

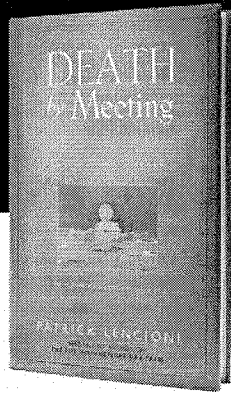
# Death by Meeting



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the table group  
a patrick lencioni company



# Death by Meeting

| Meeting Type                                  | Time required   | Purpose/Format   |   |
|---|-----------------|--|---|
| <b>Daily Check-in</b>                         | 5 – 10 minutes  | Share daily schedules and activities   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• don't sit down</li> <li>• keep it administrative</li> <li>• don't cancel even when some people can't be there</li> </ul>                   |
| <b>Weekly Tactical</b>                        | 45 – 90 minutes | Review weekly activities and metrics, and resolve tactical obstacles and issues          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• don't set agenda until after initial reporting</li> <li>• postpone strategic discussions</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Monthly Strategic (or adhoc strategic)</b> | 2 – 4 hours     | Discuss, analyze, brainstorm and decide upon critical issues affecting long term success | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• limit to one or two topics</li> <li>• prepare and do research</li> <li>• engage in good conflict</li> </ul>                                |
| <b>Quarterly Off-site Review</b>              | 1 – 2 days      | Review strategy, competitive landscape, industry trends, key personnel, team development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• get out of office</li> <li>• focus on work; limit social activities</li> <li>• don't over-structure or over-burden the schedule</li> </ul> |

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## Death By Meeting - 5 Tips for Better Meetings

Author of the best-selling book *Death by Meeting* offers insights on how to make meetings more productive and less painful.

**1. Know the purpose of your meeting.** Is it about solving a tactical, short-term problem, or a critical strategic issue? Are participants meant to brainstorm, debate, offer alternatives, or just sit and listen? Don't let your meeting devolve into a combination of all of these, leaving people confused about what is going on and what is expected of them.

**2. Clarify what is at stake.** Do participants understand the price of having a bad meeting? Do they know what could go wrong if bad decisions are made? If not, why should they care?

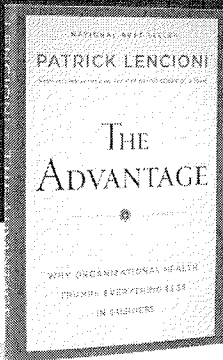
**3. Hook them from the outset.** Have you thought about the first 10 minutes of your meeting and how you're going to get people engaged? If you don't tee up your topic and dramatize why it matters, you might as well invite participants to check-out.

**4. Set aside enough time.** Are you going to be tempted to end the meeting before resolution has been achieved? Contrary to popular wisdom, the mark of a great meeting is not how short it is, or whether it ends on time. The key is whether it ends with clarity and commitment from participants.

**5. Provoke conflict.** Are your people uncomfortable during meetings and tired at the end? If not, they're probably not mixing it up enough and getting to the bottom of important issues. Conflict shouldn't be personal, but it should be ideologically emotional. Seek out opposing views and ensure that they are completely aired.

These five tips alone can improve the quality of our meetings, both in terms of the experience itself as well as the outcome. And considering the almost universal lethargy and disdain for meetings, they can transform what is now considered a painful problem into a competitive advantage.



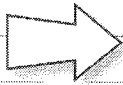


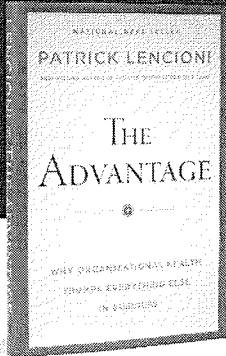
# The Advantage

## Weekly Tactical Meeting Guide

Date \_\_\_\_\_

|   |   |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |   |
|---|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---|
| <b>I. Lightning Round Notes</b>   | <b>II. Scoreboard Review</b>  |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |   |
| <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>   | <div style="text-align: center;"><input type="text"/><br/>Our Thematic Goal</div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"><input type="text"/><input type="text"/><input type="text"/><input type="text"/><input type="text"/></div> <div style="text-align: center;">Defining Objectives</div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"><input type="text"/><input type="text"/><input type="text"/><input type="text"/><input type="text"/></div> <div style="text-align: center;">Standard Operating Objectives</div> |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |   |
| <b>III. Tactical Agenda Items</b>   | <b>IV. Potential Strategic Topics</b>   |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |   |
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| <b>V. Decisions/Actions</b>   | <b>VI. Cascading Messages</b>   |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |   |
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# Tactical Meeting Guidelines

|  |  |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |  |
|--|--|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--|
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## I. Lightning Round (5-10 minutes)

Ask each team member to list the Top 3 things on their plate for the coming week. This should take no longer than 1 minute per person, even with a couple of follow-up questions. *Note any issues that need to be discussed further.*

## III. Tactical Agenda Items (30 minutes)

Discuss the potential tactical issues to be covered, assign an order for that discussion and dive in. These issues may have arisen either in the lightning round or the Scoreboard Review.

## V. Decisions/Actions (5 minutes)

Ask one team member to chart the decisions and actions that were committed to during the meeting. Team leaders should note these as well.

## II. Scoreboard Review (5 minutes)

Review the thematic goal and defining objectives of your business and note the current status of each.

## IV. Potential Strategic Topics

As you progress through your meeting, use this area to note the topics that you need to cover during a strategic meeting. *Be sure to resist the temptation to resolve them right away.*

## VI. Cascading Messages (5 minutes)

Discuss what, if anything, each team member should communicate to their direct reports from the meeting. Agree on a timeframe for that communication to happen.

## *Death by Meeting Quiz*

How effective are meetings in your organization? Take the following quiz and find out.

1. Yes/No      Are your meetings dull and uninspiring?
2. Yes/No      Do team members question the usefulness of meetings?
3. Yes/No      Are critical issues avoided or overlooked during meetings?
4. Yes/No      Do you wonder if team members are holding back during meetings?
5. Yes/No      Do team members complain about having to attend meetings?
6. Yes/No      Do you find that meetings end without resolution of critical issues?
7. Yes/No      Do you discuss administrative, tactical and strategic topics during the same meetings?
8. Yes/No      Are important discussions cut short because of time constraints?
9. Yes/No      Is your team reluctant to go off-site more than once a year to review the state of the organization and business?
10. Yes/No      Do team members seem disengaged during meetings?

If you answered **NO** to all of these questions, congratulations! You have one of those rare teams that has mastered the art of meetings.

If you answered **YES** to 1-4 of these questions, you could probably improve your organization's decision-making and overall effectiveness by making a few adjustments to the structure and content of your meetings.

If you answered **YES** to 5 or more of these questions, your meetings are probably causing you to waste considerable resources, both human and financial, and creating confusion within your organization. You should consider making significant changes in the content and structure of your meetings.

