



Your 5 step guide to a complete meeting makover

How to use cloud services to meet up, save time
and get more done.

Introduction

If there is one thing almost everyone in business can agree on, it's that meetings are a real pain. They take too much time and too little gets done. One recent survey showed nearly half of all employees think meetings are a total waste of effort.

Despite the poor reviews, meetings do have an important role to play. They can build a sense of camaraderie, spark innovation and help you get and keep everyone on the same page. That's especially important if you have employees in remote offices, satellite locations or working from home. You need a way to keep everyone informed, connected and focused on the right things. Meetings can fit the bill.

But that doesn't mean you have to continue to muddle through. With the right suite of cloud-based communication and collaboration tools, you can give your meetings a much needed, top-to-bottom makeover. They become easier to set up and more engaging to attend. They also can become much more focused and help you get important work done.

This five-step guide will show you just how simple and affordable your meeting makeover can be.

Give everyone their own meeting room

Traditional voice conferences are the bread and butter of team meetings. But they can be really clunky. First, you've got to schedule around the availability of your conference bridge. Then you have to initiate meeting invitations that include lengthy dial-in numbers and access codes that are easy to mistype and to mis-dial. You're also limited in what you can do once you get everyone together. You can't share your desktop or use video to see reactions. With nothing to look at, boredom can set in. It's no wonder most of us multi-task during conference calls. We check email or text messages, surf

the web or go hunting under our desk to search for that favourite pen we dropped.

Fortunately, you can conquer the boredom and break free from these "voice only" limitations with today's powerful new cloud-based meeting services. You and each member of your team get your own "always on" virtual meeting room to use whenever you want. Your personal meeting room can be used for spontaneous or planned meetings complete with video conferencing, desktop sharing and multi-party chat. It's all highly intuitive and easy to use.

Most importantly, these virtual meeting spaces can have a big impact on your meeting makeover.

Shorten response times. Rather than having to follow up after the meeting to answer questions that crop up, use your meeting room tools to send an instant message to a colleague for the answer. Or drag and drop the name of a subject matter expert into your meeting to invite them to join in real time.

Gauge reactions and modify your meeting accordingly. Since you can see faces, you get a much better feel for how individuals are responding to your agenda. If you sense disagreement, invite discussion of alternate points of view. If you sense minds are beginning to wander, ask questions, change things up and get folks re-engaged.

Eliminate delays at the start of your meeting. Participants simply “click to join.”

There’s no scrambling to find the right dial-in number and access code.

Eliminate multitasking. With video conferencing, you keep people focused on the screen of their PC, laptop, tablet or smart phone where they can see and be seen by colleagues.

Keep everyone on the same page. Share your whole desktop screen, web pages, applications and documents at the click of a button, removing the need for that awkward “where do we find that file” conversation and enabling you to capture comments and edits in real time.



Best in class
companies use
video conferencing
far more than their
peers - about 30%
more on average.

Simplify room-based video conferencing

Room-based video conferencing is a great way to replicate face-to-face immediacy when meeting with remote team members, customers or colleagues. But traditional video systems can be a nightmare. Most are cobbled together with hardware from multiple vendors. Each piece of equipment seems to have its own remote control, so you never know what you are turning on or off. And the software is complicated and hard to use. Lots can go wrong, which is why many room-based systems sit gathering dust.

With cloud-based conferencing, the complexity disappears. Your video conference room gets its own virtual meeting space, just like you and your team members do. With a simple click, anyone can start or join a video conference – no special training is required if you already have a video conference room. If you don't have one, it becomes easy and affordable to set one up almost anywhere. All you need is a conference camera/ speaker, an Internet connection and a large-screen display.

Here are a few of the features you get that can make your meetings better:

Easy scheduling. From your office calendar, you can see whether your video conference room is available. If it is, simply make a calendar entry to book it and forward an invitation to your team.

Faster startup. When it's time for your conference, simply walk into the room, power up and click a single button to get started. That's all there is to it.

Inclusiveness. Remote participants don't need their own room-based system. Anyone can join in from a desktop PC, laptop or any mobile device.

Productivity. Since your meeting is hosted in your virtual meeting space, you aren't constrained by the software limitations of your room-based system. You get an integrated suite of tools to make you more productive. Content sharing functions allow you to start a collaboration session and review spreadsheets, presentations or other documents with your team. HD voice captures every verbal nuance and HD video relays crisp images. You can even use multi-party chat to ask a quick question or poll participants, without having to interrupt the flow of the meeting.

Make mobile devices "meeting ready"

With a simple software client, any mobile device used by you or your meeting attendees can become "meeting ready" – eliminating common pain points.

Never miss another meeting while on the go. You can view all your scheduled meetings and stay auto-synced with your office calendar.

No more delays searching for phone numbers and access codes. Simply tap on an icon and your phone will automatically connect you to a meeting.

Easily launch instant messages or emails to meeting organisers and participating colleagues.

Select "meet now" and connect with team members on demand – all with a single touch. Your phone dials everyone up and establishes the conference for you.

Keep things professional when you're using a personal mobile device. Only your business phone number and identity are displayed when you join a meeting. Your personal mobile number remains protected.

Set up collaborative team workspaces

How many times have you been ready to hop on a conference call only to realise you aren't sure where to find the file you are supposed to be discussing? Or perhaps you thought you had the right document, only to discover everyone else is using an updated version.

With the collaborative online team workspaces offered with your new cloud services, you can end the paper chase once and for all. Simply drag and drop files into the team workspace and keep everyone in sync. You also can easily track tasks, due dates and work history. Built-in contextual

intelligence tools serve up the precise information you need when you need it – preparing you for every meeting, every call and every interaction.

All your meeting features are in your team workspace, allowing you to message a single individual or everyone on your team at once, click to dial a number or to launch a voice or video conference, or invite partners, customers and outside experts to join in.

Your team workspace can serve as a hub for the productivity apps you use each day – like Salesforce, Office 365 and Google G Suite. You won't have to hop from application to application to get things done. Everything is accessible from one spot, regardless of where you are or what device you use to connect.

Imagine the possibilities

With all your work content, meetings and apps managed in the same place, the makeover possibilities are endless. Here are a few examples to get your imagination going:



Set up a project management workspace where your engineers can track timelines and share sketches, CAD drawings, specifications and site photos. Use video conferencing to connect with remote team members and outside experts. Capture meeting minutes, action items and use tags to keep your content organised. Whiteboard notes during face-to-face meetings, photograph them with your smartphone and use your mobile meeting app to upload them to your team workspace.

Set up a budget-planning workspace for your finance team with process guidelines, schedules and the status of approvals. Drag and drop spreadsheets and link to financial reports from prior periods. Use content tagging and filtering to find relevant content by revenue category, expense type or other criteria.

Set up an account management workspace where the latest information on customers and prospects is available to your sales team. Post relevant updates and client feedback and use “@all” to notify the entire team. Set up reminders for follow-up calls, proposal deadlines and other deliverables and automatically sync them to team calendars. Post your latest sales presentation and other background resources associates need to sell more effectively.

Schedule your meeting makeover today

Collaborate from Gamma offers all you need to give your company's meetings a top-to-bottom makeover and begin working more productively. Get started today!

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