



How to run a board of director or senior level corporate meeting

Senior level meetings are challenging to run efficiently. It is difficult to plan the appropriate amount of detail to include in strategic discussions, and they become even more difficult to manage when decisions need to be made in the room. Beyond having multiple perspectives, and decision-making authority, these meetings are usually defined by their length due to the amount needing to be covered. Gaining alignment on a decision and leaving these meetings with a feeling of accomplishment can be achieved by following a few simple ideas.

OUR FIVE TIPS TO FACILITATING CORPORATE CONVERSATIONS

1. Get clear on the objectives before the meeting

Building an agenda and prioritizing the topics to be covered is the first and most important step in creating a successful meeting. Often this will mean working with multiple stakeholders to gather all of the desired topics to be covered and presenting them to the meeting owner for prioritization. If you are having difficulty figuring out the right mix of topics, revisit your objectives and evaluate what needs to be discussed live, versus what can be done via other communication channels.



2. Collaborate and delegate the creation of materials

It's important that the group helps in the creation of materials where possible. Engage with subject matter experts and give them a clear ask, with objectives and a set amount of time in the agenda. It's important that you don't try to do everything, and to use some of your capacity for the facilitation of the meeting. Remember that other speakers can help break up the meeting and provide energy to the day.

3. Iterate, iterate iterate

The unfortunate reality of meetings held at the executive level is that things can change rapidly, especially as challenges and opportunity evolve during the planning phase. Don't be afraid to move the agenda around to accommodate these changes both during the planning phase and during meetings. When building the agenda pay attention to which conversations are going to require the most energy – plan to have these early in the day, as attention tends to lessen towards the end of the day.

4. Work ahead of the decision

It's important to think through the critical discussions happening in these meetings. That means working through possible outcomes, and then going back to your materials to refine the language to be as insightful as possible. Good planning helps to guide the conversation to the critical issues, and quickly get past the inconsequential details that can often derail a discussion.

5. Be ruthless about the participant list

It is difficult to keep these meetings limited to a small number of leaders, as topics can tend to expand across functions and accountabilities. While having certain roles in the room can help to work across an organization, pay careful attention to the level of seniority. The dynamic of a meeting can change considerably once it grows beyond 15 people, and if your objective is to make decisions in the room, you may want to keep the invite list even smaller.

LET'S CONNECT TO CHAT ABOUT CORPORATE FACILITATIONS – WHETHER YOU NEED TO HOLD A SENIOR LEADERSHIP MEETING OR HAVE YOUR TEAM ALIGN ON GOALS, MACPHIE CAN HELP. THINK@MACPHIE.CA