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## *Corporate Communique . . .*

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ROBERT DENNEY Associates, Inc.

*Management, Marketing, Strategic Planning*

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### **HOW TO MAKE MEETINGS MORE PRODUCTIVE**

Certain studies have reported that executives spend an average of 16 hours a week in meetings. Whether or not that figure is accurate, most people will agree there are too many meetings and some of them are not very productive.

Whether they are in-person, telephone or electronic, poor meetings waste time and money. One sure sign of a poor meeting is when attendees don't know what they're doing there or why the meeting was called. That may explain why there is now an international organization of meeting facilitators.

Since you may not want to retain a meeting facilitator, here are some proven guidelines on how to make your meetings more productive.

- Determine the purpose(s) of the meeting beforehand. Be sure it is really necessary.
- Make sure that everyone attending the meeting has a reason to be there and knows what that reason is.
- Prepare an agenda, publish it in advance – and stick to it! Don't let discussion get sidetracked – or overheated.
- Distribute in advance all materials attendees should review before the meeting.
- Start the meeting on time – even if some participants have not yet arrived. One CEO we know locks the door at the scheduled starting time, even if some people aren't there yet, and conducts the meeting without them.
- Set a time limit on the meeting – and stick to it.
- Make decisions on action steps and be clear on who will be responsible for each step.
- If minutes need to be published, keep them brief and distribute them promptly.

Here's tip a few organizations use: Don't have any chairs in the meeting room! If the attendees are standing, they'll get to the point much more quickly.

***Robert Denney Associates Inc. provides strategic management and marketing counsel to law firms, companies and non-profit organizations throughout the United States. Previous Communiques as well as information about our services may be viewed on our web site.***

P.O. Box 551, Wayne, PA 19087-0551 • 610-644-7020 • fax: 610-296-8726  
email: [bob@robertdenney.com](mailto:bob@robertdenney.com) • web site: [www.robertdenney.com](http://www.robertdenney.com)