes maximum, invite only those who need to be there, let them know coming in that the meeting will end at the time allotted and to please stay focused and on point. This gentle reminder works wonders and staying on track allows you to keep rolling all day long without getting too much slippage.

Another technique that some have reported may be as much as 35% more effective than sitting is to have a standing meeting. This approach comes from the programming side of the IT world, where software development teams working in so-called Agile environments get together every day for a stand up meeting. On the programmer side, these meetings are there to allow people to quickly update on what they are working on, what they are doing over the next few days and what is in the way of making progress. Bankers might want to try something similar at the next meeting because standing up can really save time.

Another tip is to keep your to do list simple and to not get too crazy with it. Many experts say the list should only have a few items on it on any given day. This forces you to really think about what you are going to do and to prioritize your list to get the most impact. Spending time checking things off is nice to see, but it also may not get your bank where it needs to go. More isn't always better, so focus is critical.

Yet another way to improve is to take 30 minutes before you go home and close the door to your office or find a quiet spot to think. Take the time to think about what you need to do and then set

about prioritizing your list for the next day. It will not only help empty out your brain so you don't take work home with you, but will also ensure you hit the ground running right after you read the BID and guzzle some coffee each morning.

Finally, consider research from Microsoft. They found that adding a second computer screen can boost productivity by 9% to as much as 50% depending on the task. Meanwhile research by Texas A&M finds standing desks can improve productivity by 46% over traditional desks.

There are lots of things you can do to improve productivity to help your bank, so spread the word and keep trying things to see what works best for you and your team.

BANK NEWS

M&A Activity

1) Commercial Bank (\$407mm, MI) will acquire Mason State Bank (\$117mm, MI) for about \$14mm in cash (50%) and stock (50%).

Brexit Update

The potential British exit of the Euro (Brexit) has the world on pins and needles as we all await the vote on the 23rd. The latest reports indicate the Fed and other central banks in Japan, Europe and elsewhere are working on contingency planning to supply dollars to financial markets if a "yes" vote on the Brexit occurs.

Higher Risks

A report by the Dallas Fed indicates banks in LA, NM, and TX with exposure to energy companies and those with higher levels of commercial real estate have been setting aside more reserves, as they respond to heightened regulatory concerns.

BEC Warning

The FBI is warning global losses caused by Business Email Compromise (BEC) have grown 1,300% since Jan 2015 to about \$3.1B worldwide. In these scams, hackers send fake internal emails posing as executives asking for money to be wired out by an unsuspecting employee. Cyber experts say this approach works because it is cheap so it can happen thousands of times (email is free) and because the emails are sophisticated (include company name, correct contact info, digital signatures, etc.).

Further Expansion

The OECD projects the US economic expansion (already in its 7th year this month) should continue to expand over the next 2Ys and strengthen in 2017. The group projects 1.8% GDP for this year and 2.2% for 2017.

Easy Targets

A McAfee study finds 97% of people worldwide cannot correctly identify a fake phishing email.

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