

How to lead a meeting

18

In this unit you will learn language for leading or chairing a meeting.

Starter

- 1 Do the questionnaire about meetings. Then talk through the answers with your teacher.

- 1 Meetings are best held: *early in the morning / after lunch / late in the afternoon.*
- 2 If people are getting tired, it's best to: *continue the meeting / take a short break / end the meeting quickly.*
- 3 Confrontation should always be avoided at meetings. *totally agree / partly agree / disagree*
- 4 I try to find excuses to avoid meetings. *quite often / sometimes / never.*
- 5 Meetings with more than ten people are ineffective. *totally agree / partly agree / disagree*

Expressions

- 1 Being a chairperson at a meeting means being responsible for different roles or functions. Match the functions (1-8) with expressions (a-h).
- 1 delaying discussion of an item
 - 2 inviting contributions, involving people
 - 3 asking someone not to speak for too long
 - 4 dealing with digression
 - 5 summarizing agreement
 - 6 getting attention at the start
 - 7 moving through the agenda
 - 8 bringing the meeting to an end
- a I think we all seem to go along with your proposal.
 - b I think that more or less covers everything.
 - c Now, could we move on to the next point?
 - d I really think we should leave it there. We can't make a decision on it here and now.
 - e I don't want us to get off the point. Can we keep to the agenda?
 - f What does everyone else feel about this?
 - g Do you mind if we make a start right away?
 - h Could I ask you to keep it short?

Speaking

- 1 You are chairing a meeting where your teacher is one of the people attending. What would you say if:
 - 1 you want to start the meeting?
 - 2 you do not agree with something your teacher has said?
 - 3 your teacher begins to speak about something which is not on the agenda?
 - 4 you think you have said enough about one particular point?
 - 5 you want to end the meeting?
- 2 Speak with your teacher and together try to produce a list of eight general recommendations for how to run a meeting successfully.

Language box

The quantifiers *much* and *many* are used directly before countable (*many*) or uncountable (*much*) nouns:

Many car manufacturers are developing hybrid models.

Much water is wasted by inefficient agricultural methods.

They can be used with *not*:

There's not much more I can say about it.
How many times do you travel abroad a year? Not many.

With *of*:

I agree with much of what you say.
I think that many of their problems are due to their computer system.

Hint

Notice the way the verb to appreciate is used.

I would appreciate it if you could let me know this afternoon.

(= I would be grateful if)

I appreciate that it must be very difficult for you.

(= I understand your position)

I would appreciate your advice on this matter.

(= please help me)

I appreciate that. (= thank you)

Writing

- 1 You are acknowledged as a 'good meetings person' in your company. Your manager has asked you to write a short article for the company's newsletter entitled 'Five golden rules for meetings'. You may like to choose the best five from your discussion with your teacher in **Speaking**. Include examples of phrases the chairperson could use.



- 2 Look at the agenda of a management meeting at Bell Tools, a manufacturing company in California. What does *regrets* mean? What does *other business* mean?

Attending: Paul, Enrique, Dave, Susan, Carlos
Regrets: Peter

Agenda:

- 1 production schedule (Carlos)
- 2 report on maintenance work (Susan)
- 3 quarterly financial report (Dave)
- 4 summer working hours (Enrique)
- 5 other business

- 3 Listen and answer the questions.

- 1 Do they start the meeting on time?
- 2 How much time does the first speaker have for his item?
- 3 What point does Dave try to introduce?
- 4 How does Paul say they have a lot of other things to discuss?
- 5 Why does Dave apologize for bringing in his discussion point?
- 6 How does Paul react?
- 7 What is Dave worried about?
- 8 Who else is affected by the decision?

Look

Look at listening script 18.1 on pages 128–129. Find more examples of *much* and *many*.

With so or that:

I didn't expect so much interest in our offer. Mexico City has a population of over 20 million. **That many!**

With as ... as that!:

I didn't think the price would be as much as that!

We have 250 people signed up. I never thought we'd get as many as that!

Much and many can also be used as the subject of a clause:

There were hundreds of visitors to the show. **Many** were Chinese. (= of the visitors)
They prepared a lot of food for the reception. Unfortunately, **much** was wasted. (= of the food)

Lesson record

3 new words from this lesson

3 useful phrases from this lesson

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| 2 | 2 |
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Things to remember

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