

PMO Community of Practice January 2021 Meeting Summary

Header (Required)

Title: Wasting time – how people waste their own time and other people’s time and what to do about it.

Brief description: Identify causes of wasting time and solutions

Learning objectives: Learning how to reduce time wasting activities caused by you, your peers, and your organization

PDU Amount 1 1 PDU

PDU Allocation 1 Leadership

Member Discussion Topic 1/12/2021: Wasting time – how people waste their own time and other people’s time and what to do about it

Wasting time in meetings

- Sloppy meetings: everyone is unprepared, no agenda, no expected outcome
 - Supposed to discuss
 - Preparation is a vicious cycle, because someone may have no time, makes for an ineffective meeting, forcing more meetings...
 - At amazon, no PPT, 30-45 minute meetings organized into a 1 pager, outlining why they are all there, goal, there to do something or make suggestions
 - Distribute in advance
 - Everyone reads then they discuss
 - People don’t show up
 - Lacking “Communication”
 - Meeting leader does not cut off long running individuals (Motor mouths, Grandstanders)
 - Individual looking to impress
 - Too many people not needed - everyone wants to participate
 - Meeting leaders, parking lot – leader can cut people off
 - Need good discipline – get agreement in advance
 - Facilitators should avoid the meeting getting out of control
 - Tell people to take things offline
 - SCRUM Master can wield the big stick and keep the meeting in control, and pull the meeting back from long running individuals
 - Some firms bring in a SCRUM Master for a few days a week to facilitate meetings
 - Disrespect – last minute “I have a conflict”
 - Need time to get from one meeting to next – all meetings start 5 min after the hour and end 5 minutes before the hour.
 - There are some macros/VB
 - There are also server side settings
 - All groups had group meeting at the same time – not a good thing
 - Example: Issue w daily scrum at same time
 - Too many topics, caused irrelevance to take place
 - Have an upfront agreement on a meeting agenda, so everyone participates
 - Situations where this does not work:

- Scared to cancel reports that are always done but never used
- “Test” - see if regular reports are missed, by simply not running the reports and seeing who reacts
- Six sigma – person spent weeks every month preparing reports and puts on a shelf. Found something else for her to do
- Took 3 full business days to generate reports – checked with the president and did not distribute, waited for request – eliminated 2/3 of the reports
- Micromanage time reports – reporting down to the 15-minutes when nobody cares
 - Can work in some situations, like a lawyer booking time
 - Daily status reports
 - Work From Home task lists
 - Minimum items in task list, but a resource may not have many tasks
 - For a contractor to bill time, track exact time expenditure
- Doing manual reports over again
 - Reluctance to do macros – sometime due to lack of knowledge
 - Steal with pride – get macros off the internet and share with team
 - 90% of excel users use 10% of functionality
 - Outlook folder organization – maybe we could do for a future session
 - Ask colleagues about tips and tricks
- Multiple reports at different times using slightly different information but different formats
- Post best practices for the world to see
- “90% of the Excel users use 10% of the functionality”
 - You don’t have to be a programmer to make things simple
 - Eliminate manual typing
- Outlook use of folders
 - Auto-redirect rules
 - Allows for important emails to stand out
 - Folder reorganization in Outlook - lunch and learn

Distractions

- Going to someone’s office and talking about personal stuff, sports, politics, etc.
 - Relationship with those in close quarters - call each other to bail them out from “Intruders” who are distracting, cut them off
 - Text can replace going into one’s office and asking a basic question - mitigates intrusions
 - Texting can be intrusive, disruptive – can be double edged sword
 - Try to agree that responses are not needed immediately
 - Some issues with texting if boss needs you to drop right away.
 - You can say you are in the middle of something.
 - You can show busy.
 - Allow people to decide whether to get back right away
 - Set boundaries
- Busy is the new stupid – how lots of churn/task switching and unfocused activity wastes time

Organizational

- People taking on work, but not doing it
 - People say they will do something and don’t
- Playing defense with turf wars, backstabbers, and intimidators

- Wasting time by being intentionally misled

Next Meeting

Next meeting is Tuesday, February 9, 2021

Participants: Allison Smith Terrey, Brenda Bashir-Trout, C. John Tisi, Claudia Compagnoni Gibb, Daniel Espinosa, David Morgen, Felecia Ricketts, Gregory McClellan, John Sherlock, Julia Kuo, Laura Puddu, Marlo Moss, Raymond Francis, Richard Loeb, Sandra-Jane Mancini, Srinu Grandhi, T. T. Ruwan Fonseka, Zachary Lehmann

Facilitator: David Morgen
Scribe: Richard Loeb