**Outcome based agenda**

At Aston we often hear people saying there have too many meetings or that the meeting was a waste of time or we didn’t move forward – we keep going around in circles.

If you add up the hourly rate of each person in the meeting, this gives you an idea of how much the meeting indirectly costs.

To ensure meetings are productive and effective consider the following questions:

**PURPOSE:**   
**Why have this meeting? How does it fit with the overall work of this group? What do you want to happen that wouldn’t happen without this meeting?**  
  
**OUTCOMES:**What do want to have achieved by the end of the session?  
It is useful to consider the outcomes for both the whole meeting and the separate agenda items. All too often meetings have agendas with no defined outcomes. It is also important to be as specific as possible about the outcomes e.g. if the outcome is ideas for a new project, then how many ideas are needed? **OUTPUTS:**What documentation is required after the meeting? who will it got to? how will it be used?  
So often time is wasted writing lengthy minutes from meetings that never get read by anyone except the poor unfortunate who got landed with the task of writing them!

**FINAL CHECK**And the final check to make sure that there is alignment between the outputs, outcomes and purpose of a meeting.  
When these three things are clear and aligned it is the first step to a successful meeting.

Using an outcomes based agenda will help you to stay on track and optimise the time spent in meetings.

**Purpose tip and key**

**For each agenda item consider the purpose**

Yellow – information

Green – discussion and idea generation

Red – decision

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| Agenda Item | Time | Purpose | Outcome | Output | Lead | Comments / Notes |
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Some of your agenda items will use all three steps or colours – if you plan to share information, discuss it and then make a decision on how to proceed. Use the colours so that meeting participants understand the purpose before the meeting takes place and can prepare accordingly.

If an agenda item is red – to make a decision you will need to ensure you have the right participants at the meeting who can make that decision.

If you have lots of yellow – you should share these before the meeting takes place so when in the meeting you focus on the discussion / idea generation and / or making a decision. If the purpose is just to share information think – do I need to have a meeting to achieve this?