

## Lecture Review Sheet: Meetings

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The key to running good meetings is encapsulated in the John Cleese and Robert Hardy videos *Meetings*, *Bloody Meetings* and *More Bloody Meetings*. They are produced by Video Arts, and available in Canada from International Tele-Film. They are probably the best investment that any organization can make in terms of improving the way the operation runs.

Here is a short summary of the main ideas of the two videos.

### Meetings Bloody Meetings

#### 1. Plan the Meeting

- Be clear on objectives of the meeting
- Be clear WHY you need the meeting
- List the topics to be addressed

#### 2. Inform

- Make sure everyone knows exactly what is being discussed, why and what you want from the discussion
- Anticipate what people and information may be needed and make sure they are there

#### 3. Prepare

1. Prepare the logical sequence of items
2. Allocate time on the basis of importance, not its urgency

#### 4. Structure and Control

- Put all evidence before interpretation and action
- Stop people from jumping back and going over old ground

#### 5. Summarize and Record

- Summarize all decisions and record them straightaway with the name of the person responsible for any action

### More Bloody Meetings

In this sequel tape, Cleese pleads guilty to not properly conducting a meeting and learns the four techniques to:

#### Unite the Group

- Let off the steam,
- Don't take sides,
- Bring in the non-combatants, and
- Stick to facts.

When the meeting deviates into a fight about parking spaces, Cleese is charged with "negligent steering of meetings." The judge describes to Cleese the four techniques to:

#### Focus the Group

- Stay alert and watch out for irrelevant contributions,
- Keep a hand on the wheel,
- Test comprehension, and
- Paraphrase and check back.

Finally, Cleese is accused of allowing vital information to be suppressed or squashed. He learns the four techniques to:

### **Mobilize the Group**

- Protect the weak and keep the strong under control,
- Check around the group and collect all contributions,
- Record all suggestions to avoid losing good points, and
- Build up ideas, don't knock them down.